# Indigenous Engagement and Collaboration Agreement Template

##### **Statement of intent**

This document has two purposes:

1. To formalize the collaboration and mutual agreement between you (the applicant) and the Indigenous community partner. An Indigenous community partner refers to any Indigenous nation, community or organization involved in the proposed research
2. To provide reviewers with a clear understanding of how you plan to engage in ways that reflect ethical standards and Indigenous governance principles

All proposed research must follow the ethical principles outlined in [Chapter 9 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2](https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter9-chapitre9.html)) and any community-specific protocols and governance processes.

##### **Responsibilities of the researcher and conditions for collaboration**

The following list provides examples of common elements of respectful, reciprocal research collaborations. These may be adopted, adapted or supplemented based on the needs of the specific collaboration.

* Respect for Indigenous governance and decision-making structures, including any community-led research approval or oversight processes.
* Follow community-specific protocols, ethical guidelines and governance frameworks throughout the research process.
* Maintain transparency through regular updates and ensure that any proposed changes are discussed and approved by the community.
* Respect and uphold Indigenous data sovereignty, including community control over ownership, access and future data use.
* Respect for the intellectual property of Traditional Knowledge and cultural expressions shared through the research.
* Provide tangible benefits through capacity building, training opportunities, or resource sharing.
* Define success metrics collaboratively to ensure outcomes are meaningful and mutually beneficial.
* Acknowledge community contributions through co-authorship, shared publications or benefit-sharing, where appropriate.
* Support long-term collaboration that aligns with community-defined goals.

## Section 1: Information on the program, engagement and collaboration

To be completed by you (the applicant)

In this section, you must describe the engagement and collaboration between the research team and the Indigenous community partner involved in the research. You should explain how the partner has been, or will be, engaged in shaping the research. You must also show how the collaboration reflects ethical standards and aligns with the application review process.

You must provide evidence of meaningful consultation and collaboration. This may include meetings, workshops, formal agreements, shared decision-making processes or culturally specific protocols. If the collaboration is in its early stages, describe your plan for future engagement, including timelines, communication strategies and steps for continued involvement.

What to include:

* A brief description of how the relationship between your research team and the Indigenous community partner was initiated and developed, or, if still in its early stages, how the collaboration will be established and strengthened
* Confirmation of any co-development of research questions, research design or governance structures
* A summary of the roles and responsibilities of each party involved in the collaboration
* Any expectations regarding data management, knowledge sharing, authorship, or cultural protocols
* References to guiding principles such as OCAP® or any relevant community-specific protocols, where applicable

What not to include:

* Repetition of the project’s research objectives, methodology or scientific rationale (this belongs in the research proposal)
* Technical details, unless directly relevant to the Indigenous community partner’s role or expectations

Additional notes:

* Use clear, respectful and accessible language
* The agreement must be signed by an authorized representative of the Indigenous community partner
* Additional forms of validation may be included, such as endorsements from Elders or Knowledge Keepers, where appropriate

**Program title:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Your name (applicant):**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Affiliated institution:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Start date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**End date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

**Description of engagement and collaboration** (up to one additional page):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Disclaimer:

You may use this template during preliminary planning and partner engagement discussions. A signed agreement or formal identification of an authorized representative of the Indigenous community partner may not be available at this stage. Submission of an unsigned or partially completed agreement is acceptable if the research collaboration is still in development. You must include a clear plan for future engagement and mutual agreement**.**

## Section 2: Confirmation of engagement and collaboration

To be completed by the Indigenous community partner’s representative

By filling out this section, the authorized representative of the Indigenous community partner confirms that they have reviewed and agree to the research proposal’s goals, methods and expected impacts. This includes respect for community protocols, cultural knowledge and governance structures, and a commitment to ongoing and transparent consultation throughout the research process.

**Name of Indigenous community partner:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Primary contact:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Engagement and collaboration activities** (Tick all that apply):

Indicate the types of activities that are planned or have taken place

[ ]  Community priority

[ ]  Co-development of the research question

[ ]  Data collection by community members

[ ]  Data interpretation by community members

[ ]  Capacity building and training for community members

[ ]  Community oversight and governance

[ ]  Co-authorship and dissemination of results

[ ]  Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

[ ]  Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

**Comments (optional):**

The Indigenous community partner may provide comments in support of the proposed research, engagement and collaboration, either in the space below or as an attached document.

The Indigenous community partner may provide comments in support of the proposed research, engagement and collaboration, either in the space below or as an attached document. If a letter of support or another relevant document was prepared for a previous funding application and remains applicable, it may be submitted here.

Click or tap here to enter text.

## Section 3: Signatures

To section must be completed by you (the applicant) and the authorized representative of the Indigenous community partner.

By signing below, both you and the Indigenous community partner’s representative confirm that the engagement and responsibilities described in Sections 1 and 2 have been jointly discussed and agreed upon. This agreement reflects mutual respect, accountability and ongoing collaboration.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of applicant:** Click or tap here to enter text.**Signature, mark or acknowledgement:****Date:** Click or tap to enter a date. | **Name of Indigenous community partner’s representative:**Click or tap here to enter text.**Position or title:** Click or tap here to enter text.**Signature, mark or acknowledgement:****Date:** Click or tap to enter a date. |

Section 4: Acknowledgement by Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Steward (Optional – to be completed based on community protocols)

This agreement has been reviewed and acknowledged by an Elder, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Steward, in alignment with community protocols. This acknowledgement validates the research engagement and its alignment with community values, teachings or governance.

**Name (if appropriate and permitted):**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Role or relationship to the community:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature, mark or acknowledgement:**

**Date:** Click or tap to enter a date.

## Helpful resources and offline summaries

[**Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2 – Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada**](https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter9-chapitre9.html)

**Summary**:
Chapter 9 outlines Canada's national guidelines for conducting ethical research involving Indigenous Peoples. It emphasizes respect, collaboration, reciprocity and the right of communities to govern how research is conducted with and about them. It also reinforces the importance of recognizing Traditional Knowledge, cultural practices and self-determination throughout the research process.

[**CCI Guide for Research Involving Indigenous Peoples and Communities**](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Colleges-Colleges/Resources-Ressources/Indigenous-Autochtones_eng.asp)

**Summary**:
This guide supports respectful, community-led research with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and other Indigenous Peoples. It emphasizes early and sustained engagement, respect for self-determination, decolonization and Indigenous data sovereignty. Researchers are expected to co-develop projects with communities, honour Indigenous knowledge systems, follow ethical protocols, and ensure mutual benefit. This approach aligns with TCPS 2, Chapter 9, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and Tri-agency principles.