

UNDRIP WORKING GROUP REPORT TO THE CANADIAN EVALUATION SOCIETY NATIONAL BOARD

MAY 2024

The Fellow Reflection that wrapped up the 2022 Conference included a challenge to CES to build on its commitment to reconciliation by exploring how CES can uphold the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In October 2022, the CES Board approved Terms of Reference for a Working Group mandated to:

- Explore how principles of UNDRIP can be adopted and implemented,
- Consider the implications of UNDRIP for CES and for evaluation theory and practice in Canada,
- Review CES progress on supporting the advancement of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, and how attention to UNDRIP can augment and strengthen this work,
- Develop recommendations to the National Board on advancing a proposed plan of action, and inform the development of the new Strategic Plan.

This work was intended to be aligned with the review and renewal of the CES Strategic Plan, and the Working Group was mandated to complete key deliverables and report back to the National Board by July 2024. The Working Group was co-chaired by CES President Andrealisa Belzer, with Debbie DeLancey as the Fellows representative. A call for volunteers was issued to CES members early in January 2023. Indigenous knowledge holders and advisors, both CES members and non-members, were also invited to share their wisdom and offer guidance to this work.

There was no formal membership in the group. The following people supported and contributed to aspects of the work as their time and interests allowed. Working group members and advisors included:

Co-Chairs:

- Andrealisa Belzer, CE, President
- Debbie DeLancey, CE, FCES

Working group members:

- Jeremy Braithwaite
- Lena Dedyukina
- Evan George, CE
- Trudy Johnson, CE
- Roman Katsnelson, CE
- Nick Petten
- Paulina Semeneć

Indigenous advisors to the working group include:

- Nicky Bowman
- Larry Bremner, CE, FCES
- Tammy Mudge
- Kim van der Woerd, FCES
- Serge Eric Yakeu Dijam, CE

During the first year of operations, the group developed a work plan, began to pull together best practices and resources, and supported C2023 conference planning with an active reconciliation lens.

From June 2023 to present, working group members and advisors have contributed to the following tasks:

- Providing input and feedback into the development of the first CES “Conference in a Box”;
- Providing input and feedback to the CES Working Group on Ethical Guidance during the development of updated Values and Ethics for CES;
- Participated in scientific review for c2024 proposals, specifically those purporting to be related to Indigenous evaluation or reconciliation;
- Identified members to support the CES EDI-ES Committee in reviewing proposals for a project related to collecting identity data;
- Identified members to support the review of proposals for the development of an e-Institute course on Ethics;
- Compiled resources related to Indigenous evaluation, reconciliation and UNDRIP that can be housed on the CES website and made available to all CES members and chapters;
- Provided comments on the development of the updated CES Strategic Plan;
- Provided input into the Treasury Board Secretariat during the review of the Government of Canada’s Policy on Results; and
- Developed for Board consideration a formal statement of the CES position on reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty to replace the 2016 motion responding to the TRC.

As we near the conclusion of our mandate, the Working Group recognizes that there is more work to be done, and recommends the following:

1. That the Board adopt by formal motion the Statement of Commitment to Advancing Reconciliation and Indigenous Sovereignty;
2. That the Board explore mechanisms to provide financial and organizational support to emerging networks of Indigenous evaluators so that they can continue the dialogue about what relationship, if any, they choose to create and maintain with CES; and
3. That the Board continue to advance the work of reconciliation at a national level, including exploring mechanisms for ensuring that Indigenous knowledge holders are engaged at all levels of decision-making.