



Indigenous
Institutes
Consortium



Postsecondary education and training for the whole person, community, and Nation

*Outcomes report from the National
Indigenous Education Symposium 2023:
Operationalizing Reconciliation*

Leaders in lifelong learning



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Operationalizing Reconciliation: A first of its kind National Symposium

From October 16th through 19th the Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC) and Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) held the 2023 National Indigenous Education Symposium #NIES2023 in Treaty 4 Territory (Regina, Saskatchewan). The symposium brought together more than 260 participants from Indigenous Institutes, mainstream postsecondary institutions, stakeholder organizations, industry, government, as well as students, to share knowledge and exemplary practices focused upon the role of postsecondary education and training in Operationalizing Reconciliation. While the IIC and CICan have each held national symposiums before, this year's event marked the first time that these organizations have come together as representative bodies of both Indigenous and mainstream postsecondary institutions convening their members, partners, communities, and stakeholders in a national conversation. This outcomes paper from #NIES2023 provides an overview of the symposium and the key themes and takeaways that emerged. It concludes with key directions for change emerging from the Symposium to strengthen the role of postsecondary education and training in Operationalizing Reconciliation.

The Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC)

The Indigenous Institutes Consortium (IIC) represents the collective and collaborative efforts of its seven Indigenous-owned and operated postsecondary education and training institutions across Ontario. The IIC's mission is to facilitate and champion recognition and relationships that advance Indigenous control over Indigenous postsecondary education in Ontario. The vision is to strive for healthier and stronger Indigenous peoples and communities through Indigenous-led postsecondary education and training.

Colleges & Institutes Canada (CICan)

Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) serves as the national and international voice of Canada's largest postsecondary education network. CICan's vision is to build better futures for peoples and communities. This is achieved by strengthening Canada's system of publicly supported colleges, institutes, CEGEPs, and polytechnics. CICan hosts the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee which convenes college and institute leaders and practitioners responsible for Indigenous education. The committee provides input to CICan on advocacy priorities and positions related to Indigenous education and skills development and serves as a forum to help college and institute leaders and practitioners support each other and build capacity to serve Indigenous learners and communities.

¹ This report was prepared by Jon Medow and Rachelle Soliman (Medow Consulting) with the support of Anna Zecharia of the IIC and Angie Savard of Welch LLP and notetaking support from members of the CICan team. To develop this report, notes were taken throughout the symposium's sessions and later analyzed. Profiles of presenters' comments are not intended to provide exhaustive summaries, but rather key themes and takeaways. Likewise, key directions for change presented in this report reflect major outcomes of the discussions rather than an exhaustive inventory.

Elders attending and providing support at #NIES2023



- Elder Clifford Campbell from Piapot First Nation provided an opening and closing for the symposium
- Elder Gerry (Josh) Eshkawkogan from Wiiwemkoong Unceded Territory provided support during the symposium.
- Elder Lorna Standingready from Treaty 4 Territory provided a blessing for the Cultural Evening and Dinner.
- Elder Theresa Gladue, Elder in Residence at Northwester Polytechnic, attended the symposium.

#NIES2023 Sponsors

The IIC and CIGan wish to thank our sponsors. Their generous support helped make #NIES2023 a reality:

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Convening a diverse range of participants

The National Indigenous Education Symposium brought together a diverse range of over 260 participants representing a variety of sectors and roles:

- **Federal and provincial government** including senior executives such as Assistant Deputy Ministers and Directors, senior Indigenous advisors, managers, policy analysts, and interns.
- **Indigenous Institutes and mainstream postsecondary institutions** including professors, presidents, CEOs, researchers, senior administrators, Indigenous services and engagement leads, students, graduates, associate deans, program coordinators, program chairs, Indigenous student counselors and academic advisors, Elders, cultural consultants, and campus managers.
- **Industry partners** including executive directors, CEOs, and senior managers.
- **Foundations, non-profit organizations, councils, and committees** including career advisors, coordinators, directors.

The structure and objectives of #NIES2023

The National Indigenous Education Symposium was organized around plenary sessions featuring keynote speakers and roundtable discussions, as well as concurrent sessions organized around six symposium streams:

- Accessibility: Recruitment, Retention, and Success of Indigenous Learners;
- Braiding Indigenous Knowledge to Attain Climate Resilience;
- Empowering the Next Seven Generations;
- Strengthening Governance and Leadership;
- Indigenous Languages and Indigenous Teacher Training; and
- Indigenous Focus Applied Research.

Key note speeches were delivered by Dr. Dan Longboat and Dr. Pam Palmater. Roundtable discussions featured labour market, skills and learning innovation leaders and presidents of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Institutions. The symposium concluded with a World Café, bringing together all attendees to discuss next steps and actions for Operationalizing Reconciliation. The final plenary session included a student testimonial panel, where Indigenous students spoke about their learning journeys.



The overall symposium objectives included the following:

- Place Indigenous learners at the centre of the solution to the labour market, environmental, and healthcare crisis.
- Provide a unique opportunity for participants to reflect and share experience and best practices on Indigenous education related issues.
- Reflect on the role of Canadian postsecondary institutions (Indigenous Institutes, colleges, institutes, cégeps, universities, and polytechnics) in responding to the learning needs of Indigenous peoples and communities, including the promotion of Indigenous languages.
- Provide opportunities for participants to network and share experiences, approaches, and best practices in supporting reconciliation.
- Build community support for reconciliation and Indigenous-led postsecondary education across Canada.
- Provide innovation and leading-edge insights to support government engagement activities for the sector.
- Recognizing and learning from the uniqueness of Indigenous-led institutions.
- Amplify the voices of learners, educators, and leaders of Canada's Indigenous Institutes, colleges, and institutes.

National Indigenous Education Symposium Cultural Evening

The symposium included a cultural evening which featured performances from:

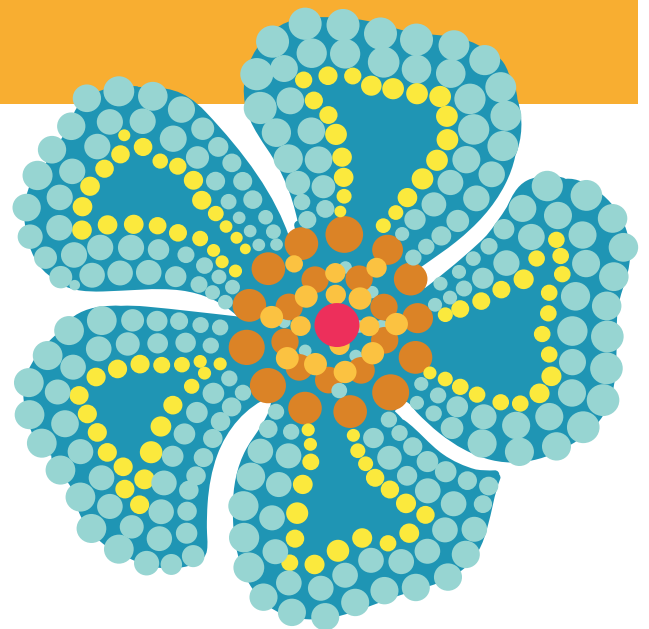
Thomson Métis Jiggers accompanied by

Saskagrass: a group of student dancers from Thomson Community School in Regina led by Alison Kimbley and accompanied by Jack and Amber Dublanica of Regina.

Teagan Littlechief: Teagan Littlechief is a Cree singer from the White Bear First Nations north of Carlyle, Saskatchewan.

Lone Creek Dance Troupe: Lone Creek Dance Troupe represents various communities within the Treaty 4 Territory.

The cultural program was organized by local CICan members including Deanna Speidel (Indigenous Strategy Coordinator, Saskatchewan Polytechnic), Larry Rosia (President & CEO, Saskatchewan Polytechnic), and Vicky Roy (President & CEO, Southeast College).





Keynote speeches framed the symposium's guiding purpose

The symposium was opened with keynote speeches from Dr. Dan Longboat and Dr. Pam Palmater. Their remarks focused upon Indigenous Knowledge, the meaning and purpose of Indigenous Education, and what Operationalizing Reconciliation through postsecondary education and training means in practice. Symposium presenters and participants frequently referenced Dr. Longboat's and Dr. Palmater's insights throughout the sessions and discussions that followed over the next two days of #NIES2023. Selected highlights from their remarks are provided below:

Dr. Longboat shared that Indigenous knowledge is a system moving through generations, having been passed down by grandparents and parents in the face of inundation by colonization. Dr. Longboat highlighted five dimensions: Respect, Relationality, Responsibility, Reciprocity and Restoration, and discussed the importance of Indigenous Language – how knowledge is embedded within Indigenous Languages' grammatical structures. He shared that it is only in this generation in which Indigenous peoples can move beyond a focus on survival and "have the privilege and honour to ask Elders what words, songs, dances, and ceremonies mean." As a process focused on the whole person, Dr. Longboat described Indigenous Education as grounded in Indigenous knowledge and focused on four forms of intelligence that each person possesses: Mental, Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual. Dr. Longboat shared that "I'm in awe of Indigenous Institutes, colleges,

institutions that address the whole person", noting that mainstream education has conventionally focused only on the mental, with some physical dimensions. He shared that it is culture-based, trauma-responsive (not just trauma-informed) education that Indigenous learners truly need to thrive: "a healing and learning journey at the same time."



"When we talk about Indigenous Education, we're talking about a new way of being in the world."

Dr. Dan Longboat



Dr. Palmater shared her vision of what reconciliation in postsecondary education means in a substantive way, centering joint-governance with Indigenous peoples, meaningful financial resource sharing, and institutional and senior leadership accountability for positive graduation and hiring outcomes for Indigenous students, staff, and faculty.

While Indigenous artwork, inclusion of Elders, Indigenous speakers, hiring Indigenous faculty, Indigenous advisory committees, pow-wow days, and

changing the names of building have an important role, these are the basics that must be expected – they are not reconciliation.

Rather, reconciliation is about changing power structures. It can be uncomfortable and create friction, but this is “good conflict” that is about positive change. It must not be voluntary, but rather, rooted in accountability, moving from engaging First Nations at an advisory level to opening space for real decision making power and real impact.

Guidance to move forward on this agenda can be found in the work of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, as well as legal sources including treaties/treaty commitments, the laws of Indigenous Nations in which postsecondary institutions are located, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Dr. Palmater challenged institutions to study these commissions, inquiries, and legal sources, mapping a holistic response. She shared that postsecondary education and training institutions are positioned to be on the forefront of change.

“First Nation led education is the foundation of strengthening our nations, self-determination, and self-governance.”

Dr. Pam Palmater



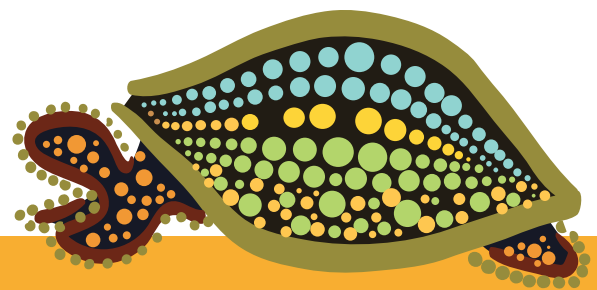
Plenary sessions focused on opportunities, challenges, and what success means for learners

Plenary sessions convened throughout the symposium brought together participants for compelling conversations. Selected highlights from these sessions are provided below.

Round table with labour market, skills, and learning innovation leaders

Norma Sunday of Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute and Vice-Chair of the IIC moderated a round table with labour market, skills, and learning innovation leaders Pedro Barata (Future Skills Centre) and Robert Luke (eCampusOntario).

Pedro Barata shared that as trust in government and many public institutions is on the decline, educators have key roles to play in supporting people to see a path forward on central global challenges. These challenges include climate change, as well as population aging. Pedro noted that Canada's economy currently has a million unfilled jobs. The young Indigenous population is growing, and systemic barriers must be addressed to support Indigenous youth in the labour market to access such roles. This includes addressing the chronic underfunding of education. It also includes supporting the Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) who make up the bulk of the economy to build their "inclusion literacy" as employers and gain the "know-how to leverage diversity and inclusion".



"We need to put our money where our mouth is when we talk about the value of Canada as a place that values diversity and inclusion, changing workplace norms and equipping employers with the tools they need."

Pedro Barata, Future Skills Centre

Robert Luke spoke about the importance of digital transformation, "that you can't be an offline school in an online world", and that key to such transformation is supporting access and digital fluency for Indigenous learners. He also spoke to the trend in postsecondary education of "missions-not-majors", with students wanting to focus on the problems and challenges they want to take on in their lives, crossing traditional boundaries of subject matter. Reflecting Pedro's



comments on the labour market, Robert observed that “immigrants and Indigenous peoples are the only two growing demographics in this country”. He spoke passionately about the serious funding challenges facing Indigenous Institutes that serve Indigenous learners and in particular, substantial instability of operating funding that they experience.

“Indigenous Institutes are doing better than most at running programs that are labour market relevant. They are doing it in a way that is more resilient than most because it is culturally based.”

Robert Luke, eCampusOntario

Round table with Presidents of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Institutions

Vicky Roy, President & CEO of Southeast College moderated a round table with Presidents of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Institutions. The round table focused on key dimensions of progress and challenges that institutions face in Operationalizing Reconciliation: addressing educational and employment gaps for Indigenous learners, achieving educational equity, and protecting and preserving Indigenous knowledge, rights, and culture.

Participating presidents and CEOs included:

- Lorri Deschamps, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute
- Beverley Roy, Kenjgewin Teg
- Brad Mahon, Great Plains College
- Neil Cooke, Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT)

The panel highlighted commonalities as well as distinctions between the experiences of Indigenous and non-Indigenous institutions. Non-Indigenous institutions are driving transformation efforts within their programs, student support/outreach services, and governance structures that have traditionally not been open to Indigenous peoples, while seeking to overcome capacity and resource challenges facing individuals charged with advancing this work internally. At the same time, Indigenous Institutes are growing and developing approaches to respond to learners’ needs at a community-level, building up institutional structures grounded in Indigenous knowledge, culture, rights, and connection to the land, and often doing so in the absence of secure funding and sustained government support. Institutions of all kinds are seeking to respond to the needs of Indigenous learners who continue to face systemic racism in education systems and the labour market.



"We don't speak in the words of 'operationalizing reconciliation'. It's about operationalizing sovereignty and our identity...It's finding the space and pathway to be great partners in two worlds and to be governed by our people."

Beverley Roy, Kenjgewin Teg

Student Testimonial Panel

Beverley Roy, President, Kenjgewin Teg, moderated a student testimonial panel to close out #NIES2023. Three students participated: Aaron Foster (Kamloops Naturalist Club), Kelsey Morris (Saskatchewan Polytechnic), and Danette McGregor (Kenjgewin Teg). The participating students spoke to their educational experiences, the transformational impact that exposure to Indigenous spaces, culture, and land-based learning had on their lives and direction post-graduation, and their advice to postsecondary institutions. They presented visions for how to deepen support to meet the needs of Indigenous learners, above all, through attention to all parts of a student's life, not just academics. Moderator Beverley Roy summed up the direction that they shared as one of "ensouling our schools" through a focus on wellbeing, including mental, emotional, and spiritual health.





Concurrent sessions provided a venue to dive deep on the symposium's six streams

#NIES2023 included a total of 21 concurrent sessions featuring diverse presentations from Indigenous Institutes and mainstream postsecondary institutions. Each concurrent session focused upon one of the symposium's six streams, with space for discussion and Q&A following presentations. The objectives set out for each symposium stream as well as key themes, areas of focus, and example initiatives that emerged from the concurrent sessions within each stream are profiled below.

Accessibility: Recruitment, Retention, and Success of Indigenous Learners

The symposium featured five sessions within the stream of "Accessibility: Recruitment, Retention, and Success of Indigenous Learners". Objectives for this stream included focusing upon:

- Bridging equity, diversity, and inclusion with Indigenous approaches
- Wellness and belonging
- Student experiences

Key themes that emerged from sessions within this stream included:

- Fostering a sense of belonging for Indigenous learners

- Promoting autonomy through the Indigenization of curriculum, instruction, and programming
- Adopting a community-based approach
- Fostering Indigenous partnerships
- Addressing barriers to student success

During the sessions, presenters spoke about the importance of fostering a sense of belonging to recruit, retain, and ensure the success of Indigenous learners. This approach includes listening to learners and developing and adapting programs to fit their needs, fostering reciprocal relationships between learners and teachers, and providing Indigenous student services that address the needs of the "whole person" such as cultural events, community connections, resident Elders, Indigenous student advisors, financial supports, child care, mental health supports, and career services for students and graduates. Outreach to Indigenous communities in both rural and urban centres and building reciprocal and collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities were noted as important to student recruitment.

Presenters highlighted the importance of Indigenizing curriculum, instruction, and programming to build Indigenous autonomy by incorporating Indigenous identities and pride into the curriculum, centering



curriculum on Indigenous knowledge, practices, and Indigenous pedagogies, engaging communities to address their needs and inform curriculum, and ensuring teaching methods include practices such as cultural camps and cultural support for both students and teachers. Programming must continuously evolve, be “Indigenous for Indigenous”, and provide flexibility to learners such as remote learning and credit for previous work and life experience. To do this work, presenters stressed the need for more funding to build capacity at Indigenous Institutes and non-Indigenous institutions to develop Indigenous services and programming and deliver professional development and cultural awareness training to staff.

The BRIGHT Start Program

The BRIGHT Start Program, a collaboration between seven Indigenous Institutes in Ontario, helps learners integrate and ease into postsecondary education by encouraging collaboration between staff and students, providing information on campus supports, fostering community connections, and providing tools for student success. The program can be accessed both in a class setting and online, providing flexibility to learners to help minimize barriers to postsecondary education. “BRIGHT” stands for B=Belong, Identity and Indigenous Culture, R=Resilience and empowerment, I=Indigenous ways of knowing, G=Goal setting and personal growth, H=Holistic Wellness and Ways of Being, and T=Transition support for college and university.

Braiding Indigenous Knowledge to Attain Climate Resilience

The symposium featured four sessions within the stream “Braiding Indigenous Knowledge to Attain Climate Resilience”. Objectives for this stream included focusing upon:

- Indigenous approaches to climate change and sustainability
- Indigenous approaches to land-based learning

Key themes that emerged from sessions within this stream included:

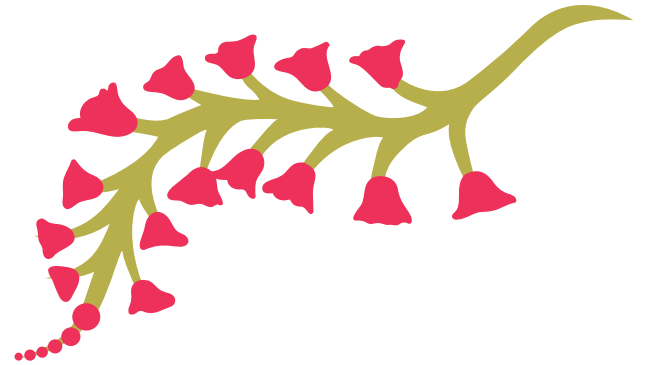
- Advancing land-based learning opportunities
- Collaborating with Indigenous communities
- Advancing Indigenous climate resilience through policy change and storytelling

Throughout the sessions, presenters discussed the importance of braiding Indigenous knowledge and western science to attain climate resilience. This involves understanding the symbiotic relationship between land and people and fostering collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners and communities.

Presenters discussed how it is essential to co-design projects with Indigenous communities, to advance land-based learning opportunities, and to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing. For example, Humber College is advancing land-based learning opportunities by offering exchange programs where students travel off

campus to an Indigenous community locally or internationally.

Presenters spoke about offering new courses on climate change, specifically for Indigenous learners, that build on the established respect Indigenous people have for Mother Nature and encourage students to think about the impact of climate change on Indigenous communities and how policy can help advance community priorities. Improving access to digital learning and digital tools were also noted as key to supporting Indigenous learners to fully participate in the economy and to tell stories about climate change for future generations. For example, Indigenous Friends offers INDIGital: Empowerment Through Art a 12-week digital art program for Indigenous learners to illustrate stories, including stories about climate change.



John Abbott College's Land-Based Learning Project

John Abbott College in Quebec has launched a Land-Based Project where “reconciliation is operationalized by the braiding of Indigenous knowledge and western science emphasizing relationship and connection with the land and to address the climate and ecological emergency”. The project includes a First People’s Garden and a Microforest, which is meant to serve as a dynamic learning tool that allows staff and students to learn about the nations in the region, providing an area for land-based teachings about cycles of plant life and uses by Indigenous communities. It allows visitors to learn how the plants help all living things in the eco-system and how everything relies on connection with nature, including human beings. Students will use the space for inquiry-based investigations, ultimately leading to a living lab that showcases the importance of biodiversity and natural spaces in the context of the climate and ecological emergency.





Empowering the Next Seven Generations

The symposium featured two sessions within the stream of “Empowering the Next Seven Generations”. Objectives for this stream included focusing upon:

- Indigenous Institutes: a solution to the labour market crisis
- Future proofing through Indigenous knowledge

Key themes that emerged from sessions within this stream included:

- Fostering student success through Indigenized practices
- Engaging community and industry to advance opportunity

During the sessions, presenters highlighted that educational institutes must empower the next seven generations by fostering student success and advancing Indigenous educational opportunities. To further Indigenous student success, educational institutes need to foster self-determination, create welcoming and safe learning environments, have cultural support systems in place, develop programs that are culturally sensitive and amplify Indigenous voices, support learners as they transition into postsecondary and the labour market, and ensure academic practices are imbedded with Indigenous ideas, principles, and practices.

Presenters also discussed how critical it is for educational institutions to develop industry partnerships that are meaningful and address the economic need of not only industry but also the community.

Engaging community was emphasized as essential to the success of learners and the empowerment of communities to move forward together. Community engagement for educational institutions means developing stronger ties with Indigenous communities in support of their community development, working collaboratively with Indigenous communities to ensure improved access for learners, having decision-makers present from both sides at the table from the start, participating in community events, bringing learning

Writing Lives: The Residential School Survivor Memoir Project

Langara College in BC offers a course called Writing Lives: The Residential School Survivor Memoir Project where students collaborate with Survivors of the Indian Residential School System to create memoir manuscripts. During the first term, students read literature and history of the residential school system in Canada. In the second term, students are paired with an Indigenous Elder with whom they record interviews, work on drafts, and develop a memoir manuscript. This involves collaboration with Elders, residential school survivors, councillors, the Indigenous Survivor Society in BC, and peers. The course was developed with community knowledge and input from students on what type of assignments they want to complete, evaluation methods, and group decision-making processes. The course helps demonstrate that Indigenous stories matter and ensures they will be passed on to future generations.



Strengthening Governance and Leadership

The symposium featured four sessions within the stream of “Strengthening Governance and Leadership”. Objectives for this stream included focusing upon:

- Indigenizing governance and leadership structures
- Sharing leadership teams’ best practices
- Engaging faculty, staff, and students

Key themes that emerged from sessions within this stream included:

- Relationship building with Indigenous partners
- Co-constructing governance structures
- Collective effort and engagement of faculty, staff, students, and community

During the sessions, presenters discussed the importance of relationship building with Indigenous partners to Indigenize governance and leadership structures. This means inviting Indigenous partners to co-construct governance structures within postsecondary institutions. Doing so means engaging Indigenous partners on their time, needs, and expectations, being transparent and open about institutional structures and operations, establishing relationships with those in power, co-constructing meetings, encouraging Indigenous peoples to set the agenda, and asking communities to identify who should participate.

Presenters also spoke about the need for collective effort of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, faculty, staff, and community to Indigenize governance and leadership structures. To move this collective work forward, presenters shared best practices such as creating a circle of support for students, faculty, and staff focused on relationship building, knowledge sharing, and learning. This was framed as “building the fire, lighting the fire, caring for the fire, and sharing the fire”. The process involves building relationships with Indigenous communities, increasing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, providing Indigenous led supports and services, and working together to enrich curriculum with Indigenous courses, learning outcomes, Indigenous styles of learning, and Indigenous pedagogy. Core to this work is listening to community voices and implementing what they advise such as incorporating local Elders, experts, oral traditions, and community-based teachers in the curriculum.





Curriculum Decolonization and Indigenization Indicators

Bow Valley College in Alberta is currently developing key indicators to identify programs and courses that have undergone decolonization and Indigenization processes to determine whether the process of decolonizing content has been meaningful. Key questions have been developed to assess programs. Examples of key questions include the following: Does the course or program include Indigenous perspectives or practices?

How have the needs of Indigenous students in the program, and in relation to content and learning outcomes, been identified and considered?

What supports do you need to more meaningfully and authentically include Indigenous perspectives and practices into the program?

What supports do you already have in place?

Bow Valley College highlighted that the processes are only meaningful if they are implemented with the assistance of community. Next steps must involve building capacity of learning designers and developing connections and relationships with community to seek feedback and collaboration on the way forward. what type of assignments they want to complete, evaluation methods, and group decision-making processes. The course helps demonstrate that Indigenous stories matter and ensures they will be passed on to future generations.

Indigenous Languages and Indigenous Teacher Training

The symposium featured three sessions within the stream “Indigenous Languages and Indigenous Teacher Training”. The objectives for this stream included focusing upon:

- Indigenous language revitalization
- Language and technology
- Growing Indigenous teacher education

Key themes that emerged from the sessions within this stream included:

- Developing inclusive and accessible tools
- Providing land-based learning opportunities
- Revitalizing Indigenous languages through meaningful interactions

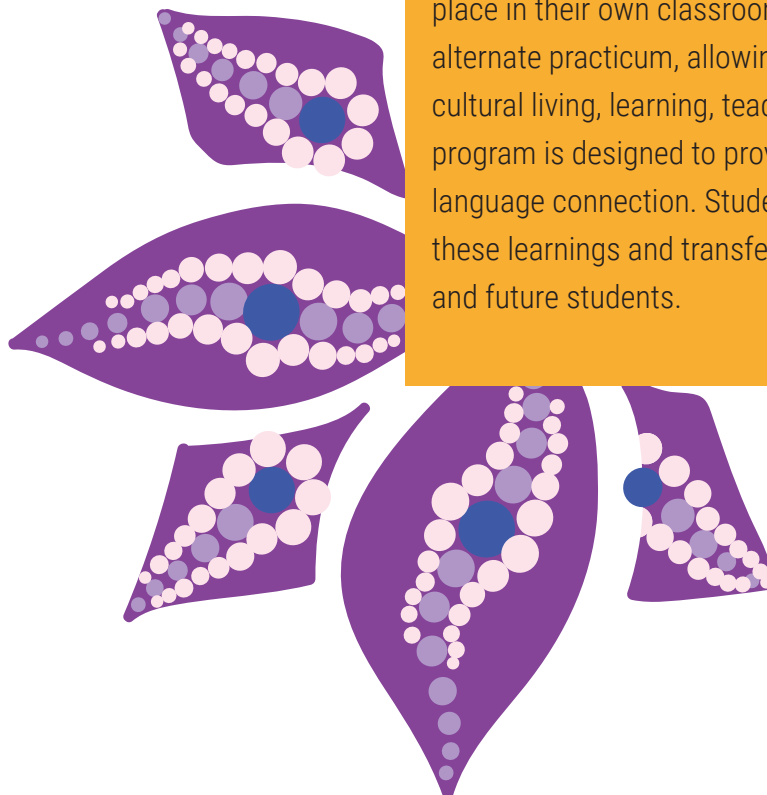
During the sessions, presenters spoke about furthering Indigenous languages and Indigenous teacher training through inclusive and accessible tools and training opportunities. Presenters discussed the importance of providing tools that support learners to develop Indigenous language skills. For instance, presenters spoke about developing interactive activities and toolkits for children to learn the Michif language, such as online games, videos, books, and flashcards. Presenters also discussed the use and importance of virtual reality tools in postsecondary classrooms to help revitalize Indigenous languages and improve accessibility for remote learners who wish to remain in their communities to learn.



Presenters discussed the importance of delivering training programs that support teachers to develop Indigenous language skills for the classroom and to prepare teachers to educate students in schools both on and off reserve. Wise practices from the programs discussed include providing land-based learning opportunities on and off campus, mobilizing fluent older speakers to share with students, and restoring intergenerational transmission through meaningful interactions. Providing one-on-one support, resources for Indigenous curriculum development, alternate practicum options, and access to professional development opportunities and cultural experiences on and off campus were noted as particularly important.

Queen's Indigenous Teacher Education Program

Queen's University in Ontario offers the Indigenous Teacher Education Program (ITEP) which aims to prepare teacher candidates to teach in schools both on and off reserve. The program incorporates Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching and offers land-based learning opportunities. The program is designed to be flexible, allowing students to stay in their communities and gain experience through site work. While on campus, students are provided with amenities and accommodations geared towards supporting them culturally and emotionally. Students have access to an Indigenous Resource Centre with curriculum ideas that are Indigenous immersed, which they can then put in place in their own classrooms. The program includes alternate practicum, allowing learning to participate in cultural living, learning, teachings, and ceremony. The program is designed to provide a land, cultural, and language connection. Students are then able to use these learnings and transfer them to their classrooms and future students.





Indigenous Focus Applied Research

The symposium featured two sessions within the stream “Indigenous Focus Applied Research”. The objectives for this stream included focusing upon

- Indigenous-led applied research
- Experiences within the community/alongside industry

Key themes that emerged from the sessions within this stream included:

- Increasing Indigenous autonomy and supporting Indigenous communities
- Recognizing skills and experience of Indigenous learners
- Developing Indigenous-led and community-led projects

During the sessions, presenters discussed the importance of increasing Indigenous autonomy and supporting Indigenous communities through Indigenous led research projects and programs. On the programmatic side, presenters spoke about recognizing the skills of Indigenous peoples and supporting their educational journey towards degrees. For instance, Cégep Marie-Victorin is offering flexible programs to Indigenous peoples in Northern Québec that are trauma-informed, individualized, inclusive, and wellbeing and selfcare focused. Representatives from the institute spoke about the important practice of offering flexible co-ops, accommodations, and materials translated into Indigenous languages. Thompson Rivers University in

BC presented on the use of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) focused on competency-based and course-based portfolio development to describe learning and provide evidence from life and work experience.

Presenters spoke about projects that are Indigenous-led and rooted in Indigenous community-engagement to better understand community needs and challenges. For example, Canadore College in Ontario discussed their participation in the ImpAct Climate Campus Living Labs project in partnership with CICan, which will now focus on forested land at the College Drive Campus to preserve the ongoing health of the forest and identify opportunities to enhance carbon sequestration. The project will be guided by an advisory committee comprised of Indigenous community members, water operators, consultants, and Canadore staff to ensure the project stays rooted in the needs of First Nations communities.





Key directions for change to Operationalize Reconciliation emerging from #NIES2023

To close out #NIES2023, all participants were invited to join a “World Café” discussion to consider key themes and ideas emerging from the symposium and what the path forward can look like for all involved in advancing the role of Indigenous postsecondary education and training in Operationalizing Reconciliation.

Participants sat in six circles and each circle was given one of three questions to consider in a discussion facilitated by CICan members, with two circles discussing each question. Notes were taken in the discussions, and the World Café concluded with a report-back of key takeaways by the facilitator from each group. Participants were invited to respond to two further questions in written form using sticky notes on flip charts in the room. These written questions focused on directions for change in Indigenous and non-Indigenous postsecondary institutions specifically.

Indigenous-Driven Environmental Monitoring: Achieving Sovereignty Through Applied Research and Training

The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) has launched a project that aims to provide capacity-building services for Indigenous communities to support the development of Indigenous-led, community-based environmental monitoring programs. The monitoring programs will support Indigenous communities to lead data collection and monitor the health and condition of their local environment. The monitoring model was developed by engaging and partnering with Indigenous communities to gather their input on each step of the process. Community engagement included conducting site visits, holding workshops, and discussing sovereignty goals.





The World Café discussion circles responding to the questions above yielded wide ranging ideas about what success looks like today, and what directions must be taken to advance the role of Indigenous postsecondary education and training in Operationalizing Reconciliation for the benefit of Indigenous learners, communities, Nations, and all Canadians.

The following key directions for change are rooted in major themes and outcomes of the World Café discussions, informed by the wider Symposium proceedings. They can support #NIES2023 participants and organizers alike to focus in on mobilizing learning out of the symposium at an institutional and system-wide level, working to create change within our own institutions and networks as well as with government, industry, and charitable partners.

"This symposium is important because it is 100% relationship-based. We are hearing from one another. We are learning from one another...Everybody in this circle has something exceptional to offer."

World Café Participant

World Café Discussion Questions

Celebrating Success

What successes or best practices support reconciliation through postsecondary education and training, and what else should be done?

Systems Change

What role do the following partners have in making these changes to strengthen and build the capacity of Indigenous-led institutes and non-Indigenous institutions?

- Federal government
- Provincial/territorial governments
- Indigenous governments
- Employers / Industry
- Non-profit/charitable sector

Increasing and Strengthening Collaboration and Relationships

How can the relationships developed through this symposium be supported to flourish? What does a pan-Canadian network for Indigenous postsecondary education and training look like?





Key Directions for Change: Advancing the role of Indigenous postsecondary education and training in Operationalizing Reconciliation

Focus Areas	Key Directions for Change
<p>Drive institution-level change to increase capacity, improve outcomes, and enhance accountability.</p>	<p>Accelerating change within mainstream institutions:</p> <p>Indigenous leads within mainstream institutions must sit at the executive leadership level, directly reporting to Presidents and holding job titles, decision making capacity, and resourcing aligned to this status.</p> <p>Co-created plans for Reconciliation and Indigenization must move beyond a level of broad strategic direction to have clear actions and timelines focused upon the next seven generations, with accountability of institutional leadership for results including Indigenous student outcomes, Indigenous staff hiring, and retention.</p> <p>Approaches to institutional strategies, curricula, and learning outcomes must be rooted in direction from and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities and students, including a focus on advancing Indigenous languages and ways of knowing, doing and being, with protection of Indigenous Knowledge, and ways to involve instructors who have lived experience and may not have a formal credential.</p> <p>Work on Indigenization must be effectively staffed to support change in an authentic way. This means ensuring that those teaching Indigenous material and developing curricula are qualified and that Indigenous student service resources are not diverted to overall institutional strategies, or to fill gaps in faculty expertise in the classroom.</p> <p>Advancing collaboration between mainstream institutions and Indigenous Institutes:</p> <p>Indigenous Institutes are building up community-responsive curriculum and programs in unique ways, but frequently lack the resources to employ full time</p>



	<p>faculty. There is an opportunity for mainstream institutions to collaborate with Indigenous Institutes by sharing time of Indigenous faculty to support development of programs and curriculum at Indigenous Institutes, as well as in course delivery.</p> <p>Indigenous Institutes and non-Indigenous Institutions should continue to explore deepened collaboration in programming, credit transfer, and articulation, with partnerships terms that are equitable and that protect ownership of Indigenous Knowledge.</p>
<p>Create system-level conditions for success for Indigenous learners, communities, and Nations.</p>	<p>Achieving equitable and sustainable government support:</p> <p>Indigenous Institutes across Turtle Island take many forms, but most are community-based and lack adequate funding. A framework for equitable operating and capital funding from governments must be developed which accounts for long-term resource deficits, the unique role and costs faced by Indigenous Institutes, and their visions for growth to serve their communities and Nations.</p> <p>Frameworks should continue to be established and implemented which recognize Indigenous Institutes as independent credential granting institutions.</p> <p>Mainstream institutions have ongoing needs for support to advance Indigenous student success and broader transformation efforts. Funding should be regularized and removed from short-term competitive processes. Indigenous students at institutions of all forms likewise require adequate support from government to make their educational visions a reality.</p> <p>Indigenous Governments have key roles to play including in relations with institutions in their traditional territory and as advocates for Indigenous postsecondary education and training as a critical enabler of sovereignty.</p> <p>Leveraging win-win partnership with industry and the non-profit sector:</p> <p>By building and strengthening equitable hiring and employment practices, businesses are positioned to address ongoing skills shortages through expansion</p>



	<p>of opportunity for the young and growing population of Indigenous postsecondary graduates.</p> <p>With their standing as both employers of Indigenous graduates and grant-making organizations for Indigenous postsecondary education and training, the corporate and non-profit sector have central roles to play as advocates with government, highlighting the role that increased investment in Indigenous postsecondary education and training can have in addressing skills shortages, driving economic growth, and tackling global challenges including climate change.</p> <p>Continuing the wider Reconciliation journey:</p> <p>Indigenous postsecondary education and training is rooted within the broader context of the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Peoples' relationships with Canada. For Indigenous postsecondary education and training to flourish, progress must continue to be made across multiple domains affecting individual and collective wellbeing. This includes but is not limited to support for children and families, food security, equitably funded and culturally grounded K-12 education, language revitalization supports, and land.</p>
<p>Strengthen relationships and networks for long-term systemic change.</p>	<p>Continuing collaboration beyond #NIES2023 through a pan-Turtle Island postsecondary network:</p> <p>The relationships and exchange of ideas that began at #NIES2023 could play a longer-term role in contributing to systemic change. Developing a virtual sharing circle could improve collaboration between mainstream institutions and Indigenous Institutes, industry, government, and non-profit organizations on a national and regional scale. This could involve ways for people to connect who have specific roles and shared interests, such as curriculum development, student service delivery, or advocacy. It could also include student organizations and potentially, in-person regional events in between future national symposiums.</p>



Appendix A: List of concurrent session presenters

Stream	Presenters
Accessibility: Recruitment, Retention, and Success of Indigenous Learners	<p>Saskatchewan Polytechnic Jen Pritchard, Academic Chair – Literacy & Adult Education Programs Brandi Kohl, Indigenous Students’ Centre Coordinator.</p> <p>Bow Valley College Wendelin Mistaken Chief, Indigenous Partnerships Officer April Bellegrade, Indigenous Student Recruitment Specialist</p> <p>Thompson Rivers University Chuying Jiao, Knowledge Makers Learning Strategist</p> <p>Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies Adrienne Durocher, Director of Early Learning Education</p> <p>Six Nations Polytechnic Lisa Dietrich, Unit Manager -Centre for Teaching and Learning Amber Skye, Unit Manager – Health Services</p> <p>Oshki-Pimache-O-Win: The Wenjack Education Institute Kelly Fossum, College of Access Coordinator Pimache-O-Win Coordinator</p> <p>Anishnabek Educational Institute Meghan Stevens, Student Wellness Coordinator</p> <p>Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute Kelly Dejong, Academic Program Coordinator</p> <p>Portage College Robin Tizzard, Dean Patricia Flatla, Curriculum Lead Coordinator EA/ELCC Nadia Abougoush, Program Coordinator</p> <p>Red Deer College Polytechnic Lloyd Desjarlais, Dean of Indigenous Initiatives Patricia Marshall, Indigenous Learning Designer</p>



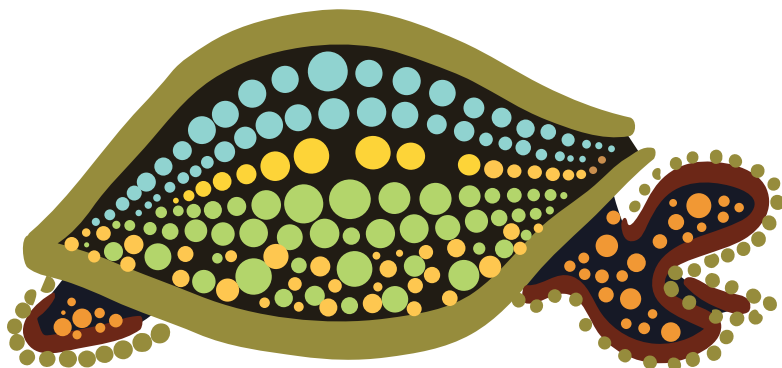
	<p>Northern Lakes College Jasmine Light, Chair, Business Programs & Regional Stewardship Angie White, Chair, Trades and Resource Technology</p>
<p>Braiding Indigenous Knowledge to Attain Climate Resilience</p>	<p>John Abbott College Kim Tekakwitha Martin, Rn, BSN Dean of Indigenous Education, Transition Programs and Criminology Intervention, Chris Levesque, PhD Faculty, Biology Department</p> <p>Fleming College Elizabeth Stone, Vice President Indigenous Knowledge & Relations Brett Goodwin, Executive Vice President, Academic and Applied Research & Innovation</p> <p>Humber College Lindsay Walker, Director Sustainability Marrissa Groulx, Indigenous Student Success Coordinator – Indigenous Education & Engagement</p> <p>Suncrest College Kami DePape, Vice President, External Relations, International & Research</p> <p>Red River College Polytechnic Ginger Arnold, Instructor</p> <p>IFA – Indigenous Friends Sarah Emily Cayetuna, Research Manager, and Tsista Kennedy, Illustrator and Artist</p>
<p>Empowering the Next Seven Generations</p>	<p>SIIT Marlee Proulx, Manager, Wellness and Community Development</p> <p>Langara College Jill Goldberg, Instructor</p> <p>Assiniboine College Kris Desjarlais, Director of Indigenous Education Michael Cameron, Dean of Community Development Lorraine Johnson, Chair of Contract Training</p>



<p>Strengthening Governance and Leadership</p>	<p>Thompson Rivers University (TRU) Mukwa Musayette Shelly Johnson, Canada Research Chair in Indigenizing Higher Education & Associate Professor at TRU</p> <p>Red Deer Polytechnic Katelyn Ruiz, Planning and Reporting Specialist</p> <p>Cégep de l’Abitibi-Témiscamingue Christine Desrosiers, Indigenous Program Development Pedagogical Advisor</p> <p>Collège d’Alma Dominic Simard, Training advisor Gilbert Cyr, Success coordinator, Listuguj Mi’gmaq Development Center</p> <p>Mohawk College Amanda White – Acting Director, Centre of Indigenous Relations, Knowledge, & Learning Ela Smith – Professor, Teaching and Learning Consultant - Indigenous Education Amanda Aitchison – Acting Manager, Indigenous Student Services</p> <p>Niagara College Leah Hogan, Ass. Director – Indigenous Education Karl Dockstader, Cultural Consultant – Indigenous Education Aria D’Ailmonte, Special Event Coordinator – Indigenous Education Maxine Semple, Associate Director – Cultural and Global Engagement Bow Valley College Jamie Fidler, Learning Design Specialist</p>
<p>Indigenous Languages and Indigenous Teacher Training</p>	<p>Dumont Institute David Morin, Curriculum Developer</p> <p>SUNTEP representatives Russell Fayant, SUNTEP Regina Beige Unger, SUNTEP Prince Albert</p> <p>Kenjgewin Teg Debbie Debassaige, Dean, Post Secondary Education & Training</p> <p>Queen’s University Lauren Smart-Lampl, Indigenous Teacher Education Program Coordinator</p>



	<p>Georgian College Michelle O'Brien, Coordinator, Indigenous Studies Programs Angeline King, Faculty</p> <p>Suncrest College Elaine Hulse Christina Oleynik Shayla Peleshytyk</p>
<p>Indigenous Focus Applied Research</p>	<p>Cégep Marie-Victorin Jeffrey Gladu, Formateur en relation d'aide Équipe Grand Nord</p> <p>Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) Jeremy Wakaruk, Aboriginal Project Coordinator</p> <p>Canadore College Jesse Russell, Project Leader, Sustainable Development Carly Renaud, Manager of Research and Development, First People's Centre</p> <p>Thompson Rivers University Ashley Broadfoot, Indigenous Educator & Assessor</p>





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