



Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion
Centre canadien pour la diversité et l'inclusion

 Indigenous Works

Indigenous Reconciliation

A Toolkit for Employers

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion in
partnership with Indigenous Works

October 2021

We respect the privacy of our clients and request they do the same. This document is private and confidential and not to be shared with anyone external to your organization.



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Indigenous Works and CCDI

Formed in 1998 as a recommendation in the 1996 Report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Indigenous Works' mandate is to increase Indigenous engagement in the Canadian economy. Indigenous Works is an award-winning, ISO certified, national Indigenous organization with expertise in workplace, employment, corporate-Indigenous engagement, and partnership systems.

August of 2021, The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) and Indigenous Works announced a formal partnership to bring our Employer Partners and clients an exceptional array of services to help them move toward inclusion of Indigenous peoples, and understand their role in reconciliation.

CCDI and Indigenous Works' partnership is timely given calls by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Government of Canada to renew our commitment toward reconciliation with Indigenous peoples for the betterment of Canadian society and the economy.

CCDI is honoured to be entering into this partnership with Indigenous Works as it will add value for Employer Partners and clients and help ensure we are all working toward reconciliation with our Indigenous cousins.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission



Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

1. Inform Canadians about Residential Schools and their impact.
2. Guide Canadians through a process of reconciliation.

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (including videos and reports) is now housed at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. The TRC created the Principles of Reconciliation and 94 Calls to Action to support the reconciliation process.

Principles of Reconciliation

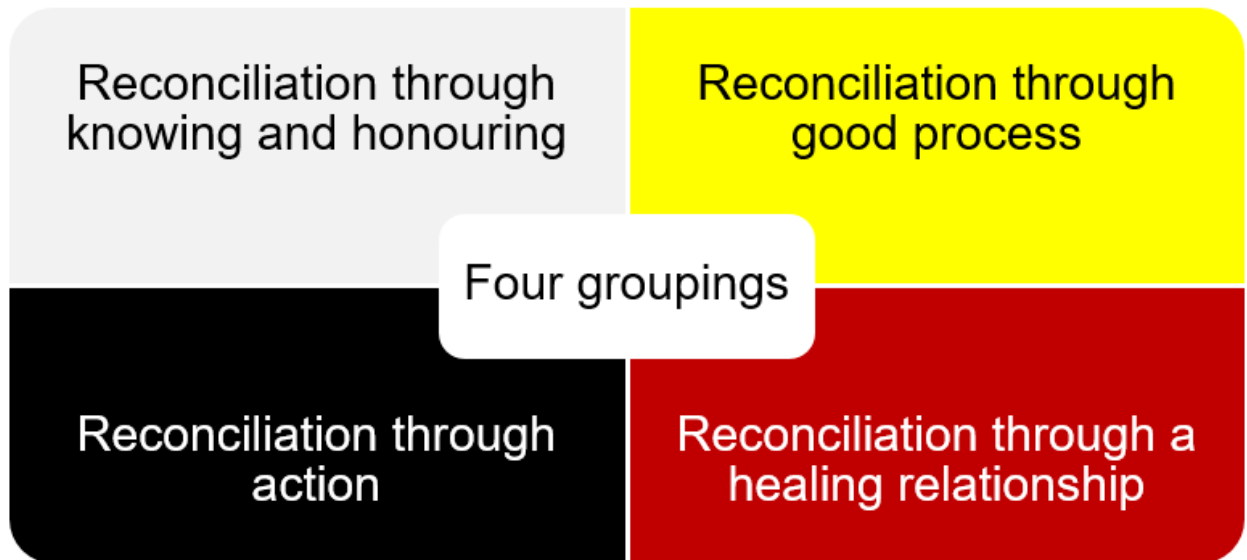
The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada believes that for Canada to flourish in the twenty-first century, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canada must be based on the following principles:

1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is the **framework for reconciliation** at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.¹
2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as **self-determining peoples**, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.
3. Reconciliation is a process of **healing of relationships** that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.
4. Reconciliation requires **constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism** that have had destructive impacts on Indigenous peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.
5. Reconciliation must **create a more equitable and inclusive society** by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
6. **All Canadians, as Treaty peoples**, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.
7. The perspectives and understandings of **Indigenous Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers** of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.
8. Supporting Indigenous peoples' **cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems**, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.

¹ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>



9. Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, **trust building**, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.
10. Reconciliation requires **sustained public education and dialogue**, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.



The Principles of Reconciliation are important. These principles provide a foundation for any reconciliation work and can be utilized to guide the work within your own organization

TRC 94 Calls to Action

The full report and calls to action may be found at:

<https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/trc-website/>

Special focus should be given to Recommendation #92 which asks the corporate sector and their leadership to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.² The commission calls for meaningful consultation, long term sustainable opportunities from

² <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>



economic development projects as well as education and training for managers on the history of Indigenous people, intercultural competency, human rights, and anti-racism.

“We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

Call to Action #92 – Business and Reconciliation

1. **Commit to meaningful consultation**, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
2. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have **equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector**, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
3. Provide **education for management and staff** on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

Truths of the past



Pass system

Between the 1880s to 1940s, First Nations people residing on reserve were required to apply for a reserve pass. They had to be granted a travel document authorized by an Indian agent to leave the reserve. Decades of restricted movement negatively impacted culture, economies, societies, and families. This was a catalyst for distrust in Canadian government and systems. This was a means for controlling the movement of First Nations people and preventing gatherings, ceremonies or mobilized resistance.

Indian Act

The Indian Act is a Canadian federal law that governs Indian Status, bands, and reserves. It was created in 1876 to facilitate assimilation, setting regulations, and restricting the rights of First Nations people and communities, authorizing the Canadian federal government to regulate and administer the affairs and day-to-day lives of registered Indians and reserve communities. It imposed structures (like band councils and reserve land) and restricted or made illegal traditional forms of governance (hereditary chiefs), ceremony (sun dance, potlach), the gathering of three or more Indigenous people, and Indigenous people's ability to access the court or lawyers. While the Indian Act has been revised over the years, it continues to exist today.

Métis scrip

The government prohibited the Métis to participate in the numbered treaty-making process throughout Western Canada. Instead, Métis people were required to individually claim their land title through a system the government created called Métis scrip. The system was intentionally confusing, slow, and legally complex, thereby disenfranchising the Métis of their land rights in order to support white settlements throughout the Prairies. A 2013 Supreme Court decision recognized that the government failed to distribute land to Métis people.

Residential schools

Active in Canada from the 1890s to the 1990s, residential schools were an intentional effort by the government to assimilate Indigenous children who were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to live at the schools. These children were punished for expressing their Indigenous culture or language.

Truths of the present



Health gaps

Significant health gaps exist between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Canadians. Indigenous youth suicide rates are six times higher than suicide rates among non-Indigenous youth. The tuberculosis rate among Inuit people is 290 times higher than the rate for non-Indigenous people in Canada. The life expectancy of non-Indigenous people in Canada is longer, in some cases 15 years longer.

Federal funding

Federal funding for First Nation education amounts to only 70% of the funding non-Indigenous children receive through the provinces and territories. This means First Nations children receive 30% less funding for their education

Discrimination and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Visibly Indigenous people in Canada receive daily racial discrimination and harassment. This includes being followed in stores, questioned at banks, being denied access to housing, and being threatened or disrespected while waiting for a bus. These daily acts cause stress, pain, embarrassment, shame, and fear. They happen to children, youth, adults, and elders.

A disproportionate number of Indigenous women and girls have been murdered and/or are missing.

Building Reconciliation Action Plans “RAPs”



Learning from other jurisdictions

A framework for diverse types of reconciliation planning is suggested by Reconciliation Australia. This national body on reconciliation was established in 2001 in that country.

There are many similarities as well as differences in the approaches taken by Australia and Canada to address reconciliation. It is instructive for organizations in Canada to examine some of the approaches taken in Australia and benefit from the models which they have developed and use. Judicious use of their models and frameworks can offer new approaches for Canadian organizations, and vice versa.

Reconciliation Australia administers their trademarked Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program which commenced in 2006 and provides step-by-step templates and guides to organizations to develop RAP's, to advance reconciliation in the workplace and beyond. The RAP program provides a structured approach to drive change within organizations.

Designing Your Reconciliation Action Plans – RISE

In the Australian context, there are four types of Reconciliation Action Plans that organizations can develop, and this framework may be useful to Canadian organizations that are on their own reconciliation journey. The plans are identified by the acronym 'RISE' which stands for

1. **R**eflect
2. **I**nnovate
3. **S**tretch
4. **E**levate

Each of the four plans enable organizations to support and advance Australia's national reconciliation movement through deliberate commitments and leadership efforts. Each type of **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)** is designed to suit an organization at various stages of their reconciliation journey.

The plans help to foster and embed respect for the world's longest surviving cultures and communities. Your organization can use these plans to develop opportunities within your organization to create positive impacts and grow Indigenous reconciliation in alignment with whatever stage your organization is at in its journey.

Reflect

Scoping reconciliation

A Reflect type RAP clearly sets out the steps you should take to prepare your organization for reconciliation initiatives in successive RAPs. Committing to a Reflect type RAP allows your organization to spend time scoping and developing relationships with Indigenous peoples, companies, communities, and stakeholders. This process may take your organization many months to complete.



Decide on your vision for reconciliation and explore your pillars of influence (reach, relevance, resonance, credibility, and trust); before committing to specific actions or initiatives. This process will help to produce future RAPs that are meaningful, mutually beneficial, and sustainable.

Innovate

Implementing reconciliation

An Innovate type RAP outlines actions that work towards achieving your organization's unique vision for reconciliation. Commitments within this type of RAP allow your organization to be aspirational and innovative to help your organization to gain a deeper understanding of its pillar of influence and establish the best approach to advance reconciliation.

An Innovate type RAP focuses on developing and strengthening relationships with Indigenous peoples, engaging staff, and stakeholders in reconciliation, developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower our Indigenous friends. Organizations should aim to achieve this plan during a 2-year timeframe.

Stretch

Embedding reconciliation

A Stretch type of RAP is best suited to organizations that have developed strategies and an approach. The organization has established a strong approach towards advancing reconciliation internally and within the organization's pillar of influence. This type of RAP is focused on implementing longer-term strategies and working towards defined measurable targets and goals. During this phase organizations will complete the following:

- » Set measurable targets and firm tangible commitments throughout the RAP
- » Implement strategies to ensure staff throughout the organization are engaged in reconciliation.
- » Enable continuous improvement of engagement, cultural learning, employment, and procurement strategies.
- » Engage external stakeholders in reconciliation.
- » Consider initiatives to address the dimensions of reconciliation.

The Stretch type RAP requires organizations to embed reconciliation initiatives into business strategies to become 'business as usual.'

Elevate

Leadership in reconciliation

An Elevate type RAP is for organizations that have a proven record of embedding effective RAP initiatives in their organization through their Stretch type RAPs. Organizations at the elevate stage are ready to take on a leadership position to advance national reconciliation.

Organizations with an Elevate type RAP have strong strategic relationships and actively champion initiatives to empower and create societal change.



Organizations with an Elevate type RAP also require greater transparency and accountability through their activities and share best practices.

Visit the Reconciliation Australia website for more information at:

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

Final Commentary

Indigenous Works has developed its own Inclusion Continuum characterized by seven-stages to achieving an inclusive workplace. Organizations develop increasing levels of knowledge about Indigenous people, history, and culture and they use those knowledge assets to develop increasingly sophisticated and impactful strategies for Indigenous engagement, relationship-building, and partnership formation. Success in these areas is predicated on organizations adopting an enterprise-wide approach with Indigenous strategies, practices and systems developed throughout the organization in areas such as employment, business, communications, and leadership. Organizations undergo transformational changes. Some features and attributes of each stage follow the diagram below.

The Inclusion Continuum

1 - INDIFFERENCE

Inclusion is not on the radar

2 - INTIMIDATION

Inclusion as forced compliance

3 - IMAGE

Inclusion as public relations



6 - INTEGRATION

Inclusion as a catalyst for growth

5 - INCUBATION

Inclusion nurtured as a core competency

4 - INITIATION

Inclusion as a business imperative



Stage 1 - Indifference – Inclusion is not on the radar screen

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » No or low level of awareness of Indigenous cultural issues.
- » Indifferent to Indigenous world views.
- » No awareness/concern about Indigenous employment.
- » In such a company, leadership is set against healthy social change, as adamantly and forcefully as advanced inclusion leadership will be committed to such change.
- » The prospect of diversity management & the conflicts that indifference causes are invisible to the organization.

Stage 2 - Intimidation – Inclusion as forced compliance

Features & Attributes of the Workplace of this Stage

- » Value of diversity unknown.
- » Indigenous suppliers not seen and/or deemed unreliable.
- » When discrimination cases arise, the primary focus of the leadership is to minimize damages rather than investigate and transform what gave rise to these acts of discrimination in this company.
- » Special efforts towards Inclusion are perceived to drain time and resources.
- » The organization has a blind spot. It does not act unless forced to do so. When it acts, it does so defensively.

Stage 3 - Image – Inclusion as public relations

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » Important that the organization is *seen* to be acting. Efforts are superficial and motivated to protect image rather than achieve business results.
- » The commitment to inclusion goals at this stage is dictated by and limited to photo ops and the equivalent.
- » Isolated inclusionary practices are developed and evaluated but a comprehensive strategy is not yet developed.
- » Poor or uneven record of Indigenous employment and retention.

Stage 4 - Initiation – Inclusion as a business imperative

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » Dissemination of Inclusion vision, mission, and definition to division staff.
- » This stage is distinguished by the “hand-off” of the function of change agent, from the original change agent to the company’s top executive. If the hand-off does not happen, and the change agent leaves, the company becomes stuck at the Initiation level and may easily slip back to the Image level.



- » Actions to engage employees may include explicit communications, employee networks, training, specialized events, consultation, linking objectives to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.
- » Managers begin to investigate the policy and procedures that may require change.
- » Establishment of the link between organization's corporate strategic initiative and the diversity process.

Stage 5 - Incubation – Inclusion nurtured as a core competency

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » This tier of leadership is reached as soon as the CEO or prime leader in an organization commits that organization to a growth in inclusion. The executive inquires into the organization's commitment to Indigenous inclusion: what have we done, and what have we not done?
- » Employees attend diversity training, and discrimination prevention training.
- » Managers may attend training sessions on how to prevent discrimination and develop awareness of how to provide a supportive workplace for Indigenous employees.
- » Link between taking action in inclusion goals and improving business performance is taking form.
- » Barriers to recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention of Indigenous workers as staff, volunteers, and partners has been explored.

Stage 6 - Integration – Inclusion as a catalyst of growth

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » The role of leadership expands beyond the organization into Corporate Social Responsibility and other roles. At this tier, the corporate leadership makes inclusion practices and inclusion goals a mandatory aspect of managers' reports. Managers who fall short may be penalized, for example, by withholding bonuses, etc.
- » Employees witness the first steps to creation of a workplace culture that draws upon the capabilities and perspectives of its Indigenous employees.
- » Issues of diversity and social inclusion have been addressed in a strategic action plan.
- » Long-term thinking and long-term investments guide Inclusion strategies.
- » Divisional work plans contain Indigenous targets for employment, economic development, and supplier development.

Stage 7 - Inclusion – Inclusion is embraced as a cultural norm

Features & Attributes of the Workplace at this Stage

- » Corporate leaders reach out to other corporate leaders to share their organization's experience and achievements with inclusion.
- » Human rights and responsibilities are promoted and respected. Employees are free of concerns related to basic equity issues.
- » Indigenous people are employed/retained at all tiers of the organization including the Board.



- » A comprehensive Indigenous procurement strategy is developed.
- » High levels of employee engagement are seen and experienced in the organization.
- » Indigenous Inclusion is integral to the overall mission and vision of the organization.

This developmental model is not to be taken too literally. Organizations may progress through various stages in diverse ways and at different paces, but the general pattern of transformation is evident in organizations that have achieved the highest levels of Indigenous inclusion.

The steps in the reconciliation journey described in the modelling that Reconciliation Australia has developed align with the Inclusion Continuum and the transformation which ensues across the seven stages.

Reflect - Scoping reconciliation

A Reflect type RAP aligns with stage four (Initiation) of the Inclusion Continuum.

Innovate - Implementing reconciliation

Organizations that develop an Innovate type RAP align with the features and attributes described in stage five (Incubation) of the inclusion continuum.

Stretch - Embedding reconciliation

The attributes of organizations that adopt a Stretch-type RAP indicate an elevated level of organizational competency in alignment with stage six (Integration) of the Inclusion continuum.

Elevate - Leadership in reconciliation

We may expect to see the development of the Elevate RAP in organizations that have established a proven record working successfully with Indigenous people, businesses, and communities. These organizations fit the descriptors of stage seven (Inclusion) on the Inclusion continuum aligns with the ability to take a leadership position to advance national reconciliation.

Find out how an Indigenous Works membership and our other products can further assist your organization on its journey through inclusion and reconciliation at:

<https://indigenousworks.ca/en>



Thank you | Merci | Miigwech

Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI)

The Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion (CCDI) is a made-in-Canada solution designed to help employers, diversity and inclusion/human rights/equity, and human resources practitioners effectively address the full picture of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workplace. Founded and run by experienced diversity and inclusion practitioners, CCDI's focus is on practical sustainable solutions that help employers move toward true inclusion. Effectively managing diversity and inclusion, and human rights and equity is a strategic imperative for all Canadian organizations that wish to remain relevant and competitive.

We focus on the topics of inclusion that are relevant in Canada and the regional differences that shape diversity by addressing the issues that move employers from compliance to engagement. Our research, reports and events have become valuable cornerstones for people developing and implementing diversity plans.

CCDI is grateful for the support of our over 200 Employer Partners across Canada.

Contact us

Have questions about the benefits of becoming a CCDI Employer Partner, or any of our services? Please contact:

Partner Relations
1-416-968-6520
mail@ccdi.ca

CCDI is grateful for the ongoing support of our Founding Partners.



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