

ALES RESEARCH TIP SHEET #6 (revised) Indigenous Engagement June 2025



What is Indigenous-engaged research?

It is an approach to research that centers' Indigenous Peoples, knowledge systems, priorities, and sovereignty throughout all stages of the research process. The Guiding Principles for Indigenous-engaged research are a framework for conducting research that is respectful, mutually beneficial, culturally relevant, and accountable. The four Rs are **Respect**, **Reciprocity**, **Relevance**, and **Responsibility**. It usually includes:

- **Community engagement and relationship-building** before research begins.
- **Co-development of research questions and methods.** Establishing a new research framework.
- **Ongoing consultation** throughout the research process.
- **Ethical adherence** to Indigenous protocols and The [First Nations Principles of OCAP®](#) (ownership, control, access, and possession.) The principles assert that First Nations have control over data collection processes, and that they own and control how this information can be used.
- **Reporting back to the communities** and sharing findings in accessible and culturally respectful ways.

Guidelines & recommendations:

Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) 2 (2022)- Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada.

This chapter is intended to provide guidelines and 'to serve as a framework for the ethical conduct of research involving Indigenous peoples'. "Where the research is likely to affect the welfare of an Indigenous community, or communities, to which prospective participants belong, researchers shall seek engagement with the relevant community". The conditions under which engagement is required include, but are not limited to:

- *research conducted on First Nations, Inuit or Métis lands;*
- *recruitment criteria that include Indigenous identity as a factor for the entire study or for a subgroup in the study;*
- *research that seeks input from participants regarding a community's cultural heritage, artefacts, traditional knowledge or unique characteristics;*

ALES Research Team:

For more information and resources check the ALES Research webpage (intranet):

<https://intranet.ales.ualberta.ca/research/>

- *research in which Indigenous identity or membership in an Indigenous community is used as a variable for the purpose of analysis of the research data; and*
- *interpretation of research results that will refer to Indigenous communities, peoples, language, history or culture.*

NOTE: Institutions eligible to administer and receive Tri-Council research funding agree to adhere to the above policy as a condition of funding.

- Researchers planning engagement and/or collaboration with an Indigenous community or peoples, are advised to start well ahead of their application submission and become familiar with relevant and applicable customs, codes of research practices, and identify relevant representative bodies or individuals within the community. It is necessary that you obtain approval for the proposed involvement from the appropriate community representatives prior to submitting your application.

Considerations when creating new proposals:

- Planned engagement with Indigenous communities should be indicated on the New Request Form:

Does this research involve Aboriginal/Indigenous peoples,
their communities or knowledge systems?

☒ Yes ☐ No

- Consider any requirements for research ethics approval by the UofA's institutional Research Ethics Board (REB) (e.g.: social science studies) and any responsible community body recognized by the First Nations, Inuit, Métis authority. Seek out advice from the [Research Ethics Office](#) as needed.
- A data sharing, data ownership, MOU or intellectual property rights agreement may be needed, particularly when graduate students are involved or potential spin-off companies may emerge. Contact the ALES Research Team for guidance on who to contact for advice/clarification.

Support for Indigenous-engaged research grant applications

Contact: [Marek Tyler](#)
Program Officer
Indigenous Initiatives, VPRI

Support for Indigenous Researchers submitting grant applications

Contact: [Makayla LeSann](#)
Research Partner
Indigenous -Focused Research, VPRI Research Partner Network

ALES Research Team:

For more information and resources check the ALES Research webpage (intranet):
<https://intranet.ales.ualberta.ca/research/>