



Purpose

Research that involves Indigenous peoples works best when it's guided by Indigenous knowledge, values, governance, and community priorities, not just a standard institutional ethics processes. While those processes matter, they often don't fully address things like cultural responsibility, reciprocity, or Indigenous data sovereignty.

With that in mind, the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg (AHWC) is exploring the creation of an Urban Indigenous Research Lodge - Ethics Board (UIRL-EB). The goal is to ensure research involving urban Indigenous peoples is culturally grounded, accountable to community, and aligned with Indigenous ways of knowing.

The first step was talking to community to find out whether an UIRL-EB is possible for our community, and to gather the information needed to make it work.

What This Means for the UIRL-EB

This feasibility study confirms strong, consistent support for the development of a UIRL-EB. No findings suggest the work should not proceed. AHWC is uniquely positioned to lead this effort, which will involve thoughtful design and implementation: developing a model that is grounded in Indigenous values, responsive to community realities, accountable to those it serves, integrated within broader research systems, and sustainable over time.

What We Found

- **Strong Foundation & Support:** AHWC brings a strong foundation grounded in Indigenous worldviews and community-centered approaches, positioning a UIRL-EB as a natural extension of its existing values and growing role in Indigenous-led research. There is also broad support for this work among community organizations, academic researchers, and partners.
- **Diversity & Gap:** Indigenous research ethics are richly diverse and address gaps found in the current colonial academic research processes. Indigenous led approaches are appropriately shaped by governance structures, cultural teachings, community priorities, and local context, and AHWC's UIRL-EB would address a meaningful gap in urban Indigenous ethics leadership.
- **Indigenous Research Ethics in Practice:** Indigenous research ethics recognize that ethical responsibility is an ongoing relational commitment that extends across the entire research lifecycle, encompassing collective rights, cultural protocols, and data sovereignty. Importantly, Indigenous ethics processes will recognize the distinctions between urban, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit experiences.
- **Keys to Success:** Building a successful UIRL-EB will be supported by clear mandates, strong partnerships, flexibility, sustainable resources, and meaningful participation from Elders, Knowledge Holders, community members, and people with lived experience.



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