

Information Governance & Data Projects



The Information Governance & Data Projects (IGDP) team is supported by the Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq (UNSM) and administers data related projects with all Mi'kmaq First Nations in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.



HOST ORGANIZATION: UNION OF NOVA SCOTIA MI'KMAQ

The Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq (UNSM) is a tribal council organization serving five of the thirteen Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia: Membertou, Eskasoni, Potlotek, Wagmatcook and We'koma'q.

Established in 1969, the UNSM provides a unified political voice for the Mi'kmaq people of Nova Scotia. The Information Governance & Data Projects (IGDP) team is managed under the Capacity Development

COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

Nova Scotia First Nations:

- Bear River
- Annapolis Valley
- Glooscap
- Sipekne'katik
- Millbrook
- Pictou Landing
- Paqtnek
- We'koqma'q
- Membetou
- Potlotek
- Eskasoni
- Wagmatcook

Newfoundland First Nations:

- Miawpukek
- Qalipu

IGDP coordinates national level surveys, including the First Nations Regional Health Survey, the First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education and Employment Survey, the First Nations Labour and Employment Development and the new First Nation Regional Social Survey.

Our team is provided with funding and support from the national First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC). FNIGC became an independent, incorporated non-profit entity on April 22, 2010. But their history can be traced back to 1996, when the Assembly of First Nations formed a National Steering Committee to design a new national First Nations health survey in response to a decision from the Federal Government to exclude First Nations people living on reserve from three major population surveys.

FNIGC and the IGDP team work together to administer regional data collection & research processes that embody the principles of OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

MEET OUR TEAM



Robin Thompson (she/her)
Governance Manager

Robin (Cree Métis from Treaty 1 Territory) manages the Information Governance and Data Projects team within the UNSM Capacity Development department. With 20 years of senior management experience in Indigenous governance, Robin is a strong advocate for First Nation self-determination. In 2015 she was one of the ten participants chosen worldwide for the Indigenous Fellow Programme with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights in Geneva Switzerland. Robin is a practicing lawyer and a Human Rights Commissioner for Nova Scotia.



Muin Ji'j (Bertram) Bernard Jr. (he/they)
Special Projects Coordinator

Muin Ji'j [moo-in geeg] (Eskasoni First Nation) coordinates various special data-related projects in the Atlantic Region and is a Saint Mary's University doctoral student in the Executive Doctorate of Business Administration program. In addition, he graduated from the Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Business Administration program at Cape Breton University, and a Certificate in Leading People and Investing to Build Sustainable Communities from



Sean Campbell (he/him)
Data Analyst

Sean (Sipekne'katik First Nation) is responsible for data cleaning and analysis for on-reserve regional data sets, reports, and publications, including the First Nations Regional Health Survey (FNRHS), the First Nations Regional Labor and



Shenayah Gould (she/her)
Projects Coordinator

Shenayah [shen-aye-yuh] (Eskasoni First Nation) supports the preparation, deployment, monitoring, and dissemination of surveys administered by the IGDP team.



Camryn Sock (she/her)
Administrative Assistant

Camryn (Eskasoni First Nation) supports the team. Camryn's extensive experience in community development, both nationally and internationally, has fueled her passion for community and leadership. Camryn is deeply committed to youth advocacy, which strongly influences her work and beliefs.

The IGDP team administers various data-related projects across Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Below is a summary of some of the exciting work we have recently completed or are currently undertaking:

REGIONAL HEALTH SURVEY (RHS) PHASE 4

The Regional Health Survey (RHS) is the first national health survey created and conducted by First Nations people for First Nations people. Now in its fourth phase, RHS results support policy and programming at community, regional and national levels.

Administered by the IGDP team with support from FNIGC, the survey is only administered in First Nation communities with community consent as indicated by a signed Band Council Resolution (BCR). Personal participation is voluntary and can be revoked at any time.

Current Progress

The IGDP team is currently securing BCRs and hiring, training, and supervising local fieldworkers to collect the survey responses. Data collection for Phase 4 began in 2023 and is underway in 12 of 13 Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia and in Miawpukek, Newfoundland.

Next Steps

Data collection is expected to be completed by fall of 2024. Once complete, the IGDP team will analyze the data and produce a report for the re-

REGIONAL SOCIAL SURVEY (RSS)

The First Nations Regional Social Survey (RSS) is a new survey focusing on the well-being of First Nations children and families living on reserve and in northern communities. Gathering First Nations driven data on social and economic indicators, the RSS hopes to better understand the socioeconomic context and experiences of Mi'kmaq children and families.

The RSS data collection process is expected to begin in the spring of 2025, starting with community consent.

FIRST NATIONS LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT SURVEY (FNLED)

Overview

The First Nations Labour & Employment Development Survey was conducted in 2019 and 2020. The survey collected data on a number of factors such as employment trends, workforce participation, and economic conditions within Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. A comprehensive report was created and made public at a gathering in July 2023.

MI'KMAQ RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MRAC)

All national level surveys are reviewed and regionalized by the Mi'kmaq Research Advisory Committee (MRAC). This committee is comprised of technicians and practitioners who are knowledgeable of the subject matter of the survey. Most recently, the MRAC has been reviewing the Regional Social Survey, these reviews will continue in the fall of 2024.

ETHICAL SPACE: IDGP TEAM & THUNDERBIRD FOUNDATION'S EPIGENETICS TRAINING IN PICTOU LANDING

Our Information Governance & Data Projects (IGDP) team, along with the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, visited Pictou Landing First Nation and had the privilege of delivering a three-day training session titled, *"Indigenous Knowledge and Epigenetics: Creating Ethical Space for Mi'kmaq-Led Genetic, Epigenetic, and Other Biological Research in Nova Scotia"* in late May 2024.

This initiative aims to build capacity and create an ethical space for Mi'kmaq-led biological research, integrating traditional knowledge and lived experience.



REGIONAL DATA CENTRE FOR NOVA SCOTIA AND NEWFOUNDLAND

In addition to administering data related projects, the IGDP is supporting the development of a new independent non political regional data centre. This center will offer data and statistical services to communities, governments, advocacy organizations, and service delivery agencies in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Its goal is to provide the digital infrastructure and professional expertise needed to empower communities and the Mi'kmaq nation to govern, access, and repatriate their data.

Current Progress

The development of the regional data centre is community-driven, nation-based and rolling out in phases. The IGDP team has engaged with leadership in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and a Steering Committee has been established with key stakeholders who are starting to have these important and timely conversations.

IGDP is working on Phase 1 of the First Nations Data Governance Strategy, which includes conducting regional engagements and launching data pilot projects.

Next Steps

The aim is to have a functioning Data Centre in approximately four years. IGDP will continue to update and follow direction from leadership, with the Steering Committee guiding the strategic direction. The IGDP team is collaborating with other regions across the country.

For more information, contact:

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