

GLOBAL EXCHANGE

INDIGI-X

FOR INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONALS

FINAL REPORT

MAY 2023



CANADA, AOTEAROA NEW
ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA

HIGHLIGHTS

23

Indigenous Changemakers

15

Discrete recommendations presented for the consideration of governments in Canada, Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia

6

Week Program

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FORWARD

And just like that, another cohort of incredible Indigenous leaders have proven that international collaboration is simply - TRANSFORMATIONAL.

This virtual exchange has fostered friendships, international travel, professional relocation, job offers, and international assignments. We have further strengthened our global community of Changemakers who continue to do the hard work to reclaim our traditional languages, governance systems, and food sources.

In the brief six weeks the fourth cohort spent together, I personally gained many new perspectives. From the fact that we are all, in fact, DREAMWEAVERS; the incredible potential of hosting culturally safe, in-person conferences for Indigenous leaders to collaborate; what the First Peoples of what is now known as Canada, Australia and New Zealand continue to fight for the right to self-determination; and the importance of reflection on the GIFTS left for us by our ancestors... I continue to be inspired by the outcome of Indigenous minds connecting globally.

Kinanâskomitin to Knowledge-Keeper Bob Silverthorne for both your enthusiastic counsel and holding a safe space for us all to connect. And Uncle Ray Minnicon for bringing your prayer and energy to the cohort, The declaration you provided during our kick-off meeting was so powerful. We love you.

Last but not least, kinanâskomitin Ken Letendre for your generosity in creating the iconography for this cohort and allowing us to feature two pieces of your transformational artwork in this report.

There are so many more exciting things to come later this year... so stay tuned. Our incredibly vibrant network of Indigenous Changemakers from around the world are just getting warmed up!

Hiy hiy,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Raylene Whitford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the width of the name.

Director, INDIGI-X



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the 15 recommendations put forward by our fourth cohort.

To learn more about the delegates who have authored this report, refer to our Welcome Handbook available at: www.INDIGI-X.com/alumni

Navigating by the Stars: Dream Walking to Dream Weaving

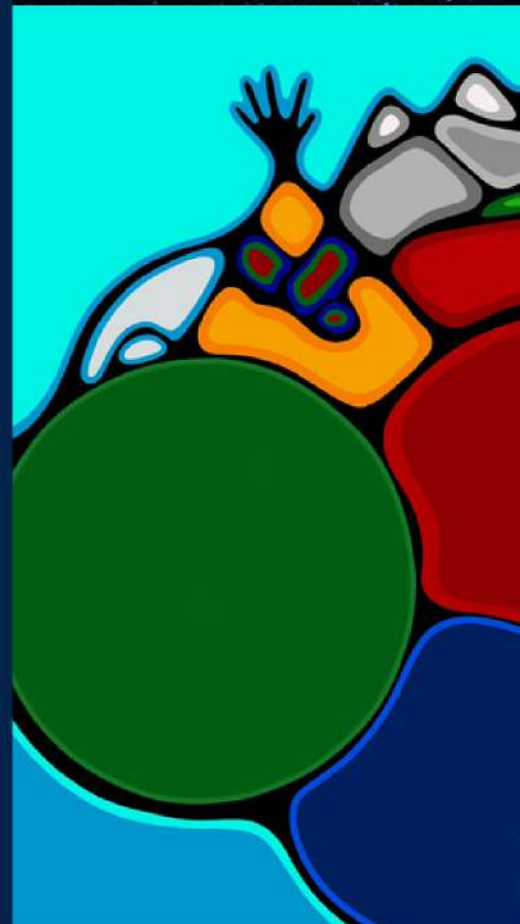
1. Connect the many **localized, place-based, pre-existing** programs/initiatives to a global platform to:
 - **Share, learn** and **grow**
 - Harness Indigenous **knowledge, thinking,** and **ways of being** in professional contexts

Setting a **dream space** where Indigenous

2. professionals can continually walk alongside each other. A place to dream, work, share and grow from our learnings. A place for **ongoing engagement of changemakers.** While Indigenous professionals may weave in different ways, collectively there is an opportunity for Indigenous people to enable and **celebrate the richness that results from what is made together.**

INDIGI-NEXT: In-person Global Summits

3. Federal governments to support INDIGI-X to **pilot in-person conferences** branded as "INDIGI-Next." INDIGI-Next conferences will take place over **three** years, beginning in **Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada,** and ending in **Australia.** The primary audience will be INDIGI-X alumnus, Elders, Youth, and the Public and Private sector.
- 4 **Event themes will be Indigenous driven** and not public or private sector driven. **Focussed on collaboration between the three countries,** conferences will be outcome-driven, producing summary reports and implementation pathways for ideas and solutions to be put into action.



Three Lands & Four Oceans

5. Support establishing an **international collaborative** working group of Indigenous peoples from the three lands to develop a voice for policy and advocacy at the **governance level that speaks across the three lands with a collective voice of solidarity.**
6. Support the establishment of a **funded independent** Indigenous health authority across the three lands to **advocate and promote Indigenous health and healing aspirations.**
7. Support the establishment of an **Indigenous voice** across the three lands to advocate and promote support for **Indigenous enterprises, entrepreneurs, and economic development initiatives** that support nation-building activities.
8. Support establishing an **Indigenous voice** for **traditional ecological knowledge** at the governance level across the three lands.
9. Support the establishment of an Indigenous **youth advisory** council to discuss these seven campfires and develop a voice for youth.
10. Support the establishment of an **Indigenous Language Commission** Agency in all three lands.



A GIFT

11. Indigenous people must continue to **seek out Elder teachings** and guidance, learn our languages that were taken from us, make ceremonies a balancing and healing occurrence in our lives, sing the sacred songs, drum the drums of mother earth, and reclaim our rights to living and existing as proud Indigenous people.
12. Indigenous peoples use Kira (Fire) as a spiritual and practical tool. The **principles carried by the Kira should be upheld and respected by governments.**
13. **Federal policies should be focused on leveling the playing field**, ensuring Indigenous peoples have what is needed to revitalize Indigenous economies in a way that upholds Indigenous self-determination.
14. Finance, encourage, and support the creation of opportunities to **build connections with our own cultures and other Indigenous cultures worldwide**, including international events for Indigenous Rangatahi and Elders to connect, learn, and share knowledge and resources.
15. Invest in community vision to **build spaces and places to harvest the gifts that create innovation** while ensuring financial support for the core foundation.

GLOSSARY

A glossary of some Te Reo Māori terms used in this report. Definitions from the Te Aka Māori Dictionary (maoridictionary.co.nz)

Te Reo	Noun	Verb
Aotearoa	New Zealand	-
Karakia	Prayer, Blessing	To pray
Mana	Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma; a supernatural force in a person, place or object.	To be legal, effectual, binding, authoritative, valid
Mana whenua	Territorial rights, power from the land, authority over land or territory, jurisdiction over land or territory.	-
Rangatahi	Younger generation, youth	To be young
Tangata whenua	Indigenous people, people born of the land, local people, hosts	-
Tikanga	Correct procedure, law, protocols developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context	-
Whakapapa:	Genealogy	To connect genealogically



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GROUP 1

NAVIGATING BY THE STARS: DREAM WALKING TO DREAM WEAVING

A Global
Indigenous Exchange
for emerging and experienced
professionals

TERMS

Dream Walkers

Noun. Individuals (of any age, status, and gender) who aspire and are walking on a journey of conceiving possibilities and ideas.

Verb. To dream early in a journey.

Dream Weavers

Noun. Individuals (of any age, status, and gender) working with others to believe and achieve, contribute, and add value to their communities. These individuals are already leading the way in their chosen professions.

Verb. To weave dreams connecting others.

Dream Spaces

Noun. The marrying of two worlds – an Indigenous way of being and thinking with the post-colonial world's expectations.

Verb. To find the grey space between.

Tira

Noun. A group of global travellers navigating together.

Verb. To globally travel and navigate together.

INTRODUCTION

"Navigating by the stars: Dream Walking to Dream Weaving," highlights the need for a Global Indigenous Exchange for emerging and experienced professionals. Dream Walkers, individuals who aspire and are walking on a journey of conceiving possibilities and ideas, will engage with Dream Weavers, who are working with others to believe and achieve, to grow with each other as contributors.

Ancient cultural practices still exist with continuity ensured by using and applying Indigenous knowledge, ways of thinking, and ways of being. Old voices and worn hands have delivered many learnings and touched our hearts and minds to guide, motivate or challenge our efforts to integrate those learnings into our current needs.

Collectively, we acknowledge we are connected by the waterways, but to survive and thrive, we must be lifted and guided by the stars. An elevation that we also share. A perspective that provides individuals with offerings of learnings and collaboration.

PURPOSE, VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Indigenous people have always been wayfinders, explorers, and expert navigators, guiding our clans and tribes nomadically across lands, through the bush, and across oceans. In today's modern world, our people must navigate by the stars through the complexities of post-colonial systems as part of our journey to reclaim traditional ways of knowing and being. We can do this by developing a **Global Indigenous Exchange to support and encourage Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and thinking through Indigenous mentorship, collaboration, and relationship-building**, with the following objectives:

- 1 Weave together **mentorship, collaboration, and relationship-building** for emerging and experienced professionals.
- 2 Enable participants to **harmonize** their Indigenous knowledges, ways of thinking, and being to their professions through a blended (virtual and physical) exchange.
- 3 Amplify the capacity of participants to be **active, sustainable** and **trusted** contributors.
- 4 Participants **confidently develop their self-understanding** (identity, place, purpose, and capacity).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Connect the many **localized, place-based, pre-existing** programs/initiatives to a global platform to:

- **Share, learn** and **grow**
- Harness Indigenous **knowledge, thinking,** and **ways of being** in professional contexts

2 Setting a **dream space** where Indigenous professionals can continually walk alongside each other. A place to dream, work, share and grow from our learnings. A place for **ongoing engagement of Changemakers.** While Indigenous professionals may weave in different ways, collectively there is an opportunity for Indigenous people to enable and **celebrate the richness that results from what is made together.**



PROPOSAL

The benefits of global collaboration, coaching, and mentoring through a blended (in-person and virtual) approach build upon the current opportunities that exist within localized, place-based contexts. Here are examples of approaches from Aotearoa, Australia, and Kanata, which have inspired the Globalized Indigenous Exchange:

- Ngā Aho (Aotearoa)
- Global Internship Conference aka GIC (Aotearoa)
- Deadly Inspiring Youth Doing Good (Australia)
- Mūrā (Australia)
- Indspirè (Kanata)

Globally, INDIGI-X has set the standard for collaboration amongst Indigenous people. While INDIGI-X provides an incredible platform to initiate connections and collaborate on a short project, a need for ongoing access to coaching, mentoring, and support by like-minded professionals is necessary. Many Dream Weavers are currently shape-shifting and navigating post-colonial spaces in isolation rather than collaborating, learning, and growing from commonalities and similar experiences. A further commitment to building a growing base of Dream Weavers is needed, starting with Dream Walkers who may be early in their journey and not ready for an engagement such as Indigi-X.

Moving beyond a Westernized approach, where mentors/mentees are identified through a hierarchical relationship of age, status, and sometimes gender, a **Global Indigenous Exchange** reawakens ancient wisdom of initiations, circles, reciprocity, and the interconnectedness of systems. Indigenous people have different entry points of cultural confidence and competence but all value and require ongoing learning from each other to survive and thrive in the contemporary landscape. The **Global Indigenous Exchange** will provide this opportunity.

The Global Indigenous Exchange would:

- Provide a safe, cultural space where Indigenous professionals bring their 'whole self.'
- Remove cultural load in a harmonized global Dream Space.
- Utilize and embrace Indigenous knowledge, thinking, and ways of being as an integral addition to professional industries.
- Provide space and opportunity for all like-minded Indigenous industry professionals to engage.
- Transition through the exchange as an active, sustainable contributor. A way to ensure the continuation of the oldest living civilizations.
- Celebrate an integrated systems approach.
- Cater for various entry points and engagement modes for participants to connect through the exchange.
- Commitment to a holistic view of self-understanding (and overall well-being) to grow strong, resilient Indigenous Professionals.

What we propose



1 DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Stage 1 Purpose:
Expose participants to industry professionals to broaden horizons and encourage youth to be aspirational professionally within global Indigenous stage.



2 VIRTUAL CO-HORTS

Stage 2 Purpose:
Develop sustainable relationships with like-minded participants.



3 IN-PERSON CO-HORTS

Stage 3 Purpose:
Build Capacity to move from motivation towards contribution and further support participants to know their place, purpose and capacity to add value to local, national and international Indigenous communities



4 1:1 ENGAGEMENT

Stage 4 Purpose:
Opportunity to engage and work collaboratively between participants.

Activities:

- Participants will interact with the website/app to share their stories. Illustrated through storytelling.
- Provide a non-confronting form of initial engagement. Participants have the option to engage further beyond 'database' of Indigenous Professionals.
- Acknowledges various points of entry into cultural and professional journeys.

Activities:

- Determine needs of participants
- Discuss the passions and expertise of participants.
- Build capacity within industries to contribute back to local communities.

Activities:

- Opportunity to connect in-person with like-minded individuals.
- Experiencing, sharing and celebrating First Nations Knowledges, ways of thinking and being.
- The format would be a Global Symposium (or even a Pow Wow.)

Activities:

- Participants can engage with other members on a 1:1 basis based on mutual interests.
- Produce an Alumni of Indigenous Professionals committed to global exchange and collaboration.

PROPOSAL (CONT.)

There has been a struggle to be seen and represented as Indigenous people in professional rôles within a Westernized organization. Current shifts in embracing Indigenous views is placing Indigenous professionals at the epicentre. It is integral to solidify this shift for the betterment of humanity as Indigenous people hold the knowledge to keep our planet and our future safe.

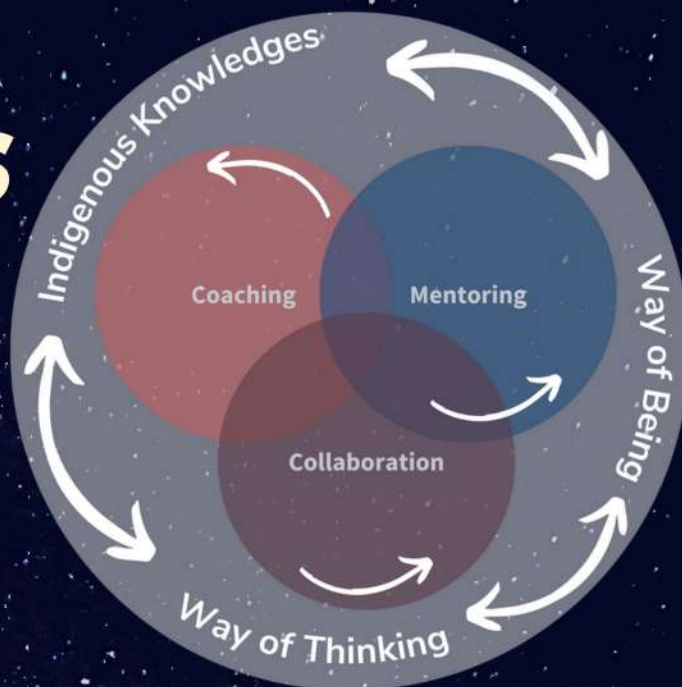
To lead and learn in our chosen professions, supported by other Indigenous people in similarly identified professions, ensures we continually grow ourselves and those around us and show up as Indigenous global industry professionals. This will model to others that Indigenous professionals can come together to dream and learn from each other while maintaining a strong, resilient view of self.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

To ensure the success of a Global Indigenous Exchange while creating a model for sustainable success, four key stages have been proposed:

- **Stage 1: Expose** participants to industry professionals to broaden horizons and encourage participants to be aspirational professionally on a global level. During this stage, the goal is to develop a bank of global Indigenous professionals that articulate their journey towards Dream Weaving.
- **Stage 2: Develop** sustainable relationships with like-minded participants. Building upon the initial stage, the **Global Indigenous Exchange** begins with virtual connections with the intention of creating like-minded pairings.
- **Stage 3: Build capacity** to move from motivational connections towards contribution through in-person, face-to-face connections. Through a symposium, further support would also be provided to participants to know their identity, place, purpose, and capacity and given chance to add value to local, national, and international Indigenous communities.
- **Stage 4: Ongoing opportunity** to engage and work collaboratively between participants. This stage looks to amplify connections in professional exchanges through professional organizations as well as the development of Alumni to continue to build a bank of Dream Weavers.

RESOURCES REQUIRED (CONT.)



The key purpose is to recognize there are various types of engagement that support the journey that each individual is on - culturally and professionally - and there are a variety of ways of growing, learning and navigating for our Dream Walkers and Dream Weavers. To ensure successful engagement for Dream Walkers to Dream Weavers, the following is needed:

1 Funding:

- To compensate a team for making this **Global Indigenous Exchange**.
- To provide an in-depth, documented strategy to ensure the sustained success of the initiative.
- To employ expertise to produce Phase 1: Interactive Map and associated resources.
- Philanthropy support for delivery of activities for remaining phases.

2 Support to create a Tira:

- Two people from each country (New Zealand, Australia, Canada).
- One governmental representative per country.
- One person from an Indigi-X Cohort.
- Subject Matter Experts on an ad-hoc basis.

CONCLUSION

The creation of a Global Indigenous Exchange, and a strong support network for all participants from Dream Walkers to Dream Weavers, will provide opportunities for individuals to be embedded within each other's organizations and allow for knowledge transfer, mentoring, and shared learnings. Through this intentional, regular connection all participants will feel safe to dream and weave together dreams of their own.

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GROUP 2

INDIGI-NEXT: IN-PERSON GLOBAL SUMMITS

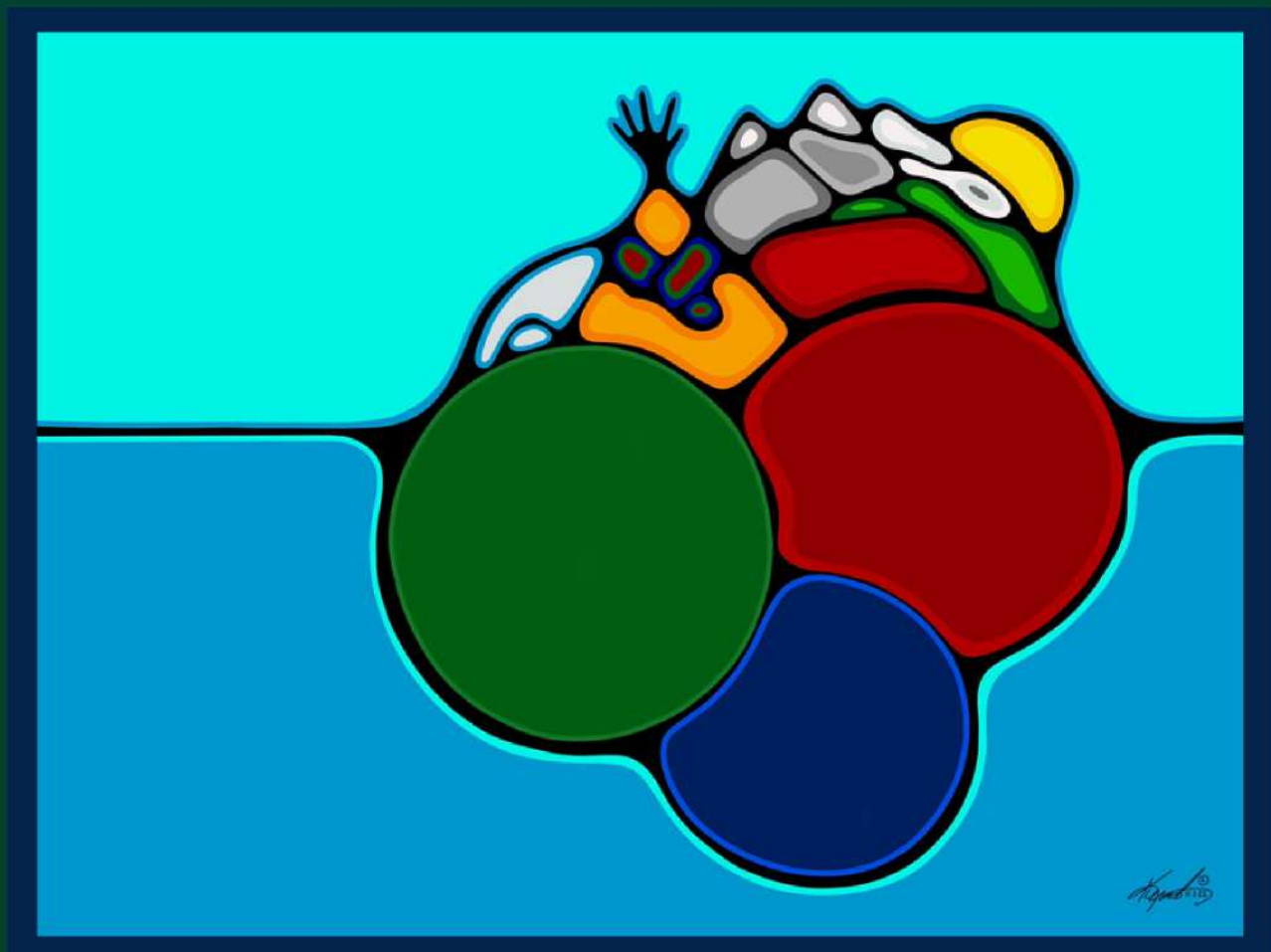
Connected through the
strength of our lands and
ancestors.

Combining powers for change
and accelerating action
through collaboration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Māori and Traditional Owners of what is now known as Australia as the lands we hail from.

We pay respect to our ancestors, whose strength and wisdom guide us, and to our natural environment for sustaining life and spirit on earth. We would like to acknowledge INDIGI-X organisers for this opportunity. To our kaumatua, Elders and alumni, immense thanks for your support and inspiration for paving the way for us.



Original artwork gifted to the INDIGI-X program by alumni Ken Letandre

BACKGROUND

INDIGI-X brings Indigenous professionals virtually from Australia, Canada, and Aotearoa New Zealand for six weeks. Throughout these weeks, we have learned about each other's cultures, the challenges we face, and the diverse solutions and strengths our communities provide. Frankly, six weeks is not enough to harness participants' brilliance and deliver tangible outcomes. We want to take this to the next step by creating a five-day face-to-face summit run by Indigenous people for Indigenous people.

This summit will combine the superpowers of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples across Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, and Canada with building connections and accelerating action. This report will outline why we need this summit, how we envision an in-person summit working, and recommendations for the next steps.

For this proposal, the term Indigenous will be used interchangeably with First Nation (the inclusive term for Māori), Métis, and Inuit. We also acknowledge in some parts of Australia, the term Indigenous can be considered offensive. That is, it has scientific connotations which have been used historically to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of the 'flora/fauna' rather than the human population of Australia.



BUSINESS CASE: INDIGI-X IN-PERSON GLOBAL SUMMIT

Our challenges are not unique. Through closer working relationships, lesson learning, joint funding, and mutual inspiration, INDIGI-Next can provide the platform for Indigenous to accelerate action and work together, building feasible and sustainable solutions for complex problems that we, as Indigenous people, are working to overcome.

While many great examples of Indigenous-led events focus on many important issues and challenges, INDIGI-X in-person summits are built on the foundation of theme/topic fluidity, innovation, and group collectivism to co-create topics and are solutions based. INDIGI-Next themes will honor what INDIGI-X was built on, discussing organic issues close to us that impact our families, communities, and world. Government buy-in and funding will be in place before each summit to support projects and ideas arising from discussions and business incubation side events to carry them through to action.

A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Our research found that many forums already bring together Māori, First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. We also found that there are many ways that these conferences could be enhanced to create a by-Indigenous, for-Indigenous summit, including:

- Dedicated time at the beginning of the summit to **connect** or **whakawhanaungatanga** with other attendees. This time will allow attendees to build relationships and understand each other's context before moving into discussions.
- A **focus on action** by ensuring that each session allows input from attendees, including business accelerators and solution exploration supported by innovation coaches.
- **A report at the end** of the conference highlights what was discussed and potential solutions. Implementation pathways. Including awarding funding and development support to promising solutions emerging from accelerator events.
- Space for the Indigenous people of the host country to set the form they want to conduct the conference to **align with their cultural values**. For example, following local tikanga in Aotearoa New Zealand.



EVENT GOVERNANCE, FUNDING AND LOGISTICS:

Rotating Country Hosts:

Each country will have the opportunity to host an international event, starting in Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, and ending in Australia.



Schedule:

Each host country will host an event for five days, with day one dedicated to networking and interacting with event hosts, program alums, elders, and youth. Each day will consist of fluid learning sessions, group dialogue, panels, digital public engagement platforms, and innovation and solutions break-out sessions. Upon the end of the event, a ticketed gala will be hosted, which the public and private sector will be invited to attend.



Governance:

Each INDIGI-Next event would be organized by an INDIGI-X delegate governing committee with representatives from each country.

CONTINUED...

Funding:

We recommend that Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and Canada's public and private sector entities provide coordinated support and resources. This could align with their commitments toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and private sector Reconciliation Actions Plans (if applicable), ESG and Corporate Responsibility commitments.

To ensure the summit is successful, we propose two phases of funding: seed funding and longer-term sustainable funding.

Seed funding will cover the first rotations of summits and come from the federal governments through Indigenous agencies and international cooperation agreements.

Governments will commit to supporting existing Memorandum of Understanding arrangements, i.e. the Indigenous Collaboration Agreement that was signed between the federal governments of Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand in 2022. INDIGI-X will seek similar commitment from Australia's federal Minister for Indigenous Australians

Longer-term funding will come from corporate sponsorship, ticket sales, and donations. Formal sponsorship for successful accelerator ideas will be sought before the event's commencement.

We also envision selling authentic arts and goods from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit businesses at the summit to raise awareness of these businesses and to supplement funding sources.

CONTINUED...

Attendance:

The summit discussions are intended for Indigenous people to share, learn, and develop solutions and are therefore open to any Indigenous person who feels they can contribute and participate towards building solutions.

Public and private sector sponsors are welcome at networking events and the closing gala but not at the discussion sessions. This space is saved for information, knowledge-sharing, and dialogue.

A report will be produced and shared with the public and private sector contributors to aid them in their work within their sector.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** We recommend that the **Canadian, Australian and New Zealand federal governments financially support** the pilot of an in-person conference branded as **“INDIGI-Next.”** INDIGI-Next conferences will take place over three years, beginning in Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, and ending in Australia. The primary audience will be INDIGI-X alumnus, Elders, Youth, and the Public and Private sector.
- 2** **Event themes must be Indigenous-driven** and not public or private-sector driven. **Focussed on collaboration between the three countries,** conferences will be outcome-driven, producing summary reports and implementation pathways for ideas and solutions to be put into action.



Jacob Birch



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GROUP 3

THREE LANDS & FOUR OCEANS

The seven pillars of
Indigenous self-
determination

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the Indigenous peoples of three lands and four oceans – Australia, Canada, and New Zealand – self-determination is the ultimate aspiration. Achieving self-determination will be a long and complex process. Fundamental to this process is Indigenous peoples having the authority to make decisions on matters that relate to us on our lands.

As Indigenous peoples, we see all things interconnected and relational. Therefore, addressing the matter of self-determination requires holistic thinking. Using the metaphor of the Aboriginal practice of drawing in the sand to convey complex ideas, the authors of this brief drew seven campfires in the sand –

1 Culture, heritage & language

2 Health

3 Youth

4 Housing

5 Capital access and economic development

6 Climate change, land & resources

7 Governance – that will lead us to our big camp: self-determination



From sitting around these campfires, we propose one clear recommendation:

Establish an international collaborative group of Indigenous peoples from the three lands to continue developing policy and advocacy - and five secondary recommendations:

- **Establish an Indigenous health authority to be a voice for health and healing.**
- **Establish a voice for capital access and economic development.**
- **Establish a voice for traditional ecological knowledge.**
- **Establish a voice for youth.**
- **Establish an Indigenous language commission agency.**



PURPOSE

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007 and supported by 143 Member States. However, four Member States voted against UNDRIP, including Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. While these three nations now support UNDRIP, it provides a clear example of the shared colonial history and challenges faced by Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, First Nations, Métis, Inuk, and Māori peoples on the path to self-determination.

Self-determination and self-governance are fundamental Human Rights for Indigenous people under Articles 3 and 4 of UNDRIP. However, Indigenous peoples have long been treated paternalistically by government and non-government organizations and have suffered under assimilationist strategies. This has negatively impacted the ability of Indigenous peoples to exert self-governance.

Under this system, Indigenous peoples suffer disproportionately. Compared to non-Indigenous people, Indigenous peoples have poorer health, higher rates of incarceration and violence, less meaningful education and employment outcomes, less secure housing and home ownership, and less inherited wealth and access to capital. Despite these struggles, Indigenous peoples grapple with maintaining and reclaiming culture, language, and heritage while fighting for ancestral homelands and sitting on the frontlines to protect the planet for future generations.



CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The authors of this brief have taken strengths- and opportunities-based approaches to analyzing the seven campfires that have informed the recommendations of this brief.

1 Culture, Heritage, and Language

Maintaining culture, heritage, and language (culture) gives Indigenous peoples identity, inner strength, and purpose. Indigenous culture is a celebration of the diversity of the human family and offers knowledge and perspectives that enrich all people's lives. Culture connects us physically and spiritually to our lands and oceans. Our place-based identities allow for place-based opportunities and solutions that are strengths-oriented and reflective of the local context.

2 Health

Indigenous peoples were healthy and thriving before colonization. Established models of healthcare existed before colonization, and the frameworks still exist in the three Lands. Indigenous peoples take a holistic approach to health care, modeling intergenerational, community-informed outcomes that enhance internal strength and promote self-determination.

3 Youth

Young people want to be in environments that create a sense of personal and collective connection, a place where they belong. They are looking for environments that encourage self-efficacy and where they are safe and free from judgment and stigma. Our youth are energetic, optimistic, educated, passionate, and future leaders.

4 Housing

When Indigenous peoples have housing security, the social impact extends to the broader community. This is because one secure household will become a safe space and refuge for relatives and extended family who may be transient, displaced, or at risk of domestic violence, etc. Creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to build on their ancestral lands will enhance their internal strength and spirit.

5 Capital Access and Economic Development

The social impact per dollar is much higher for Indigenous businesses compared to mainstream businesses. This is because Indigenous peoples have an entrepreneurial spirit, usually starting enterprises to address a gap within their community or to provide opportunities for their community.

6 Climate Change, Land & Resources

We have co-evolved with our landscapes and survived extreme climatic events, including ice ages. There is considerable strength in engaging this knowledge to adapt, survive, thrive, and even prevent the repeating of climatic upheaval. We have an intergenerational perspective and bring food, fibre, and medicine into abundance through our land management practices. However, our knowledge comes with values that must be understood and embraced.

7 Governance

Well-established systems of governance existed for millennia in all three lands. Indigenous governance, by our values, will benefit all peoples. This is because we inherently make decisions for future generations and try to bring all people into our circle of relationality. We do not see ourselves as separate from society, as living in isolation, but as an integral part.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Support establishing an **international collaborative** working group of Indigenous peoples from the three lands to develop a voice for policy and advocacy at the governance level that speaks across the three lands with a collective voice of solidarity.

2 Support the establishment of a **funded independent** Indigenous health authority across the three lands to advocate and promote Indigenous health and healing aspirations.

This recommendation supports the Housing, Health, and Youth campfires. For example, an Indigenous working group would look at Indigenous youth in detention facilities and say these youth need to be healed, not locked away.

3 Support the establishment of an **Indigenous voice** across the three lands to advocate and promote support for **Indigenous enterprises, entrepreneurs,** and **economic development** initiatives that support nation-building activities.

This recommendation supports the Governance and Capital access campfires. For example, make capital available and provide government support for sustainable projects, such as sustainable timber harvesting industries that remove invasive species.

CONT...

- 4 Support establishing an Indigenous voice for **traditional ecological knowledge** at the governance level across the three lands.

This recommendation supports Climate change and Culture campfires. For example, to better understand and prepare for extreme changes, we can learn from one another how to manage our environment.

- 5 Support the establishment of an Indigenous **youth advisory** council to discuss these seven campfires and develop a voice for youth.

This recommendation supports all seven campfires. Youth are looking for opportunities to be productive citizens in their communities and contribute their ideas. They want to be active and engaged with learning & sharing culture, heritage, and language with each other.

- 6 Support the establishment of an **Indigenous Language Commission** Agency in all three lands.

This recommendation supports the Language, culture & heritage campfire. For example, the agency would be responsible for Indigenous language strategy and revitalization.



Deborah Green



Karen Restoule



Lanita Ririnui



Jerome Tairi



Jaynaya Winmar

GROUP 4

A GIFT

Connected through the strength of our lands and ancestors. Combining powers for change and accelerating action through collaboration.

GREATER INDIGENOUS FUTURE THOUGHTS

The world is in recovery and response from the vast, long-lasting historical impact of the global colonization of Indigenous Peoples. The intergenerational effects on the generations have been extensive. We are now walking a path of healing and rebuilding our Nations.

Bringing inspirational and symbolic gifts to share, we strive to connect our dreams, leaders, and gifts for the next generations' benefit as descendants of greats and ancestors of the potentially even greater.

We acknowledge that every one of us has something to give, something to contribute, something that benefits those beyond us, and in paddling our waka together to the future.

**Connection to culture and healing is foundational to
Greater Indigenous Future Thoughts (GIFT) and
inspiration for the future.**

**In the following pages, we share some foundational
GIFTS we offer to future generations of Indigenous
leaders.**



SACRED BUNDLES

Bundles are wrapped collections of spiritually significant items and were the focus of most Indigenous spiritual ceremonies in the Plains Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Sacred bundles were given to the Blackfoot tribes by a spirit, usually encountered in dreams or visions, as a means of connection and a way to ask for help from the Creator.

The Haudenosaunee teaching is that you have gifts when you come into this world. You contribute to the collective by sharing these gifts when you grow up. We place our knowledge, faith, and legacies into bundles for future generations.

Knowledge is also symbolic in bundles such as hand drumming, singing traditional healing songs, and creating a world for the next generations that are more healed and decolonized to exist as proud Indigenous Peoples.

Before we can focus on global Indigenous concerns and advocate for change, we must lay the foundation of healing from generations of colonization, intergenerational trauma, and the legacy of residential schools. Only through our sacred teachings, our ceremonies, our languages, and our elders' knowledge can we heal. That healing comes in all forms and is known as bundles.



KIRA (FIRE)

"It is the same word used for an immediate family member. It holds power within our communities and plays a vital role not just in our survival but as an essential tool in educating and passing down stories to the next generation. This would be my gift that I would bring and share on our journey as it will bring us together, guide our paths, warm our bodies and hearts, and give us the ability to cook and purify our water. But most importantly, it will allow us to sit around and connect on our long journey of cultural healing and empowerment.

In our fire ceremony, particularly the Nunga fire ceremony, traditional fire-starting methods are sometimes used as a part of the ceremony. This is included in welcome pantry ceremonies, which we cleanse and allow good spirits and conversations to flow once we've smoked everyone. But then, as we leave, we share the same respect, culture, and beliefs. Some records go back generations if there were clans that used our ceremony types, rituals, and symbols like fire in combatting settlements, arguments, rooming feelings, bitterness, and rival groups."



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

"For centuries, Indigenous economies have centered around land and water, influencing where we lived, how we lived, and how long we stayed there.

This way of living allowed us to trade with other Nations, strengthening our local economies and establishing diplomatic relationships and strengthened alliances.

As European exploration and settlement advanced, many Indigenous Nations found their economies and ways of life disrupted. Despite this, the entrepreneurial spirit has proven to be most resilient, surviving the robust implementation of colonial policies. And giving way to innovative solutions to overcome legacy issues, social challenges, and economic restrictions.

Today, that resilience and power are felt and seen across the globe as Indigenous businesses grow at disproportionate rates, with a reported 60% growth in the past decade alone. Indigenous peoples are reshaping modern economies worldwide. The growth of these economies is rooted in a "way of life" that is unique to Indigenous peoples - balancing economic benefit with environmental sustainability.

Everyone - Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike - wants to position the next generations better economically. What differs is how we will get there, relying on our innate ability to see and understand different values and systems and how these operate in complex networks. For the next generations of Indigenous peoples, **our greatest Indigenous future thought rests within who we are, where we come from, and our way of life.** "

POI

Poipoiā te kākāno, kia puawai ki te ao. Nurture the seed, and it will blossom to the world!

"At first sight, the Poi can be described as a ball on the end of a string. For Māori, **Poi is a timeless instrument, the heartbeat of a nation, and an extension of ourselves.** While different types have different protocols, it can transcend boundaries and inspire creativity and innovation. Alone, it can move and beat. Together, they can strengthen, build, entertain, and dazzle with layered effects. Indigenous innovation is a key to global growth - if, like the Poi, it is given the essence to fly with the right knowledge and guidance.

So, how does this GIFT of Poi apply? By taking it back to the origins and understanding that like the poi, who came from the earth, so too did we, and WE ARE the seeds for the future; By our leaders investing and connecting the right knowledge, people, and relationships to nurture and grow; By our communities building spaces and places to harvest the gifts that create innovation while also looking after the core foundation.

The Trust economy is equally relevant, if not more important, than the fiscal economy right now. We are descendants of Papatūānuku, Earth mother, connected to the harakeke (flax plant) and the Poi. In this connection, we innovate magic into the space around us, reaching the heavenly Sky Father of Ranginui above."

"Ko te whakapapa te whakautu - the answers are in the ancestry."





WATER

"The water gourd is the gift I want to offer to the next generation to take forward into the future.

This hollowed-out matured fruit was provided into vessels of water for Māori in former years.

We see fresh water as a taonga that connects all life, regardless of culture, regardless of what generation you come from, and regardless of location; wherever you are, whether you're urban, rural, or living on the marae, **fresh water connects us all.**

Water. It's **powerful enough to carve through rock**, and yet it **nourishes our babies.**

It's this stuff that we need to realize the power of. "

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

"There is a **need to connect** among us. Many have felt it across generations that have carried on ahead of us and those about to face it. Through my professional engagement with over 500 young people, it is telling from their behavior what motivates them, what they're driven to do, and what they are driven to achieve. These can be seen within three distinct groups:

The first group is **reactive**, tending to be motivated by **unmet physiological, safety, belonging, and esteem needs**. There is a feeling of hopelessness and a lack of control.

The third group is **proactive** and motivated for higher achievement levels through a **growth mindset**. They see future success as their responsibility and within their control.

The middle group is **neutral**, where there is a growing concern. They lack drive and motivation. They **do not understand who they are** and have no sense of belonging."

"We must do all we can to help Indigenous youth feel confident and empowered."



WE LOOK TO THE NEXT GENERATIONS...

**As proud global Indigenous peoples, we
will carry and pass on our GIFTS to future
generations.**

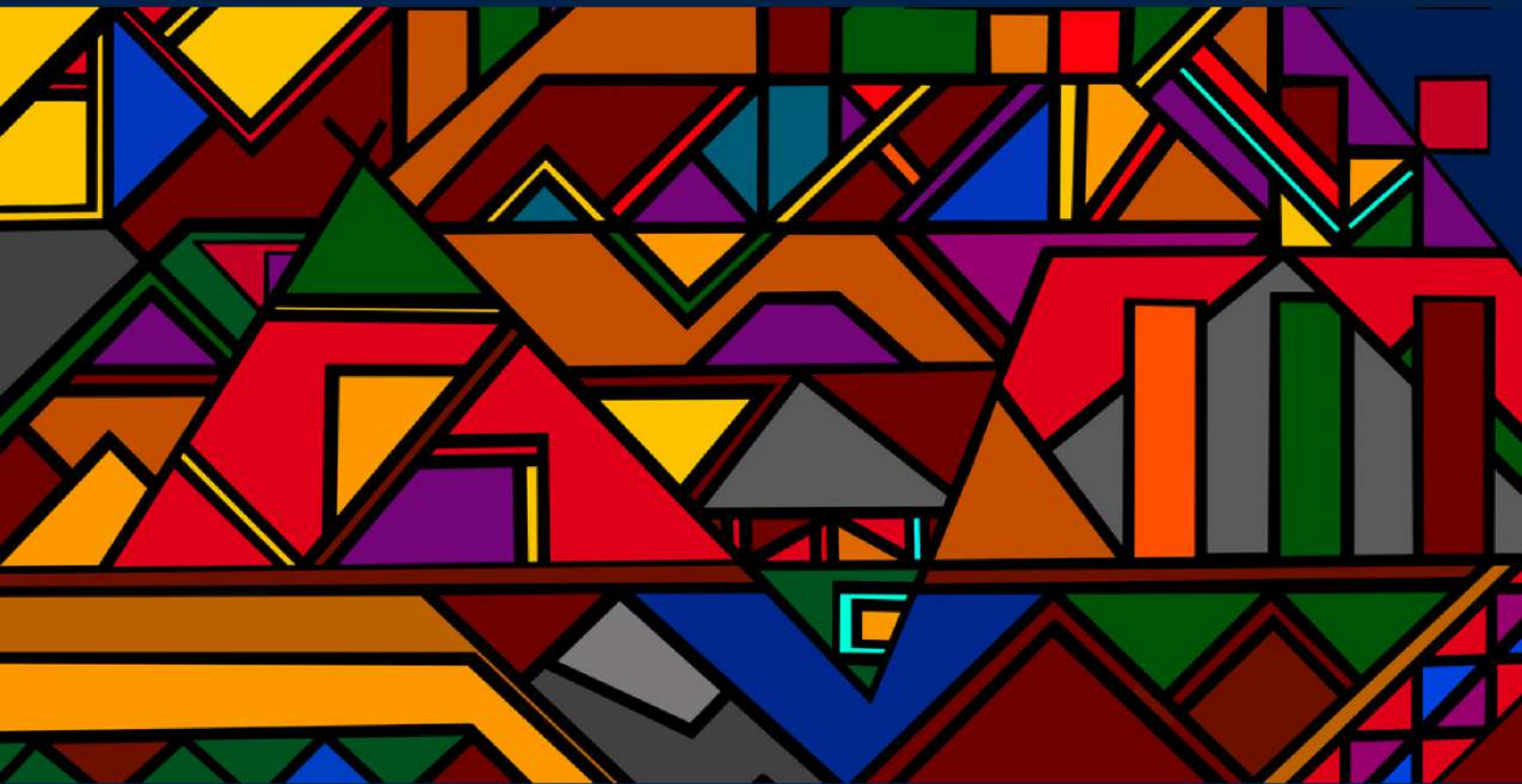
**Together, we can create a future of pride
and sustained culture, healing, and
traditions. In the spirit of reconciliation,
the following is recommended for
government action...**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Indigenous people must continue to **seek out Elder teachings** and guidance, learn our languages that were taken from us, make ceremonies a balancing and healing occurrence in our lives, sing the sacred songs, drum the drums of mother earth, and reclaim our rights to living and existing as proud Indigenous people.
- 2 Indigenous peoples use Kira (Fire) as a spiritual and practical tool. The **principles carried by the Kira should be upheld and respected by governments.**
- 3 **Federal policies should be focused on leveling the playing field,** ensuring Indigenous peoples have what is needed to revitalize Indigenous economies in a way that upholds Indigenous self-determination.
- 4 Finance, encourage, and support the creation of opportunities to **build connections with our own cultures and other Indigenous cultures worldwide,** including international events for Indigenous Rangatahi and Elders to connect, learn, and share knowledge and resources.
- 5 Invest in community vision to **build spaces and places to harvest the gifts that create innovation** while ensuring financial support for the core foundation.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR PROGRAM
AND TO APPLY TO JOIN THE NEXT COHORT
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