

Policy Name: Ethical Conduct for Research with Indigenous Peoples and Communities
Originating/Responsible Department: Provost and Vice-President (Academic); Vice-President (Research, Innovation and International)
Approval Authority: Senior Management Policy Committee
Date of Original Policy: April 2026
Last Updated: April 2026
Mandatory Revision Date: April 2031
Contact: Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Teaching, Learning and Research

Policy Statement:

Research with Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous communities must adhere to ethical cultural protocols and practices to ensure that research is conducted in a way that honours the knowledge, rights and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples. Researchers are to approach their work with humility and prioritize the wellbeing and self-determination of the Indigenous communities involved. It is critical to ensure that the research not only benefits the community but strengthens and uplifts Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Carleton released the *Kinàmàgawin Report* in response to the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report. Call number 37 of the Report calls for Carleton University to establish an Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB): "We call for the establishment of an Indigenous Research Ethics Board with the purpose of ensuring that research conducted by Carleton faculty, students and staff take Indigenous governance, legal and cultural protocols into account."

The IREB will continue Carleton's advancement towards reconciliation efforts with partnering Indigenous communities and Peoples. The IREB will assist researchers at Carleton University in being thoughtful and respectful in their research relationships with Indigenous communities. Carleton University is committed to advancing these good-relations partnerships to accommodate Indigenous communities and to equip researchers.

Purpose:

To develop and uphold call number 37 of the *Kinàmàgawin Report* that establishes the Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB). The IREB was developed through consultation with Indigenous communities and Indigenous faculty at Carleton University. It was developed in partnership with the Office of Research Ethics and aligns with Carleton University's Research Ethics Boards (CUREB). The IREB was established to ensure that research conducted by Carleton University faculty and students impacting Indigenous Peoples and communities is done in a safe, ethical and respectful manner and adheres to the principles of Ownership Control Access and Possession (OCAP), Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2), and Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada. The IREB ensures that meaningful and purposeful research is beneficial to the Indigenous communities Carleton University supports and that researchers are cognizant of the reciprocal relationships required to have meaningful research partnerships.

The IREB promotes, informs and encourages researchers to examine their own work and outcomes. The IREB will do its part to encourage a high standard for relationships between Indigenous communities and researchers from Carleton University.

Scope:

This policy and its procedures applies to all research conducted by Carleton University faculty members, graduate students and research associates that involve Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous communities, Indigenous languages, Indigenous lands, waters and territories, Indigenous cultures and Indigenous knowledges.

It is the expectation that researchers conduct research through an ethical and respectful process that adheres to the *Ownership Control Access and Possession* (OCAP) Principles (<https://fnigc.ca/ocap->

[training](#)) of ethical research in research with Indigenous peoples and communities and aligns with other relevant policies, such as the *Responsible Conduct of Research Policy*, other legislation regulations, and collective agreements that pertain to ethical research and data management.

The role of the Indigenous Research Ethics Board is to identify risks, and ensure they are justified, minimized, and disclosed by the Researcher/Team. The IREB provides guidance and review to ensure that these processes and procedures are evident and present prior to research being conducted. The researcher must also follow the Carleton University Research Ethics Boards for Research involving human participants: CUREB-A for business, public affairs, arts and social sciences or CUREB-B for engineering and sciences (<https://research.carleton.ca/about-us/ovprie/office-of-research-ethics>).

Roles and Responsibilities:

Vice-President (Research, Innovation and International)

- Ensures the university community is informed of the Indigenous Research Ethics Board and this policy.

Office of Research Ethics

- Identifies research protocols that engages Indigenous research with Indigenous community and/or communities and directs the Researcher/Team to the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives), Ānako Indigenous Research Institute Research Facilitator.
- Ensures that all researchers are informed that they are required to submit their Research Protocol to the Indigenous Research Ethics Board prior to CUREB A or B.

Deans, Chairs and Directors

- Are responsible for informing faculty that they and their students are required to complete the Indigenous Research Ethics Board process if their research includes Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Are required to foster and encourage the use of the Indigenous Research Ethics Board (IREB) process for all research that is being conducted through and by Carleton University that involves Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Are expected to adhere to the Policy as it applies to research practice, guidance, and review.

Ānako Indigenous Research Institute

- Is responsible to encourage and inform researchers concerning ethical and respectful research relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Is expected to provide high-standard research practice guidance to foster meaningful and thoughtful partnerships with Indigenous peoples and communities.
- Is required to ensure that researchers engaged in research with Indigenous Peoples and communities are provided relevant information to support their research process.

Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives)

- Is responsible to guide researchers through the Indigenous Research Ethics Board process and the Indigenous Research Ethics Assessment Tool.
- Is required to convene the Indigenous Research Ethics Board as needed.
- Is responsible to act as Chair of the IREB and ensures that research proposals address concerns put forward by the IREB.

Indigenous Research Ethics Board

- Reviews all identified proposals related to research with Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Provides further examination and feedback.
- Provides feedback to the researcher(s) that addresses areas of concern.
- Protects Indigenous Peoples and communities from harmful research conducted by or through Carleton University.

Researchers

- Ensures that all research proposed adheres to the principles of OCAP, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2), and Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada.
- Ensures that all research proposed adheres to the Indigenous Research Ethics Board process outlined here.
- Ensures all research is conducted respectfully and meaningfully as it pertains to Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Aligns their project with other relevant policies such as Responsible Conduct of Research, and other legislation regulations, and collective agreements that pertain to ethical research and data management.

Contacts:

Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Teaching, Learning and Research

Links to Related Policies:

Responsible Conduct of Research

Appendix

Procedure:

Research that involves Indigenous Peoples and/or communities is required to adhere to the following process.

1. The Office of Research Ethics identifies Research Protocols that engages in research with Indigenous Peoples.
2. The Research Protocol is forwarded to the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives) who will then meet with the Researcher/Team.
3. The Researcher/Team is provided with the Indigenous Research Ethics Assessment Tool and guided on applying it to their Research Protocol.
4. The Researcher/Team Protocol and Indigenous Research Ethics Assessment Tool are reviewed by the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives). A list of required changes is provided to the Researcher/Team by Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives).

If further discussion and assessment are needed, the Indigenous Research Ethics Board (chaired by the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives) and comprised of two Indigenous faculty members and two Indigenous community members) will be formed by the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives) to review the Research Protocol in a timely manner.

The IREB will go through the Research Protocol and completed Research Ethics Assessment Tool and provide their feedback in writing to the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives). If further discussion is needed, a meeting will be struck by the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives) with the IREB to review all feedback together. Their feedback will be communicated to the Researcher/Team by the Manager, Administration and Research Services (Indigenous Initiatives) who ensures all required changes are completed.

5. The researcher must then follow the Carleton University Research Ethics Boards for Research involving human participants: CUREB -A for business, public affairs, arts and social sciences or CUREB-B for engineering and sciences (<https://research.carleton.ca/about-us/ovprii/office-of-research-ethics>).
6. Approvals from the IREB and CUREB A or B are needed before research can commence with Indigenous community and/or communities.