

National Association  
of Friendship Centres  
Association nationale  
des centres d'amitié

## ***Research For A Better Life***

# NAFC's Approach to Urban Indigenous Research

### **Presenters:**

Jennifer Rankin, UPIP Program Manager  
Shady Hafez, Research Advisor

# Urban Indigenous Population

- According to the 2016 Census, more than 1,022,000 or 61.1% of Indigenous people in Canada live in a Canadian city.
- Indigenous youth, including urban Indigenous youth are the fastest growing population in Canada.
- Urban Indigenous peoples generally fair better than on-reserve First Nations or Northern Inuit peoples, but their socio-economic status remains lower than that of their non-Indigenous neighbours
- Many of today's Indigenous people migrate to urban centres from reserves for reasons such as employment, education or improved quality of life. While some urban Indigenous peoples have only known city life for 2, 3 or even 4 generations.



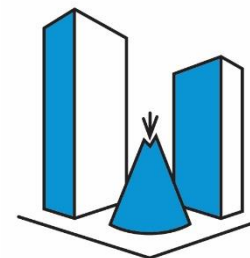
# Who We Are: National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)



- ❑ Established in 1972.
- ❑ the NAFC is democratically governed, and accountable to its membership.
- ❑ The NAFC's mission is, **"to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples in an urban environment by supporting self-determined activities which encourage equal access to, and participation in, Canadian Society; and which respect and strengthen the increasing emphasis on Indigenous cultural distinctiveness."**

# Friendship Centres

- With over 2,700 staff working in Centres across the country, Friendship Centres are one of the largest employers of Canada's urban Indigenous population. With a current physical infrastructure of 238 buildings in communities and cities from coast to coast to coast.
- Friendship Centres offer programs and services to all urban Indigenous people, regardless of status, for housing, child care, health, education, employment, culture and language, family, economic and community development and justice, all wraparound services that are crucial for poverty reduction.

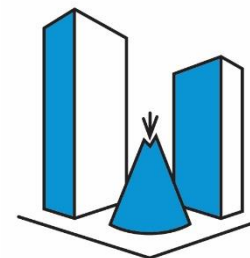


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# Community Research Into Policy

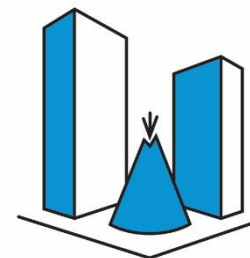
- ❑ Friendship Centres and urban Indigenous organizations are using research to leverage funds to access or continue to access funding for programs and services, create better partnerships with other service organizations, researchers, community members and government, and create research that feeds back into the community to improve the quality of life for the urban Indigenous population.



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# NAFC Research Framework

- ❑ NAFC Research Framework
  - Development of Research Ethics
  - Internal Research Policy
  - Research Screening Tool
  - Research Policy Statement
  - Research Ethics Board at NAFC
  - Training Modules (increased capacity)



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# NAFC–Pathways–PEKE



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NAFC-PATHWAYS-PEKE

- ❑ Support communities to ethically and meaningfully engage in community driven research by
- ❑ Building and supporting community capacity to partner in Pathways research.
- ❑ Building capacity of community to turn research into action by supporting the development and implementation of community specific knowledge mobilization plans.
- ❑ Building researcher capacity to understand and respect the urban Aboriginal research environment.
- ❑ Brokering and supporting research relationships between Friendship Centres and Implementation Research Teams (IRTs).
- ❑ Promoting urban Aboriginal research opportunities among post secondary students.
- ❑ Supporting and facilitating the scale-up of interventions.

# UAKN : Research For a Better Life

The UAKN is a research network with a focus on urban Indigenous concerns. Our goal is to contribute to a better quality of life for Indigenous peoples living in cities and towns by filling knowledge gaps in urban Indigenous research, programming and public policy.

**Goal: Research aimed at fostering “mino-biimaadiziwin” – the good life for urban Indigenous peoples**

This is achieved through funding high-quality, policy relevant that brings together perspectives from urban Indigenous communities, academia and government.







# URBAN ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

## Background of the UAKN

The UAKN is a multilateral partnership between urban Indigenous community-academia-government.

Since 2007, the partnership development has been led by the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) and Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC).

SSHRC Partnership Grant – 2.5 million over 5 years (2012–2017)

In 2016 we have 80 formal community/academic/government partners (national/regional) with expectations to add more partners in coming years, and many more informal partners.

The UAKN Secretariat is located at the NAFC, but is not exclusively for Friendship Centres, we have a variety of community partners.

[WWW.UAKN.ORG](http://WWW.UAKN.ORG)



# UAKN Highlights

- Over 80 regional research projects and counting!
- Over 60 students involved to date!
- 80 verified partners including co-applicants (44), collaborators (2) and partners (34).



# Community Driven Research Highlights: This is What I Wish You Knew UAKN Atlantic Project



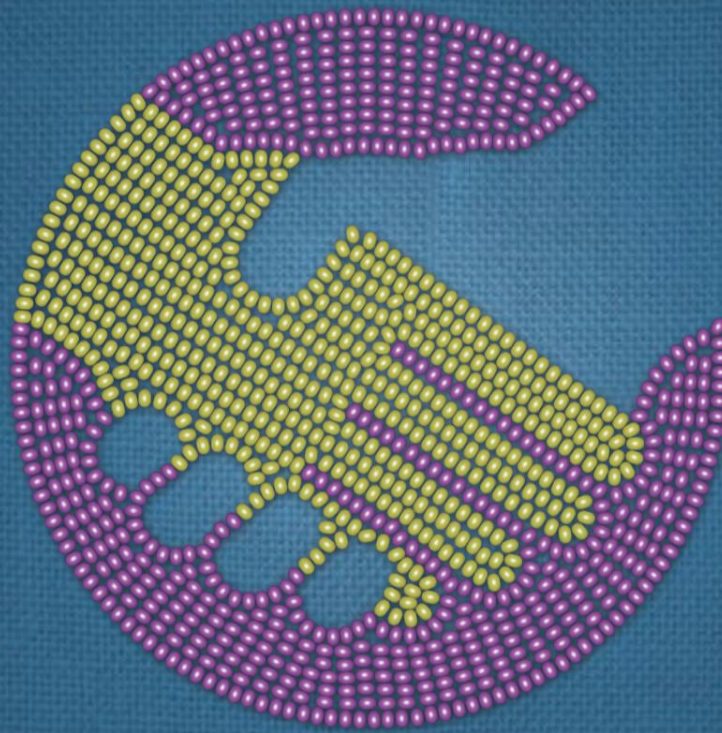
The clay tile mural, *This Is What I Wish You Knew*, was unveiled at the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre in Halifax June 21/Photo by Stephen Brake



# This is What I Wish You Knew







AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT  
**of First Nations and Métis**  
Traditional Knowledge Keepers

The Wîcihitowin Conference Committee

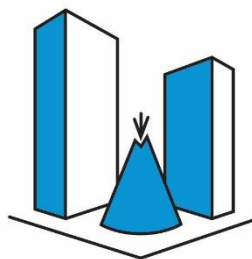
# Examining a Community-Based Theatre Program as a Source of Resilience and Well-being among Indigenous youth in Saskatoon – UAKN Prairie Project



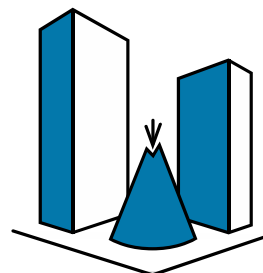
# Moving Forward with the UAKN

- ❑ NAFC has been granted institutional eligibility to hold the funds for the next SSHRC grant
- ❑ Continue with a community-driven and led approach
- ❑ Goal: Further support and build research capacity in Friendship Centres and urban Indigenous communities
- ❑ Not about excluding academic and government partners
- ❑ Looking for partners and letters of support in the renewal stage





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**NAFC-PATHWAYS-PEKE**



UAKN | RCUU  
Urban Aboriginal  
Knowledge Network | Réseau de connaissances des  
Autochtones en milieu urbain



CIHR IRSC



Indigenous and  
Northern Affairs Canada

Affaires autochtones  
et du Nord Canada



Canadian Institutes of Health Research  
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

# Thank you! Any Questions

Shady [shafez@nafc.ca](mailto:shafez@nafc.ca)

Jennifer [jrankin@nafc.ca](mailto:jrankin@nafc.ca)