

Methodology Overview

Our methodology includes the following formal and informal research procedures:

Formal Procedures: national survey

In order to facilitate a national review of archival policies and best practices, the TRC-TF has developed a formal on-line survey developed using UNBC's Fluid Survey software. This survey will be made available in both English and French to the Canadian archival community through both the Arcan-L list-serve and the list-serve of l' Association des archivistes du Québec. Generally speaking, the type of information being collected includes demographics; identification of outreach programs; the level of engagement with, and understanding of, regional Indigenous communities; the level of understanding and awareness of the work done by the TRC; and identification of existing institutional policies and procedures related to Indigenous archival resources. This information will be gathered through a structured sequence of questions with a number of answer options provided for underneath. There are also open dialogue sections wherein respondents will be able to articulate more qualitative answers such as the specific type of outreach they facilitate, specific barriers to reconciliation they have identified, what they think should happen in terms of a review of current archival practice, and their thoughts on the potential contributions archives could make towards reconciliation. The answers to this survey will be gathered, common threads identified, identifying information anonymized, and all data summarized into a draft report format. This draft report will then undergo further assessment by our Indigenous Partners in order to expand its overall perspective.

Informal Procedures: outreach & dialogic engagement

In order to gather a balanced perspective on how well Canadian archives manage their Indigenous information resources and programs, and how successfully the Canadian archival profession includes Indigenous record keepers as archival "colleagues", representatives from umbrella Indigenous organizations will be contacted. Task Force members will be reaching out to Indigenous community representatives from tribal councils, cultural centres and territorial governments (etc.) whose responsibility it is to oversee programs pertaining to traditional Indigenous knowledge, whether in the form of archives, language or heritage program development, treaty research, libraries, artifact collections, traditional land use studies, etc. Through this outreach and dialogic engagement Task Force members will engage community representatives in conversation from both a client engagement perspective and a collegial engagement perspective. More specifically, members will seek to identify and understand existing relationships, issues, challenges, etc. encountered by Indigenous organizations (i.e. employees and/or volunteers thereof) as either a client or patron who uses Canadian archives for research; or as Indigenous record-keepers interacting on a collegial level within our profession. Through this outreach component of our project, it is also our intent to begin the process of relationship-building with Indigenous record-keepers and to extend a formal invitation to participate on a collegial level with the Canadian archival community - if they have not already done so or thought of doing so.

Information collected through these informal discussions will once again be anonymized, common threads identified, and findings summarized into a draft report to be reviewed and expanded upon by our Indigenous Partners.

Informal procedures: expanded literature review

Undertaken concurrently with this outreach work, will be an expanded literature review. By that I mean we will be identifying authors of archival and related professional discourse pertaining to reconciliation work, participatory archiving, cross-cultural engagement and the development of a multi-cultural collegial network of professionals. After reading the discourse we will be contacting these authors to follow-up with them about their conclusions: to see if they still stand, if they would make any changes to their methodology or proposed outreach strategies, or if they have any additional words of advice to offer to us as we continue along on our path towards reconciliation. Once again this data will be summarized and collated into a draft report format and reviewed and commented upon by our Indigenous Partners.

Comparative Analysis

Once this preliminary research is complete, we will begin the process of comparative analysis. With our national survey results report and our outreach activity report in one hand, and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *United Nations Joint-Orentlicher Principles* in the other, we will begin to identify how Canadian archives, overall, have supported or hindered Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools. This national assessment will be our benchmark for progress. It is against these results that we will gauge our collective progress towards meeting the requirements for compliance with both UNDRIP and UNJOP.

Deliverables

With project analysis complete we will compile and summarize the entirety of our findings and research methodology into one final report; we will create and issue a list of actionable recommendations to national, provincial and territorial archival associations and institutions as well as to the individual professional; and last but not least, we will draft a set of protocols and principles pertaining to the culturally responsive management of Indigenous archival resources. Taken collectively, this body of research will serve as a reconciliation framework for the Canadian archival system.

The development of these protocols and principles will be an iterative process, with input into draft versions being sought from our Indigenous Partners, the Indigenous community representatives with whom we engaged, the authors with whom we conversed and the Canadian archival community at large. Once 'finalized' the protocols and principles will exist as an evergreen document open to revision in acknowledgment that both inter-cultural relationships and cultural requirements change over time.