



Outreach Interviews: A Thematic Analysis

Prepared by the Response to the Report of the Truth and
Reconciliation Commission Taskforce of the Steering Committee
on Canada's Archives

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I. Introduction

Background

This report describes the process and findings of outreach interviews conducted by the Taskforce from the early summer 2018 through the end of April 2019. Building upon the knowledge gained from the literature review – which identified potential barriers to reconciliation efforts from the perspective of the archivist – the outreach interviews provided an opportunity to speak with Indigenous Cultural Memory Keepers, record keepers, cultural resource managers, researchers, and other relevant community representatives to understand varied Indigenous perspectives, both from the client and the collegial engagement perspectives. Along with the literature review, the findings from the outreach interviews informed the drafting of policies and protocols for the culturally appropriate management of Indigenous-related materials held in Canadian archives.

Objectives

The overall objective of the outreach interviews was to identify and understand existing relationships, issues, challenges, and other matters encountered by members of Indigenous organizations as either a client who uses Canadian archives for research, or as an Indigenous Cultural Memory Keeper interacting on a collegial level within the archives' profession. This research enables the Taskforce to:

1. Contribute to the building of meaningful relationships between settler archives/archivists and Indigenous communities and/or umbrella-level organizations, including their Cultural Memory Keepers and archival researchers;
2. Begin to understand the archival knowledge structure and practices currently employed by and within varied Indigenous communities and organizations;
3. Begin to understand the range of services and the type(s) of relationships different Indigenous communities and organizations want when conducting archival research, during visits to archival institutions, and when requesting the assistance of archives and archivists; and
4. Begin to understand the ways through which different Indigenous communities envision good relations between themselves and settler archives/archivists.

Additionally, the outreach interviews aimed to initiate professional dialogue and the building of respectful relationships between Taskforce members and participant communities. It was hoped that this initial engagement would establish a collegial relationship that will enable either individual to reach out to one another in the future with offers of support and requests for collaboration, opening pathways for Indigenous participants to be actively engaged in the Canadian archival community.

Scope

In searching for potential participants, the Taskforce identified Indigenous community representatives from tribal councils, cultural centres, territorial governments, and other organizations whose responsibility it is to oversee programs pertaining to Indigenous knowledge, whether in the form of archives, language or heritage program development, treaty research, libraries, artifact collections, land use and occupancy studies, or other related activity. In doing so, the Taskforce considered the following criteria:

1. **Geographic extent:** Every reasonable effort was made to ensure outreach and engagement with Indigenous communities/organizations from the northern, central, and southern parts of all provinces and territories.
2. **Remote communities:** Every reasonable effort was made to engage with, and facilitate participation by, organizations representing communities in the Northern Territories and other remote or rural regions.
3. **Regional approaches:** Outreach would initially focus on tribal councils, cultural centres and other umbrella organizations as these larger organizational bodies would *most likely* have direct experience with using archives for the purposes of furthering their organizational research objectives, and/or managing their own archival collections – two facets of our intended line of questioning. It was suspected that a regional approach to engagement *may* also invite recommendations and introductions at the community or band level. If, however such a collective organization did not broadly exist within a region, individual communities were identified for outreach.
4. **Number of perspectives:** An exact number of communities/organizations required to provide a sufficient cross-section of Indigenous perspectives across Canada has not been identified, as levels of engagement are an unknown. That being said, the Taskforce aimed to engage between 100 and 150 participants.

With these criteria in mind, Taskforce members created a community connections list that identified specific umbrella organizations to contact. Additionally, they identified individual First Nations with which they had existing relationships to be potential community-level participants. Ultimately, the Taskforce identified approximately 185 communities and organizations and completed a total of 47 interviews.

Engagement Protocols

The Taskforce acknowledges that many Indigenous communities have been negatively impacted by the way in which cultural heritage organizations have historically undertaken outreach with Indigenous communities. To ensure that the outreach interviews were conducted respectfully and ethically, the Taskforce created a draft protocol document that guided interviews on the use of ethical approaches to engaging in dialogue and relationship-building activities with Indigenous communities. The protocol is founded on the recognition that the intellectual, ancestral, and inherent knowledge, as well as the cultural property rights of Indigenous Peoples and communities, must be respected at all stages of engagement.

Respect and Recognition

Taskforce members conducted their interviews with the understanding that Indigenous Peoples have sole authority over what constitutes ancestral, inherent, or cultural knowledge and confidential information within their community. Before connecting with community representatives, Taskforce members committed to the responsibility of learning about and respecting these codes of ethics, as well as the local customs, cultural practices, and dialogue practices of the community with which they would interact. For example, if a community had restrictions on what type of knowledge could be recorded or shared, that restriction was respected. If such codes and ethics for establishing respectful engagement were not readily apparent, members investigated the following options:

1. Explore the possibility that a community may have a distinct traditional governance council as well as an [*Indian Act*] elected Council. These entities may have different roles, or even overlapping roles.
2. Identify whether the community had a Consultation Coordinator/Department as the best option to introduce the dialogue.
3. Find out if the community has its own consultation protocols.

Community advice was then used to determine the most appropriate individuals to engage in the outreach interviews.

Collaborative Participatory Approaches

The outreach process itself was guided by a collaborative participatory approach rooted in the development and maintenance of respectful relationships between the Taskforce member and the outreach participant. Dialogue, active listening, and cooperation are key to building such mutually beneficial relationships. Taskforce members committed to an active engagement process that encouraged the honest exchange of information and emphasized an ongoing, two-way discussion. Furthermore, Taskforce members enabled each community representative to dictate their level of involvement, not only within the framework of the four-month outreach process or the overall three-year project, but beyond the boundaries of the Taskforce's mandate itself. Taskforce members acknowledged that the dialogue and relationship-building process does not end when the specific work of the Taskforce has concluded. Rather, Taskforce members approached the work with the understanding that through the engagement process, they were opening the door to a future of greater collegial dialogue and collaborative opportunities.

Communication Strategy

The ideal means of outreach was established as in-person meetings. However, when distance made this unfeasible, communication took place via telephone, email, Facebook, Skype, or mail, as directed by the community participant. Before beginning the conversation, Taskforce members communicated to the community representative that participation was fully voluntary and they were able to withdraw their participation at any point. The participant then had the opportunity to provide verbal consent. If consent was given, the discussion proceeded guided by an interview template consisting of open-ended questions. After the discussion, the interviewer anonymized and summarized the interview. This summary, along with the meeting notes taken by the interviewer, were sent to the participant to review for accuracy. If the participant did not wish to keep the notes, they were destroyed four months after the development of the reconciliation framework. A final copy of the report, along with the reconciliation framework will be sent to all participants at the conclusion of this project.

II. Key Themes

When the interviews were completed and the summaries finalized, Taskforce members reviewed the summaries and identified several recurring themes. Together, the themes highlight the various challenges communities face in building and sustaining capacity in community archives and identify numerous barriers that impede Indigenous clients from accessing Indigenous-related archival materials currently being held in Canadian archival institutions. Overall, the interviews pointed to the necessity of

reconceptualizing archival policies and practice to better meet the needs of Indigenous archives, heritage professionals, researchers, students, communities, and other Indigenous stakeholders.

- ***Archives are colonial institutions***

“When Indigenous-related material is held by non-Indigenous institutions, who gets to make decisions over its management, especially when Indigenous laws and protocols might conflict with Western ones?”¹

The interviews revealed a persistent feeling among participants that archives are inherently colonial in structure and practice. Not only do Indigenous clients generally fail to see themselves reflected in the archives staff supporting their research, they also view Canadian archives as places where they are expected to remain quiet and respect an established chain of authority. One participant described how this stands in contrast to Indigenous cultural community spaces, where lively conversation is the norm and children are free to run around. In Indigenous cultures, they said, “truths are told and spoken out loud” but the structure of Canadian archives do not reflect this perspective. While several participants reiterated the belief that Canadian archives do not acknowledge and give consideration to these cultural differences in the structure and delivery of their services, others felt that the notion of Indigenizing archives needs to be abandoned altogether. For example, while some institutions in the North are attempting to incorporate Inuit qaujimaqatugangit (Traditional Knowledge) into their governance processes, structural barriers continue to present challenges because the processes themselves remain grounded in Euro-Western models and traditions.

Additionally, participants expressed a general distrust of government recordkeeping practices. Many claimed that archival records are too tightly controlled by Canadian governments and see non-Indigenous archives and archivists inappropriately acting as gatekeepers to Indigenous cultural heritage. There was, however, a sense that trust between Indigenous communities and the Canadian archival community could be regained if archival institutions shift from a position of ownership over Indigenous-related archival materials to one in which they hold these materials in trust, on behalf of the Indigenous community to which they belong. Participants agreed that the Canadian archival community needs to advocate for Indigenous control of archival materials by rethinking what materials archives ultimately have the right to collect and how matters of copyright affect community ownership over these materials.

- ***Archival principles and practice (non-Indigenous, Indigenous, and intersections)***

“We would like to rely on our own nation for our history. [We] would like to have a safe repository where families would feel comfortable with depositing their own family records. But we need to be careful about how we give access, to make sure people are not accessing information they aren’t supposed to.”

- ***Ownership and repatriation***

The need to reconceptualize archival ownership over Indigenous-related materials was a recurring theme. Several participants positioned Canadian archives as institutions that remove documentary

¹ The quotations cited throughout this report are taken from the interview summaries compiled by Taskforce members. As the interviews were summarized rather than transcribed, these quotations may be paraphrased rather than direct quotations from the participants themselves.

heritage from Indigenous communities without reciprocation. To begin to address this, they urged archives to proactively identify Indigenous-related materials in their collections and reach out to the represented communities to facilitate some form of repatriation. While repatriation of the original materials was deemed desirable, some participants felt that digital repatriation might be preferred if the current environmental conditions of the community archives or storage facility did not meet the preservation standards desired by the community. In such a scenario, it was suggested that a governance circle consisting of community members and archives staff be established to co-manage the identified materials. Regardless of the means of repatriation, participants emphasized that the conditions under which the process is carried out must be defined by the communities rather than by the archival institution.

Participants also expressed the need for cultural concepts of copyright to be integrated into the trusteeship of records. They also mentioned that consent was not always sought by and granted to a record's creator and expressed the role that archival institutions should play in revealing such unethical research and documentation activities. Participants also shared examples of repatriation efforts already underway and spoke about donors who are choosing to offer archival materials directly to the represented communities. Despite these continuing initiatives, however, one participant cautioned that the notions of ownership and repatriation are terms that are used in so many different ways that it remains a challenge to understand their specific meaning and appropriate application in various contexts.

- ***Cultural protocols, governance restrictions, and legislation***

This discussion on ownership and repatriation demonstrates the importance of considering the specific needs, perspectives, laws, and protocols of Indigenous communities in archival principles and practice. Participants working in Indigenous archives stated that while archival standards can sometimes be useful for collections management, they cannot be fully implemented as certain standards – such as how to care for some materials and who can access them – are not scalable to the needs of Indigenous communities nor are they compatible with governance restrictions and cultural protocols. Furthermore, they expressed concern that institutions with Indigenous-related archival materials may not be consulting with relevant Indigenous communities and adhering to their restrictions on access and care.

Participants also referred to the *Access to Information and Privacy Act* and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* to demonstrate how archives-related legislation does not align with the specific needs and interests of Indigenous communities, nor respect Indigenous ownership over their documentary heritage. They described how records acquired under provincial and federal access and privacy legislation often comes with restrictions, limiting an Indigenous researcher's full access to information by and about their community. Additionally, from a First Nations' perspective, decisions regarding the access and management of certain information are often Band-based – when information has been gathered through a Band Council Resolution for a specific purpose and is in the custody of a Band Council Archives, it limits who may have access to it.

- ***Records management***

Participants also identified records management as a critical archival need in most self-governing Indigenous communities. This point highlights the intersection of cultural heritage preservation and recordkeeping. As one participant remarked that “the Western approach of siloing these professions

doesn't really suit Indigenous needs and perspectives." In the administration of a Nation, they explained, a cultural perspective is vital for business contexts – one supports understanding of the other. As a result, business and culture records are often interlinked and the archival and recordkeeping standards applied in Indigenous communities must recognize the complex nature of these records. A key challenge for staff working in Indigenous archives, then, is balancing engaging with bureaucracy, being sensitive to culture, and integrating archival principles and practices into their work. Yet, participants expressed concern that the Canadian archival community has been unable to provide guidance or advice concerning questions about how these processes intersect.

- ***Barriers to professional practice***

"It's good that there is interest in bringing Indigenous perspectives into the profession but there is still no sustained funding for that work. It seems like most of the people (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) doing this kind of work are doing it off the side of their desks. I am concerned about people burning out, both for the individuals themselves, and what that might mean for projects, relationships, activities in progress."

- ***Sustained and equitable distribution of funding***

Participants frequently discussed the challenges that Indigenous communities face in acquiring the knowledge, practice, infrastructure, and trained staff needed to maintain a community archives or records management program. The insufficient and inequitable distribution of government funding that responds to the unique archival needs of Indigenous communities was identified as a significant barrier. Participants explained that for Indigenous archives the funding process is a drain on already limited resources, and the need to compete with other Indigenous communities for funding is problematic. Most government grants also require a project's outcomes be made accessible online; however, such public access is not always possible due to local governance restrictions or cultural protocols. Community archives that develop their own standards and practices also often make them ineligible for funding. Additionally, most federal grants are project-based, making project sustainability a continuing challenge. For example, one participant described efforts by some large institutions to hire Indigenous archivists to assist with language preservation as "a minimal investment"; they suggested that for funding to be effective, it must support capacity building at the community level and be available to all Indigenous communities.

- ***Community priorities***

The lack of sustainable funding earmarked for the maintenance of community archives was a repeated concern throughout the interviews. Participants explained that archives in self-governing Indigenous communities are often attached to the governance department, which determines how administrative funding is allocated. In these cases, while some may be set aside for archival work, this tends not to be viewed as a priority. As one participant observed, "cultural heritage sometimes gets put on the back burner compared to other pressing issues that Indigenous communities are dealing with." In general, participants described a sense among community members that archives do not serve an important function for their entire community. Rather, an archives is seen as a storage space, used only by a few people to conduct research in pursuit of a university degree. One participant also discussed the fundamental conflict between archival practice and Indigenous ways of preserving histories and sharing cultural knowledge: "how can an archives continue to support a traditionally oral society in maintaining its intangible heritage when it seemingly is only concerned

with maintaining the tangible documentation of a society?" Another participant similarly expressed that "collecting, categorizing, sorting, and labeling are generally not how we do things."

- ***Community capacity***

In cases where some funding has been allocated to archival work, participants pointed to the additional challenges of training and retaining staff, especially in remote and rural areas. Qualified individuals often move to urban areas where there are greater employment opportunities, impacting on the continued maintenance of community archives and retention of institutional knowledge. Additionally, archives staff that do exist are over-extended and forced to "wear many hats." Requests from the governance department tends to drive the work, leaving limited time for staff to focus on implementing archival practices. These challenges are further compounded with every change in government, leaving staff in "a perpetual state of catch up." Additionally, the high costs associated with building and maintaining the physical and digital infrastructures needed for archival preservation were a repeated concern. Participants noted that this speaks to the disconnect that often exists between archivists and information technology personnel. While there may be a trend towards digitizing archival materials, participants also indicated that many community archives do not have a digital preservation program or the technological capacity to support the long-term management of digitized files.

- ***Barriers to accessing archives – client perspective***

"[Archives] have been good at persistent protection of holdings, but not persistent access, and place preservation above what can be gleaned from the holdings. There is no transparency because collections are not well-described, are under documented, and the focus is on archival processes rather than what is helpful to the user."

- ***Access restrictions***

As most Indigenous-related archival materials are currently held in Canadian archival institutions, a recurring topic of discussion was the various barriers that Indigenous researchers face in accessing these materials. While participants universally called for access to all archival materials by and about their communities, they pointed out that access to relevant information is often restricted by donor-imposed conditions or privacy legislation. Furthermore, these policies often differ from archives to archives, making it challenging for researchers to navigate. One participant commented that this lack of transparency has led to a perceived power imbalance, where different levels of access are granted to Indigenous researchers and government researchers engaged in legal research. Reproduction policies that include fees for accessing and acquiring copies of a researcher's own documentary heritage was also described as "an unjust barrier [that] perpetuates marginalization."

- ***Multiple and unknown locations***

The lack of clarity surrounding who to contact for which records was also cited as a significant challenge, particularly within large institutions with branches in multiple locations. Participants described often sending inquiries to one department only to be redirected to another and forced to begin the process again. One participant suggested it would be beneficial to receive notice from archives of new accession materials as "it is resource intensive to have to keep surveying archives to determine if new, pertinent material has been acquired." Compounding these challenges is the fact that relevant materials are often dispersed among several different archives. Several participants indicated that a coordinated effort among archives is needed to identify the locations of all

Indigenous-related archival materials and create some form of centralized access to them. This would not only support Indigenous researchers in locating and accessing these materials but would assist in the repatriation process.

- ***Archives research methods and support***

Participants also variously described the specific technical skills required for archival research as “not well-understood by the general public,” based on Euro-western recordkeeping practices, and “quite intimidating for community members and even Indigenous researchers who are fairly experienced.” They expressed finding it challenging to navigate the terminology and processes used in archives or simply to formulate a reference request because they are unsure what kind of information is needed. Participants also indicated that the training and assistance required to learn how to conduct archival research is not generally available, especially in larger institutions. Limited staff availability and hours of operation further limited how and when Indigenous researchers could access materials. Some participants also described the “unhelpful nature” of archivists and the researcher’s “poor or absent” relationship with archivists. They shared experiences of interacting with archivists who refused to provide assistance, often transferring them from one department to another, or simply not responding to their requests. They also referred to the need to make appointments, time restrictions, the use of a particular kind of pencil, and waiting times to access materials as practices that discouraged access.

- ***Distance and technology***

Participants pointed out that major archival institutions in Canada are generally located in urban centres and in southern regions, making long-distance travel and its associated costs a necessary part of archival research for most Indigenous researchers. While participants frequently pointed to digitization as an appropriate way of increasing access to relevant information dispersed among different institutions, some participants noted that many communities, especially those in northern and remote regions, do not have consistent access to the high-speed internet connections needed to access digitized records. Participants also described how online archival systems are generally difficult to navigate for the average user and importantly, not “community-oriented in terms of language and culture.” Yet, archivists have not been able to provide adequate off-site reference and research services. This lack of accessible off-site support neglects to consider the importance of off-site research for Indigenous researchers. Participants explained that preliminary off-site research and the passing of a Band Council Resolution (BCR) are required to justify the travel costs of an in-person visit to an archives. However, preliminary research conducted on archival databases, which participants described as often containing missing, incomplete, incorrect, or inadequately detailed information, is often insufficient in scope and content to provide enough information for this purpose.

- ***Archives as (elitist) space***

Archives were also described as a barrier in and of themselves. Participants acknowledged that while archives are designed to protect records, not keep people out, these spaces are not always experienced this way by Indigenous researchers. In general, archives are not seen as providing a safe and welcoming environment. Specifically, participants referred to the physical design of archives as “daunting,” “unfriendly,” and “intimidating.” They described signage as being unclear and the registration process as “overly bureaucratic,” requiring registration and a security check at one location before being sent to another location to access materials or seek research assistance. One participant also explained that “many archives or organizations [that] hold Indigenous-related

archives are located in formal institutional spaces which may be uncomfortable or be associated with negative experiences for Indigenous Peoples. For example, the local city museum has an archive. However, the building which the museum resides in once housed the Indian Agent office and many individuals feel uncomfortable in that space.” Another participant referred to university archives as being particularly problematic, imposing a “double barrier” on Indigenous researchers for not only are archives often perceived as unwelcoming to Indigenous clients, but universities are also seen as institutions that are reserved for the educational elite.

- ***Archival arrangement and description***

“Creating culturally respectful titles and descriptions is of the utmost importance. If this goal is undermined by existing policies and procedures, then change these outdated policies and procedures. No longstanding practice or policy is more important than changing something that is causing harm to people. This is true not just for Indigenous people, but for all who have historically been oppressed by the colonial system.”

- ***Incomplete and offensive descriptions***

The use of inappropriate titles and descriptions were frequently identified as not only a barrier to access but a practice that continues to harm and marginalize Indigenous Peoples. Participants described how currently, most archival descriptions consist of incorrect details, lack thoroughness in scope and content, use technical jargon and confusing numbering systems, are missing key pieces of information, or use offensive and outdated terminology. This not only inhibits meaningful access to archival materials by Indigenous researchers, but as one participant said, indicates a failure by archives to support a “rebuilding of [Indigenous] history.”

Participants agreed that representative community members should be involved in developing and vetting the descriptions. They suggested not only involving communities’ members directly in description processes but also providing a clear way for Indigenous researchers to submit corrections or additions to existing corrections as they come across them. However, while any potentially offensive language originally provided by the creator should not be given prominence in the description, participants believed that neither should they be discarded altogether. They suggested that archivists instead find ways to contextualize any problematic language with an addendum or other culturally sensitive means in order to mitigate any harm it might cause. Indeed, there was general agreement that while the terminology used in archival descriptions needs to be updated and adapted, it is also important to preserve the original descriptions, to acknowledge history while moving forward. One person referred to the “right to know” enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as inclusive of “the right to know hard things.”

- ***Indigenous taxonomies and languages***

Participants noted that not only are archival descriptions often inaccurate, outdated, or incomplete, but standard archival taxonomies also do not reflect Indigenous perspectives nor the ways in which archival materials may be used by Indigenous researchers. For example, one person remarked that archives inadequately reflect the diversity of Indigenous Peoples in the arrangement and description of their collections. They pointed out that, for example, using the term “Indigenous” can be problematic as it obscures the diverse identities and specific needs of different Indigenous communities. The lack of specificity displayed in the titles and descriptions of archival materials

makes it challenging for clients looking for information specific to their community's history and culture.

Another participant described how the indices that support the navigation of RG10 microfilm are not detailed enough to help researchers find what they are looking for. This speaks to the need for archives to understand the specific needs of Indigenous clients, who tend to use archives to conduct research for the purposes of specific claims and land claims, and on topics such as genealogy, language, and governance. Participants voiced the need for the development of Indigenous taxonomies to facilitate finding such relevant information. This may mean arranging materials by names to facilitate a search for records about a family member or arranging materials by physical land areas (i.e. treaty area) to support claims research. Participants also suggested that materials be indexed and catalogued in Indigenous languages, which may require developing database software that supports multilingual cataloguing.

- ***Finding aids***

What might be useful or “good enough” for the majority of researchers, then, does not always meet the specific needs of Indigenous researchers. This is not only evident in archival arrangement and description practices, but also in the finding aids that fail to reflect the needs, priorities, and languages of the Indigenous communities represented in the archives' collections. To better support Indigenous researchers, participants urged archives to develop research guides, pathfinders, one-page refreshers, and other finding aids that address topics of importance to them and meet their specific needs. One participant suggested creating both online and in-person tools that assist Indigenous researchers in finding published information related to their local area. They also suggested simplifying the language used in records and explaining symbols and abbreviations to ensure that clients fully understand what kind of information can be found in the archives' collections.

- ***Reference services***

“Archivists need to understand that Indigenous rights are similar to moral rights.”

- ***Cultural awareness***

The barriers to access identified by participants underscored the need for archivists to cultivate a greater understanding of Indigenous perspectives and create a more welcoming environment for Indigenous clients, especially when providing reference services and research support. Participants often spoke about the racist attitudes, ignorance, and overall lack of sensitivity often displayed by reference archivists. Without a robust understanding of the historical and cultural contexts of the Indigenous-related materials held in their collections, reference archivists have the potential to express bias and offend their Indigenous clients. As one participant said, “simple reference questions become a trigger for larger socio-political or emotional issues.”

Several participants remarked on the value of designating a subject specialist archivist or an “Indigenous Archives Liaison” with whom a researcher can develop a consistent relationship. This archivist is described as having experience in Indigenous research and knowing their collections well enough to anticipate the types of records Indigenous researchers will find valuable. They understand the highly complex structure of government records and are trained in conducting respectful reference interviews. This archivist must not only have a thorough understanding of the historical,

legal, and cultural contexts of the materials in their collections, but also be up-to-date on current events that affect represented Indigenous communities. As one participant stated, “archivists tend to focus on the past so they don’t appreciate *why* the researchers are at the door but they need to know all the issues of the present so they can get to asking the right questions.”

- **Interpretive work**

Another participant also highlighted the importance of interpretive work. They felt that reference interviews do not generally venture deep enough as the “false ethic of respecting privacy impedes work” and “there is a false aspiration toward objectivity.” However, for many Indigenous researchers, accessing the records is only part of the puzzle. The participant indicated that one of the primary barriers to their research was identifying and interpreting the context of creation. This piece of information is important because only once the creator’s worldview was understood could the colonial connotations of its creation be identified. This insight enables the researcher to “read” the text and interpret the content within the context of their community’s oral histories. Reference archivists can therefore assist in the research process by teaching inexperienced researchers how to assess the creator’s inherent subjectivity and the socio-political context of the record’s creation. Several participants expressed the need for archivists to have the in-depth knowledge to teach researchers about such biases, silences, or omissions in the record, as well as assist them in identifying additional records that may provide context for further interpretation.

- ***Outreach and education needed - client perspective***

“The most positive relationships we have had with academic or religious archives have been ones where they have brought funding and support to our work. They are not only sharing research but they are actively engaged in work that helps the community.”

- ***Proactive outreach and collaborative approaches***

In order to address the issues and challenges identified throughout the interview process, participants stressed the importance of engaging in proactive and collaborative approaches to outreach. As Indigenous communities are not always aware of the locations of archival materials that might be relevant to them, it is essential for archives to seek out and inform the communities represented in their collections. One participant felt that “this act would open the door to further discussions on access protocols, culturally appropriate collections management policies and repatriation processes, as well as pave the way for respectful relationship-building,” the establishment of Indigenous advisory circles, and development of collaborative approaches to community archiving. Another participant recommended that such an advisory circle does not consist exclusively of a community’s Elders as “Elders are not a surplus information resource and as such they are often overworked.” Rather, they suggested that it be comprised of “interested community members of a variety of ages and experiences,” which would provide “a mentorship opportunity for the older members of the circle to teach important cultural protocols and values to the younger members [and] an opportunity to introduce the archival profession to community youth and encourage professional development and further education.”

- ***Active archiving***

Participants also noted that when attempting to engage with Indigenous communities about their archival needs, it is integral to look beyond the sole preservation of existing documentary heritage. Instead, they referred to the importance of “active archiving,” which may involve activities such as

hosting research training workshops for Indigenous researchers, providing guidance for those wishing to set up their own community archives, and supporting Indigenous Cultural Memory Keepers to record oral histories, translate existing records, and engage in description processes. Because of the diverse needs of Indigenous communities, such community archiving models also recognize that one model will not be suitable to all Indigenous communities.

Additionally, participants indicated that a collaborative approach to community archiving would include data sharing agreements that guide the management of Indigenous-related materials held by non-Indigenous archives. This would ensure that when community materials are being accessed by researchers from outside the community being researched, especially for the purposes of publication, the community is informed and the researcher is directed to request permission from the community to use the information. Such a protocol would affirm the community's ownership over the materials, provide an opportunity to identify any harm that may be caused by the publication of the information, and ensure that the information collected is shared with the community.

- ***Relationship-building and communication***

The collaborative approaches recommended above aim to rebuild trust and respectful relationships between Indigenous communities and archival institutions. Participants affirmed the need for the Canadian archival community to take on an advocacy role and build mechanisms through which communities can tell their own stories and make their own decisions regarding the care of their cultural heritage. They suggested that this involves actively listening and responding to the specific needs, ideas, concerns, and requests expressed by their Indigenous partners while recognizing that the overall goal of a collaborative approach to archiving is to reverse a community's dependence on non-Indigenous institutions for their archival needs.

Participants also cautioned that when engaging with community representatives, the tone used in communication is critical. One participant described how communication with Indigenous people is often "either too reverential or does not give credit for sophistication" – when speaking with Elders and Cultural Memory Keepers, archivists must take the time to understand their particular communication styles, including the non-linear structure of their storytelling. Participants also expressed the importance of understanding a community's kinship ties and dynamics, as well as its political, economic and social contexts to ensure that outreach archivists are prepared for any challenges or tensions that may arise during the engagement process. Additionally, high staff turnover rates or limited staff time due to unstable sources of funding may impact on sustained engagement with a community. This makes it especially important to develop communication methods and relationships that mitigate any potential losses of connection. One participant advised archives to "keep showing up" and demonstrate a commitment to building a long-term relationship that extends beyond the duration of a single project.

- ***Barriers to outreach and education – collegial perspective***

"Education needs to be more scalable, achievable. Valuable hands-on workshops for community practitioners are more useful. Acknowledgement that archives don't always have to be accredited is significant. They need to become what a community needs, and that may not necessarily be an 'archives.'"

- ***Barriers to archival education***

Participants identified the lack of Indigenous people in the archives profession, especially those in management positions, as a general challenge to increasing access and building community capacity. There are, however, currently very few Indigenous students enrolled in archival education programs. Several practical barriers may contribute to this trend, including the unrealistic length and distance of most archival education programs and the lack of Indigenous-specific supports for students. Additionally, the absence of community archives with dedicated resources and facilities limits employment opportunities for graduates who may wish to work in or close to their home communities. Participants also pointed to possible gaps in education levels as a reason for the limited number of Indigenous students seen in the archives field. They explained that overall graduation rates from secondary schools, colleges, and universities tend to be lower in Indigenous communities, which may prevent potential students from considering archival training opportunities, most of which require some formal academic credentials for enrollment. To make these opportunities more accessible, participants suggested offering more introductory courses that cater to those who may have lower levels of textual literacy or knowledge of archival practices, or who may not be comfortable in institutional settings. As one participant said, “this gap in knowledge and skills inevitably acts as an unspoken, unseen barrier to information that no amount of training will bridge unless it is identified and incorporated into the pedagogy.” To this point, they questioned the need for attaining a Master of Archival Science (MAS) degree before being able to work as an archivist.

- ***Education models***

Participants also indicated that the lack of Indigenous representation in the field is a consequence of the continuing association of archives with the legacy of gatekeeping by non-Indigenous people and institutions. This perspective continues to be reflected in archival education programs, which fail to adequately provide learning opportunities that focus on addressing the specific archival needs of Indigenous communities and the particular concerns of managing Indigenous-related archival materials. One Indigenous participant described their experience at a MAS program as having a Euro-Western focus – cultural protocols were not mentioned nor was there any acknowledgement of Indigenous juridical contexts. Rather, the few Indigenous students enrolled in the program were expected to be experts on Indigenous knowledge and asked to teach others about Indigenous perspectives. This lack of appropriate learning opportunities meant that the participant was forced to initiate their own learnings about how archival theory and practice intersects with Indigenous perspectives. This story speaks to the need for the archival field as a whole to develop new educational models that support the specific learning needs and professional goals of Indigenous students.

- ***Supports to outreach and education – collegial perspective***

“In the past and into the present, archives have been created by settlers, for settlers and the Indigenous side of the story hasn’t been told. Indigenous people can use archives to help inform our stories.”

- ***Education and training opportunities***

Participants suggested encouraging Indigenous people into the archives profession by providing education and training opportunities that address the unique archival needs of Indigenous communities. They recommended increasing access to archival materials of interest to Indigenous communities, introducing these materials to Indigenous youth at the secondary and post-secondary

levels, providing internship placements at Indigenous archives, creating mentorship opportunities, and developing programs in oral history. Any such initiatives should also consider the challenges of cost, duration, and location for many potential Indigenous students. For example, on-site programs could offer support services for students moving from their home communities, such as housing and child care assistance. More regionally accessible training and networking opportunities as well as online options could also better support those living in remote areas or juggling full-time work.

Additionally, participants agreed that it was important to find ways to support Indigenous Cultural Memory Keepers without “turn[ing] everyone into MAS archivists.” One participant suggested exploring possibilities for knowledge transfer between archivists, Elders, and youth. This could be especially useful for projects related to Indigenous names and language preservation, for example, as it would enable Elders to share their knowledge with youth who may have better technological skills. Another suggestion was the development of an Indigenous archives and records management manual or toolkit to provide Indigenous heritage professionals with input into building a community archives, guidance in digitization processes, resources for further learning, as well as networking opportunities. One participant surmised that contracting an archivist to provide practical, hands-on training to interested community members may be the only way to sustainably build community capacity. However, they also warned that there have been complaints and disagreements in the past about contracting “outsiders,” who “bring their skills to aid the community but then take that knowledge with them when they leave.”

- ***Professional networks and advocacy***

Professional networks were suggested as a way to support capacity building and increase Indigenous representation in the archives field. Participants proposed the development of a collaborative platform that provides opportunities for heritage professionals working with Indigenous-related archival materials to share knowledge about how different communities and archives have approached collections management issues and overcome common challenges. Participants added that while such networks would be helpful, the cost of membership to provincial and national archival and heritage organizations continues to be a barrier for many Indigenous archives wishing to participate. They recommended waiving membership fees for Indigenous heritage professionals, supporting Indigenous communities in identifying and applying for available grants, and encouraging inclusion of more Indigenous perspectives in archival publications. Overall, participants felt that the Canadian archival community should take on a greater advocacy role to secure sustainable financial support for Indigenous archives and researchers.

- ***Re-alignment of institutional priorities for archival organizations***

“First Nations’ needs, perspectives, laws, and protocols cannot be separated [from] archival activities, practices, and theory.”

- ***Shift in policies and priorities***

As the discussion throughout this paper has demonstrated, the theme underpinning participants’ comments and recommendations is the need to shift standard archival policies to respond to the specific needs and priorities of the Indigenous communities represented in archival collections. Participants commented that while some existing efforts are excellent steps in the right direction, they are often constrained by institutional policies and timeframes that do not consider the perspectives and realities of Indigenous communities. Participants felt that for change to take place,

the Canadian archival community must rethink the concept of archival ownership over Indigenous-related materials and work collaboratively with communities to establish repatriation, access, arrangement, and description policies that consider their particular needs, cultural protocols, and ways of keeping and protecting knowledge. This suggests that archives need to “lessen their focus on acquisition and invest more in accessibility and conservation,” with the overall goal of transferring materials back to communities. To this end, participants advocated for a shift in institutional priorities towards investing in community-based research and community capacity development to ensure that Indigenous communities have the resources needed to improve their physical and digital infrastructures and train people to maintain community-based repositories.

- ***Outreach portfolios***

Building reciprocal relationships and collaborative partnerships that include Elders, Cultural Memory Keepers, and other community stakeholders was another major theme underpinning participants’ responses. Despite the importance of this work, participants noted that currently “cooperation is based on personal relationships” rather than mandated by established archival policies.

Consequently, while “there are various committees and working groups related to Indigenous communities and heritage work, the people who run or participate in these groups are often stretched too thin, as they also have very demanding full-time jobs.” There was general agreement among participants that policies must be developed to formally dedicate the time and resources necessary to conduct outreach work with Indigenous communities. One participant provided the example of the Yukon Council of Archives Itinerant Archivist Model, a grant-funded program that designates a community archivist to travel to Indigenous communities for the purposes of building relationships, establishing collaborative projects, and providing support and mentorship in all aspects of archives and records management. They noted that such a model requires a flexible approach that responds not only to community need but current capacity and stressed the importance of recognizing that communities may be at different levels of repository development. Other participants also reminded archivists that urban Indigenous communities are often a forgotten stakeholder but should also be included in the outreach process.

- ***Hiring practices***

As previously noted, there is currently very limited Indigenous representation in the archives’ profession. Participants remarked that while archival institutions may have diversity policies in place, “when push comes to shove, everybody is white” and “Indigenous professionals do not move up” within the field. As a result, there continues to be “much talk about Indigenous issues without an Indigenous person at the table.” In addition to developing new educational models and opportunities for potential Indigenous students, participants agreed that there must also be a shift in hiring practices within archival institutions. They recommended hiring Indigenous people to work with Indigenous-related archival material, assist Indigenous researchers, and support Indigenous communities to create their own repositories. They also stated the importance of ensuring that Indigenous people hold management-level positions, where they have the power to effect policy change. While hiring Indigenous employees was encouraged, participants also cautioned against tokenism. As one participant said, “archives cannot assume to have representation if only a token person is present.” Additionally, because there are few Indigenous people currently working in the archives profession, overworking Indigenous employees is a significant risk.

When hiring Indigenous employees, participants commented that it was important to consider how best their perspectives and experiences can contribute to the reconciliation process. They advised creating new positions only with input from Indigenous communities or representative groups and ensuring that the purpose of these new positions is effectively communicated to new and existing employees. If these positions are properly considered, as one participant described, Indigenous archivists can play a very important role in addressing the challenges discussed throughout this paper:

“Practically speaking, Indigenous people can identify themselves and other Indigenous people in photographs, and can identify cultural implements, places, names, etc. that would be very difficult for the majority of non-Indigenous archivists. Indigenous employees have a wealth of knowledge and experience that can bring collections, files, and items to life. Creating or reviewing descriptions would be a good start. And writing blogs, e-books, presenting at conferences, identifying areas of interest, assisting with the creation of online content, promotional materials, etc. would be some ways to highlight the unique knowledge our Indigenous colleagues have. Plus, we know what would appeal to our communities. We can also act as an intermediary between archives/institutions and Indigenous communities because we will have experience with both. This type of storytelling-based engagement is what is needed to enliven archives and make them relevant for today, including today’s Indigenous youth which also happens to be the fastest growing population in Canada. And it is crucial to move reconciliation past the guilt and pain into positive action and growth.”

III. Conclusion

The process of Indigenizing archives was described by one participant as "letting go of the power." Indeed, the outreach interviews highlighted the need for the Canadian archival community to transform their policies, practices, and protocols to ensure that they aim to build mechanisms through which Indigenous communities can tell their own stories and make their own decisions regarding the care of their cultural heritage. This means transferring ownership of archival materials to Indigenous communities, facilitating repatriation and digitization processes, and building community capacity in research, archival work, and records management. To support this overarching work, participants proposed making available centralized access to Indigenous-related archival materials, creating finding aids and search tools more suited to the specific needs of Indigenous researchers, and developing collaborative community archiving models. They also encouraged designating knowledgeable reference archivists and travelling outreach archivists, and emphasized the need to develop new education and professional development models that encourage Indigenous participation in the archives field. All participants emphasized that the work will require a long-term commitment and as such, the need for the Canadian archival community to advocate for more sustainable and equitable funding underpins the entire process.

The Taskforce hopes that this outreach, relationship-building, and engagement process will open pathways for Indigenous participants to become actively engaged in the Canadian archival community, thereby expanding their collegial network and ensuring greater inclusion of marginalized voices into archival discourse, practice, and pedagogy. It is also hoped that the collegiality established during this process will continue beyond the confines of this project and manifest in future collaborations and

systems of support that contribute to the respectful management and further development of the tangible and intangible items of Indigenous heritage. The Taskforce believes that whether through a co-authored grant application, a co-created exhibition, co-developed curriculum, or the repatriation of materials to their home of origin – the benefits to such collaboration is unlimited.

Appendix I – Existing Models

Throughout the interview process, participants provided examples of existing and emerging projects and initiatives worthy of note. A few of them are described below.

- A *How to be an Archivist within a First Nations community* guide is currently being developed. When completed, it will be disseminated widely to provide the Canadian archival community with insight into conducting outreach and relationship-building activities in respectful and flexible ways.
- The Museum of Anthropology (MOA) was provided as an example of an institution that has developed a long-standing, respectful relationship with the local Indigenous community. MOA's digital audio lab was described as a helpful resource and the staff provided assistance in digitization and preservation at no cost.
- Inuit Heritage Trust (IHT), Government of Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. have established a working group to set up a Nunavut Heritage Centre that will likely be in Iqaluit. While the focus of the centre appears to be archeological research and the repatriation of artifacts, the Archives Council of Nunavut is attempting to ensure that an archival component is included as well.
- Nunavut Public Library Services was provided as an example of how a cultural institution can successfully adapt to both Inuit and qallunaat ways of managing collections, recruiting and retaining staff, and designing programming and services.
- The Nunavut Legislative Library has been doing multilingual cataloguing in Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, English, and French for over ten years.
- In addition to Yukon Council of Archives Itinerant Archivist discussed in this paper, the Council of Yukon First Nations has plans to build a repository or "keeping house" for Yukon First Nations. However, this project is dependent on grant funding.

Appendix II – Outreach Process

1. Identify umbrella level organizations within designated province/territory or region therein
 - It is your responsibility to learn about, and **respect**, local customs and cultural practices of the community you are interacting with. If such codes and ethics are not readily apparent, you need to investigate the following options in order to establish respectful engagement:
 - Investigate the possibility that a community may have a distinct traditional governance council as well as an [*Indian Act*] elected Council. These entities may have different roles, or even overlapping roles.
 - Identify if a community has a Consultation Coordinator/Department, as this might be the best place to introduce the dialogue.
 - Find out if the community has its own consultation protocols.
 - Determine if financial reciprocity is required and amount
2. Follow identified protocols if they exist. The following steps would still apply. If no such protocols apply continue with step 3.
3. Within each organization, identify department and then individual with a heritage portfolio – ***** be sure to make note of any archives-related projects their department/organization has been involved with as this is the reason you are asking them for their time to speak with you*****
4. Send email (see sample email in Outreach Protocol) to individual - give individual a few days to read/respond to this email then follow up with another email.
5. Set up a time/day/means of communication to discuss this project and the intent of this outreach
6. **During the initial conversation:**
 - Introduce yourself and the project (i.e. Project Overview); answering the TRC's Calls to Action
 - Ask about *them*, their portfolio and projects (see step #2 above)
 - Identify that 1-2 hours of their time may be required of them
 - Note timeline for this outreach: end of Dec. 2018
 - Offer a sample of (or all) outreach questions
 - Provide reason why *they* are being asked to participate (see step #2 above) AND let them know why their participation is valuable: (for example)
 - working in collaboration with Indigenous peoples, we seek to develop a national framework for reconciliation awareness and action which will guide the Canadian archival community as they begin to build respectful, reciprocal relationships with the Indigenous communities represented in the records they hold
 - to begin to understand the archival knowledge structure and practices currently employed by and within different Indigenous communities and organizations.
 - to begin to understand the range of services and the type(s) of relationships different Indigenous communities and organizations want in the future when conducting archival research, during visits to archival institutions, and when requesting the assistance of archives and archivists.

- to begin to understand the ways through which different Indigenous communities envision good relations between themselves and settler archives/archivists.
- we value the input from their organization (given the heritage/archives – related projects)
- this framework will ensure that Indigenous record-keepers/cultural memory keepers find their professional voices included within Canadian archival profession
- this framework will ensure that Indigenous communities are given a greater role in the respectful management of archival materials pertaining to their communities and their histories, but which may still be in the custody of traditional archives.
- Let them know:
 - participation is fully voluntary and they are able to withdraw participation at any point
 - no consent forms are being used; consent is given verbally
 - all information collected will be anonymized
 - no personal information is being collected, all questions are professional in nature
 - a summary of this conversation will be provided to them to review for accuracy
 - a copy of the summary discussion will be provided to them once finalized
 - they are also welcome to keep the meeting notes taken by you - if they do not wish to keep these notes, they will be destroyed 4 months after the development of the reconciliation framework (destruction date approx. March/April 2020)
 - a final copy of our report, along with the reconciliation framework (i.e. evergreen protocols & principles and list of recommendations for continued action and engagement) will be sent to them at the conclusion of this project.
- **Possible Risks for Participants:** while dialogue will be professional in nature, let them know:
 - you acknowledge that the fundamental motivation behind the TRC’s drafting of some of the specific *Calls to Action* (i.e. #70) is poor past professional practice by the Canadian archival community.
 - you acknowledge the connection between many Indigenous individuals and archives with respect to the entire TRC statement and truth gathering process, and the filing of claims towards Common Experience Payments and/or Independent Assessment Process payments,
 - As such, contact by an archivist *may* resurface personal memories of traumatic experiences and/or frustrating archival research processes.
 - if they are feeling conflicted, angry or upset at any point to please let you know and the interview will end.
 - Offer the following resources for help:
 - **24-hr National Indian Residential School Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419**
 - **24-hr First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line 1-855-242-3310** or connect to the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca.
 - *(in BC only)* **KUU-US Crisis Line Society at 1-800-588-8717** – the only Aboriginal crisis line in BC.
- **Possible Risks to You:** given the above potential, you may be at risk for acute verbal conflict. In this instance:
 - acknowledge past mistakes and validate participant experience(s).
 - let participants know you remain determined to receive and acknowledge all highly critical input from them on this shared path of relationship building.

- Contact Erica directly, or email entire team so we can share/disperse the responsibilities of this work. *This will not be an easy road to travel.*
- Set up a time/day/means of communication for the discussion
- Thank them for their time

7. Facilitate outreach discussion

- Listen, listen, listen more than you talk
 - Maintain respectful engagement, do not be pushy
 - Look/listen for participant discomfort at questions and follow their lead – you are trying to build respectful relationships here
 - remain cognizant of time and try to keep discussion within 1hour or less.
 - Express gratitude for their time and remind them that you will send them a copy of the summary for review.
8. Outreach Summary write-up – do *immediately* so you don't forget nuances. This doesn't have to be longwinded, salient points only. Remember – no personal information to be included.
9. Submit draft summary to participant for review.
10. Make changes if required.
11. Submit summary to Erica and post to Basecamp.
12. Repeat

Appendix III – Outreach Protocol

Protocol Development

Introduction: We acknowledge that many Indigenous communities have been negatively impacted by the way in which cultural heritage organizations have undertaken outreach. The purpose of this internal protocol is to provide guidance to TRC-TF members on ethical approaches to engaging in dialogues and relationship-building activities with Indigenous communities so as to not repeat these mistakes.

Basic Tenets:

- We respect, affirm and recognize the inherent right of self-determination of Indigenous Peoples.
- We respect, affirm and recognize Indigenous Peoples' ownership of their ancestral and living respective Indigenous knowledge, heritage and cultural practices.
- We acknowledge that Indigenous communities have the right to the control, ownership, access, and possession of their own knowledge and information.
- We acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous communities across Canada and endeavour to respect that diversity in all community outreach.
- We understand the term "Indigenous" to include First Nations, Métis and Inuit.
- We understand the term "cultural memory keeper" to be an all-encompassing term, herein used to denote an Indigenous professional with a broad portfolio pertaining to the stewardship and care of the tangible and/or intangible culture of the nation for which they work. While their title may, or may not, reflect the true scope of their portfolio, their duties may be similar to those of their colleagues within the heritage profession such as archivists, librarians, curators, collections managers, digitization technicians, oral historians, records managers, heritage coordinators, cultural coordinators, archaeologists, etc.
- We will strive to identify nations' distinct identities and utilize identifying terms preferred by them in all correspondence.
- We acknowledge that most people across Canada (both Indigenous and settler) are not familiar with the function of an archives or the work of an archivist; therefore, education and awareness will be a key component of all outreach work.
- We will strive to use each outreach session as a capacity building opportunity to encourage and support budding Indigenous archivists to achieve their own unique professional development goals for the benefit of both themselves and their communities.
- We understand this document as having been developed as a guide for non-Indigenous TRC-TF members to assist them in their outreach work within Indigenous communities. Therefore, while the "us vs. them" tone is acknowledged in this one document, we understand that this dichotomy will not be perpetuated, promoted or supported at any other point during this project.

Dialogue & Engagement: Indigenous Peoples have the right to be engaged in all dialogue that involves them, their knowledge, or their physical and cultural property. Best practice involves engagement with individuals who may be directly impacted by the dialogue or the results of the dialogue.

As part of the community engagement process, a collaborative participatory approach should be taken. This should involve the development and maintenance of respectful relationships and a willingness on the part of TRC-TF members to allow each community to dictate their level of involvement not only

within the framework of this four-month outreach activity, or within the scope of this three-year project, but beyond the boundaries of the TRC-TF mandate itself. ***TRC-TF members acknowledge that this dialogue and relationship-building process does not stop just because the Taskforce has concluded. Members realize that through this engagement process they are opening the door to a future of greater collegial dialogue and collaborative opportunities.***

Dialogue, active listening and cooperation are key to building mutually beneficial relationships. Active engagement encourages the honest exchange of information and emphasizes an ongoing, two-way discussion throughout the dialogue process.

Informed Consent: Free, prior and informed consent must be obtained prior to the start of any outreach. Consent must be made with full information about the details and risks of the proposed discussion. Participants have the right to withdraw from the conversation at any time. No consent form will be issued, rather, TRC-TF members will introduce the project and its objectives and ask if the potential participant is interested in engaging with us in this work. If verbal consent is given via a “yes”, dialogue will continue, if verbal rejection to the invitation is provided via a “no” dialogue will cease.

Respect and Recognition: TRC-TF members have a responsibility to learn about and respect local customs and cultural practices of the community they are interacting with. If such codes and ethics are not readily apparent, members will investigate the following options in order to establish respectful engagement:

1. Investigate the possibility that a community may have a distinct traditional governance council as well as an [Indian Act] elected Council. These entities may have different roles, or even overlapping roles.
2. Identify if a community has a Consultation Coordinator/Department, as this might be the best place to introduce the dialogue.
3. Find out if the community has its own consultation protocols.

Intellectual, ancestral and inherent knowledge, as well as, cultural property rights of Indigenous Peoples and communities must be respected at all stages of engagement.

Individuals should also be aware of existing community codes of ethics and dialogue practices. For example, if a community has restrictions on what type of knowledge can be recorded, or shared, that restriction should be respected. Indigenous Peoples have the sole authority as to what constitutes ancestral, inherent or cultural knowledge and confidential information within their community.

Community advice should be used to determine who are the most appropriate individuals to be engaged in the work of the TRC-TF.

The TRC-TF will acknowledge the contributions of Indigenous community members and will not claim Indigenous knowledge or community contributions as their own. It is paramount to the TRC-TF that Indigenous peoples’ and communities have the right to the control, ownership, access, and possession of their own knowledge and information is respected.

Determine Clear Objectives

Clear Project Communication: Dialogue objectives, anticipated outcomes, proposed access to results and possible risks and benefits to participation will be clearly communicated by all TRC-TF members to all participants from the outset of engagement. A community should benefit from relationship-building and not be subject to negative impacts as a result of participating in dialogues with TRC-TF members.

Initial Objectives: To begin to understand how Canadian archives manage Indigenous information resources and programs, and how the Canadian archival profession includes Indigenous cultural memory keepers as archival colleagues, representatives from umbrella Indigenous organizations will be contacted. Taskforce members will reach out to Indigenous community representatives from tribal councils, cultural centres and territorial governments (etc.) whose responsibility it is to oversee programs pertaining to Indigenous knowledge, whether in the form of archives, language or heritage program development, treaty research, libraries, artifact collections, land use and occupancy studies, etc. Through this outreach and dialogue, Taskforce members will informally 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, as well as other matters encountered by Indigenous organizations (i.e. employees thereof) as either a client or patron who uses Canadian archives for research; or as Indigenous cultural memory keepers interacting on a collegial level within our profession.

Long-term (on-going) objectives: This outreach will initiate professional dialogue and the relationship-building process between TRC-TF member and participant communities. In acknowledgment of this new collegial relationship, the following long-term or on-going objectives have been identified:

- To contribute to the building of meaningful relationships between settler archives/archivists and Indigenous communities and/or umbrella-level organizations and their cultural memory keepers and archival researchers.
- To begin to understand the archival knowledge structure and practices currently employed by and within different Indigenous communities and organizations.
- To begin to understand the range of services and the type(s) of relationships different Indigenous communities and organizations want in the future when conducting archival research, during visits to archival institutions, and when requesting the assistance of archives and archivists.
- To begin to understand the ways through which different Indigenous communities envision good relations between themselves and settler archives/archivists.

Anticipated short- and long-term outcomes:

- The development of a preliminary draft of evergreen protocols & principles to serve as a reconciliation framework for the Canadian archival system along with the conceptualization of future directions/opportunities for continued and respectful, multi-cultural engagement (i.e. recommendations for future action)
- That Indigenous cultural memory keepers find their voices included within Canadian archival discourse by participation in professional discourse and activities (i.e. conferences, workshops, list-serve discourse, articles, collaborative endeavors, etc.)
- That Indigenous communities will have a greater role in the respectful management of archival materials pertaining to their communities and their histories, but which may still be in the custody of non-Indigenous archives

Access to Collected Information: Participants will be made aware that all information collected through dialogue will be anonymized and summarized. TRC-TF members will provide a draft of this dialogue summary back to the participant for review & approval once complete. This back-and-forth verification process may not be free – TRC-TF members will need to identify such costs at the outset in order to create a comprehensive budget for overall community engagement. Once approval is received, the TRC-TF member will provide the participant with a final copy of the dialogue summary along with an offer of their notes. If the participant does not wish to keep these notes, the member will destroy these notes four months after the submission of the TRC-TF’s final outcomes. The member will inform the participant that a final copy of the report, along with the evergreen protocols & principles and list of recommendations for continued action and engagement will be sent to them at the conclusion of this project.

Continued Engagement: TRC-TF members will also ascertain whether the participant wishes their email to be added to relevant provincial/territorial/national archival association/council list-serves so as to be included in correspondence regarding archival workshops, conferences or other professional development and networking opportunities as well as professional discourse. This master contact list will be maintained on an Excel spreadsheet within Basecamp and will consist of name, email and affiliation only. Once this spreadsheet is complete, the information therein will be provided to the relevant provincial/territorial archival associations, as well as, to the Association of Canadian Archivists for inclusion on their list-serves. Once transferred, this information will be destroyed. The purpose for the collection of this information is to provide participants with a means through which to continue engagement with the broader Canadian archival community, on their terms. Participants who sign up, will also be informed as to how they can remove themselves from the relevant list-serves.

Possible Risks: While it is not anticipated that dialogue with employees of umbrella-level organizations will illicit psychological/emotional reactions, it is *very much acknowledged* that the fundamental motivation behind the TRC’s drafting of *Call to Action #70* is poor past professional practice by the Canadian archival community. Because of the history of weak communication between archival institutions and Indigenous communities, it will be difficult to gauge beforehand what the response will be, either to the questions presented, or to the TRC-TF members themselves. As well, because there is an intrinsic connection between many Indigenous individuals and archives with respect to the entire TRC statement and truth gathering process, and the filing of claims towards Common Experience Payments and/or Independent Assessment Process payments, contact by archivists *has the potential* to resurface personal memories of traumatic experiences and/or frustrating archival research processes.

- **For TRC-TF members:** TRC-TF members are aware of the psychological/emotional risks identified above, and have accepted the potential risk to *themselves* of acute verbal conflict. In these instances, engaging members will be required to acknowledge past mistakes and participant experience(s). It should be communicated early that they remain determined to receive and acknowledge all highly critical input from participants on this shared path of relationship building. All members are, and will continue to be, involved in Taskforce debriefing sessions through which we can share/disperse the responsibilities of this work.
- **For Participants:** Participant involvement in this process is optional, and potential participants may decline involvement at any point. It is expected that individuals who cannot bear further association with archives/archivists will not engage in dialogue with TRC-TF members. However, if

emotionally charged conflict occurs, end the interview, and assist the participant in finding immediate support through their organization, and/or through the **24-hr National Indian Residential School Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419; the 24-hr First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line 1-855-242-3310** or connect to the online chat at hopeforwellness.ca. If participants are located in British Columbia there is also the KUU-US Crisis Line Society at 1-800-588-8717 – the only Aboriginal crisis line in BC.

Possible Benefits:

- Active contribution towards the development of a reconciliation framework which will guide future relationships between Indigenous communities (i.e. Indigenous archival researchers and cultural memory keepers) and the Canadian archival system (i.e. institutional archives and professional archivists).
- Direct engagement with a TRC-TF member. It is hoped that through these discussions that a collegial relationship is established – one that will allow both individuals to reach out to one another in the future with offers of collegial support and requests for collaboration. While such interaction is expected to benefit both individuals directly, it is also anticipated that the establishment of such collegial networks will benefit the institutions/communities to which each individual belongs.
- Further involvement in the Canadian archival system. It is hoped that such relationship-building and engagement will open pathways for Indigenous participants to become actively engaged with the Canadian archival community; thereby expanding their collegial network and contributing to the inclusion of marginalized voices into archival discourse, practice and pedagogy.
- Contributions towards collections management and development. It is hoped that the collegiality established through this dialogue will continue and serve to manifest collaborations and systems of support which contribute to the respectful management and further development of the tangible and intangible items of Indigenous heritage held by both institutions. Whether through a co-authored grant application, a co-created exhibition, co-developed curriculum, or the repatriation of materials to their home of origin – the benefits to the collections is unlimited.

Extent of Engagement

Geographic Extent: TRC-TF members will make every reasonable effort to ensure outreach and engagement with Indigenous communities/organizations from the northern, central, and southern parts of all provinces and territories.

Regional Approaches to Engagement: During the first stage of outreach, Taskforce members will focus on initiating dialogue with tribal councils, cultural centres and other umbrella organizations. These larger organizational bodies will *most likely* have the most direct experience with either using archives for the purposes of furthering their organizational research objectives, and/or in managing their own archival collections - two facets of our intended line of questioning. Such a regional approach to engagement *may* also invite recommendations and introductions at the community or band level. If, however such collective organization does not broadly exist within a region, individual communities will be identified for outreach.

Inclusivity of Remote Communities: The Taskforce will make effort to engage with, and facilitate

participation by, organizations representing communities in the Northern Territories and other more remote or rural areas of the provinces/territories to ensure balanced perspectives from these regions are included.

Community-Driven Engagement: Taskforce members are cognizant of the fact that participation in this relationship-building process must be community-driven, with participants deciding for themselves the extent, method and scheduling of their engagement. Additionally, it is recognized that many Indigenous communities and organizations have more urgent needs that require attention and resources, and that engagement with the work of the Taskforce may not be a high priority for some. With this in mind, the members of the Taskforce will do their best to provide a variety of methods for participation or engagement at the community/organization level.

Community Connections List: Taskforce members have identified specific umbrella organizations they will each endeavour to connect with from the summer to early winter of 2018. They have also identified individual nations with whom they have existing relationships as potential community-level participants. This list is titled "Community Connections".

Means of Communication: The ideal means of outreach has been established as in-person meetings; however, when distance makes this unfeasible, communication will take place via telephone, email, Facebook, Skype, or even by mail as directed by the community participant.

Number of Perspectives: An exact number of communities/organizations required to provide a sufficient cross-section of Indigenous perspectives across Canada has not been identified, as levels of engagement are an unknown. That being said, it is hoped that through this relationship building process that between 100-150 Indigenous cultural memory keepers working for an umbrella-level Indigenous organization or within a community will work with the TRC-TF through this information gathering and relationship-building process.

Identification of Isolated Communities

The Taskforce is committed to actively engaging Indigenous organizations representing communities in remote geographic locations in dialogue, to the extent that each organization wishes to participate. Due to their remote nature, communities that are geographically located away from urban centres, will be invited to engage with Taskforce members via teleconference, online forums, and via mail/email as necessity and internet connectivity dictates.

Communication Strategy Development

Written Invitation to Participate: Initial means through which to invite engagement: email/letter/FB post to appropriate employee of organization identified within Community Connections List, followed by telephone call. The following is a draft template for Taskforce members to use when initiating communication.

Outreach Engagement Draft Letter Template:

Good day (full name here)

My name is _____, I am a member of the Steering Committee on Canada's Archives (SCCA) *Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Taskforce* (TRC-TF). I'm writing to ask if you might consider speaking with me about your work with your community's archives. I'm currently gathering information from Indigenous heritage professionals, cultural memory keepers, researchers and community members regarding their experiences conducting research in archives and their opinions on how supported or included they feel within the broader Canadian archival profession. Just to provide you with a bit of background on this research project, in June 2016 the SCCA (itself a collaboration between the Canadian Council of Archives, the Association of Canadian Archivists, Association des archivists du Québec, Library and Archives Canada, and the Council of Provincial and Territorial Archivists – see our website here for more information: <https://archives2026.com/>) established the "Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Task Force" with a mandate to meet and embrace the TRC's "Call to Action".

Our Taskforce is comprised of 30 Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage professionals and advocates, and together we are trying to develop a national framework for reconciliation awareness and action for the Canadian archival community. It is hoped that through the development of this framework, that Indigenous heritage professionals and cultural memory keepers will find their professional voices included within Canadian archival discourse, and that Indigenous communities will assume greater roles in the respectful management of archival materials pertaining to their communities and their histories, but which may still be in the custody of traditional archives.

If you would like to speak to me further about the time required, our specific objectives, or the scope of our project I would be delighted to give you a call at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration to this request.

Regards,
(Your Name)

Member, *Response to the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Taskforce*
Of the Steering Committee on Canada's Archives
(your work credentials to follow)
Telephone #

Reference Documents

- TCPS-2: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/chapter9-chapitre9/>
- Protocols for Native American Archival Materials: <http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/protocols.html> (The building relationships of mutual respect section might be particularly relevant for our outreach).
- First Nations Ethics Guide on Research and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge, Assembly of First Nations http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/fn_ethics_guide_on_research_and_atk.pdf
- Negotiating Research Relationships with Inuit Communities: A Guide for Researchers, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Nunavut Research Institute http://www.nri.nu.ca/sites/default/files/public/files/06-068_itk_nrr_booklet.pdf
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, National Inuit Strategy on Research, <https://www.itk.ca/national-strategy-on-research/>
- First Nations Principles of OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access, Possession) <http://fnigc.ca/ocapr.html>
- Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, Guidelines for Ethical Research in Manitoba First Nations, <https://mfnerc.org/services/research-development/guidelines-for-ethical-research-in-manitoba-first-nations/>

Appendix IV: Outreach Discussion Questions

The following template provided example questions for Taskforce members to engage depending upon participant perspective.

Participant:						
Participant Affiliation:						
TRC-TF Member:						
Location of Meeting:						
Date of Meeting:						
Method of Engagement:	<input type="checkbox"/> In-person	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Skype	<input type="checkbox"/> Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: (list)

SECTION I: CLIENT ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE (suggested questions)
1.1 Has your community/organization looked to archives for information or research assistance? (i.e., family genealogy, IRS attendance, land claims, etc.)
1.2 Did you find this engagement helpful? If not, can you describe why?
1.3 Based on your research experience, what kind of barriers do you see in archives that make it difficult for Indigenous researchers and community members to do their work? (i.e., hours of operation, location, finding aids, lack of assistance, searching for records through a database, don't know which archives have what, etc.)
1.4 Based on your research experience, what kind of systems of support did you encounter while working in an archives or with an archivist that were most helpful? (i.e. dedicated and/or extensive research support, reference room facilities and/or amenities, digital resources, online databases, etc.)
1.5 What is your understanding of what an archives is, or does?
1.6 How do you think archives could better support the research work of Indigenous researchers and community members?

1.7 Does your organization have any relationship with the nearest community / university archives? Do you feel a university archives is even open to public research?

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1.8 Do you know if the nearest archives to your community has any information pertaining to your community? (i.e., photographs, audio/video recordings, journals, family genealogy, etc.)
a. If so, have you been able to get access to those records? If not, what was the reason? If so, what was this experience like?

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1.9 Do you have concerns about how information about your community is being kept/made available by archives? (Information might include photos, recordings, textual records, etc.)
a. Do you have any suggestions as to how this information could be better cared for? (i.e. participatory archiving, access protocols, Elders Advisory Circle for the archives, repatriation)

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1.10 Other relevant info:

SECTION II: COLLEGIAL ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE (suggested questions)

2.1 Has your community/organization ever contacted an archives or a Canadian archives association for information or assistance with your community’s archival collections? (i.e., how to set up an archives, guidance for digitization, preservation and handling concerns, grant opportunities, etc.)
a. If so, did you find this engagement helpful? If not, why not? If so, how so?

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2.2 Are you interested in becoming a “professional” archivist?
a. What, if any, barriers exist which may prevent you from achieving this goal?
b. What, if any, organizational support exists which may assist you in achieving this goal?

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2.3 Are you aware of any of the Canadian national/provincial/territorial archival associations? Would you consider becoming a member of any of these associations? If not, why not? (i.e. no knowledge of services, don’t think membership would assist them, costs of membership, etc.) If so, why?

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<p>2.4 Would you ever consider attending a conference or workshop offered by a Canadian or provincial/territorial archival association?</p> <p>a. If so, what type of workshop would you most likely attend? What would you like to learn about archival work? (i.e., preservation, basics of digitization, setting up an archives, etc.) And what format would best fit your needs - on-line webinar, or in-person attendance?</p>		
<p>2.5 Would you be interested in becoming a member of, or getting more information on, a new grass-roots, Canadian organization tentatively called the “National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance”? This alliance will bring together Indigenous heritage professionals (i.e. archivists, librarians, cultural resource managers, language teachers, oral history researchers, etc.) and non-Indigenous allies to create an Indigenous system of support, knowledge and resource sharing to members across the country.</p>		
<p>2.6 Does your organization have its own archives? What type of records are kept there?</p> <p>a. Are your archives open to the public? To member Nations? To community members?</p> <p>b. What level of staffing does your archive currently have? What department oversees the archive?</p> <p>c. Do you have any restrictions on access to the records? Is there a formal access policy?</p>		
<p>2.7 Does your organization work with/access archival records in other places? Or do you facilitate access for your community members / clients?</p> <p>a. What kind of records are typically accessed? What are they used for (i.e. land claims, specific claims, treaty research, genealogy, etc.)?</p> <p>b. Have you/your clients faced any barriers or issues with gaining access to those records?</p> <p>c. Have you/your clients encountered helpful systems of support with gaining access to those records?</p>		
<p>2.8 Are there ways the archival community could better support Indigenous cultural memory keepers?</p>		
<p>2.9 Would you like to have your email added to relevant provincial/territorial/national archival association/council list-serves so as to be included in correspondence regarding archival workshops, conferences or other professional development and networking opportunities as well as professional discourse?</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Email:
<p>2.10 Would you like to have your email added to a list of individuals interested in learning more about the development of a “National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance”?</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Email:

2.11 Other relevant info:

SECTION III: FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

3.1 Through this project we will develop a “living” set of principles and protocols, written in the spirit of reconciliation, which supports respectful, fulsome and on-going inter-cultural engagement between both Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous archives, and between Indigenous cultural memory keepers and non-Indigenous archivists. Feedback into the drafted reconciliation framework will be sought from both archivists and Indigenous cultural memory keepers/organizations to ensure they meet the reconciliation objectives of these two diverse communities. Would you be willing to review this draft reconciliation framework and provide us with your critical input? We hope to have the first draft ready by late Spring 2019.

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Email:
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3.2 Would you like me to email you the final “living” reconciliation framework for your reference? We hope this framework will be ready for distribution by Winter 2019.

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Email:
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Appendix V: Outreach Summary Template

MEETING OVERVIEW	
Participant:	
Participant Affiliation:	
TRC-TF Member:	
Location of Meeting:	
Date of Meeting:	
Date of 1 st Review:	
Date of 2 nd Review:	

PERMISSION OVERVIEW		
Permission granted for release of participant email to list of individuals interested in learning more about the development of the “National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance”	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Participant is interested in reviewing and providing critical input into the draft reconciliation framework	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Participant would like to be emailed a copy of the final “living” reconciliation framework	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Participant Email(s): <i>(if permission granted)</i>		

DISCUSSION SUMMARY		
<p>Sample sub-section headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships & Experiences: • Archival Research Support: • Research Data Management: • Archives: • Support & Engagement: 		
PARTICIPANT REVIEW OF SUMMARY		
The information in this document is an accurate summary of our conversation:	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I would like to make the following changes to this information: <i>(please note changes below, or contact the TRC-TF member directly to identify changes needed)</i>		