

## Indigenous Knowledge Centre

### Potential Scope of Projects

January 11, 2010

#### 1.0 IKC Philosophy

The IKC will adopt the following statement of philosophy, expressed in the Mohawk Language as follows:

Yawerenhatyen oh nahio:ten teyottennyonhatye kato:ken ne yonkwanikonhrayen:tas

“It does not matter of what continually changes, our understanding remains certain”

By this statement the IKC recognizes that change is inevitable, however, we firmly believe that the underlying philosophies, values, beliefs, ethics and traditions have remained generally strong within the Indigenous communities. However, to assure that those underlying assets continue to inform the decision-making of Indian communities we now need to better document and reinforce those traditions. The IKC is dedicated to developing and implementing a variety of programs as outline below.

We realize that we cannot accomplish all of these programs immediately, therefore we will spend the next few months assessing priorities and our own capacity to determine what will be the programmatic objectives for the KC for the next five years.

#### 2.0 IKC Art Projects

The arts, - visual, literary and performing - are important avenues for the expression of Indigenous knowledge. The IKC will build a strong foundation on the visual literacy of the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni and other Indigenous societies.

IKC Goal: Increase the use of culturally-defined aesthetics.

##### 2.1 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Art Reader – Best Essays written about Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Art

This publication will republish curatorial essays on the history, diversity and aesthetics of Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni arts, past and present. The essays will be the best of the works produced by Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni scholars, art curators, art historians and other scholars. This will make the previously published material, much of it not generally available, to wider audiences.

##### 2.2 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Design Guide – Historic Designs for Contemporary Artists

This electronic data base will provide historical background and interpretive essays on the use of stone, bone, bark, wood, clay, wood, fiber, shell, metal and mixed media. The guide is intended to provide artists and craftspeople with more accurate models of past artistic achievement. There will be three special sections:

- a) Changing Clothing Styles
- b) Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Symbols
- c) Contemporary Arts

### 2.3 Indigenous Arts – Visual Survey of archaeological, historic and Contemporary Arts.

There will three components to this section:

- a) Indigenous Artists on Art – Personal Reflections on the meaning and practice of art
- b) Indigenous Art History – An Overview of the arts of the Americas put into a historical sequence to coincide with social, cultural, political and economic forces of change.
- c) Reflections of State of the Arts - This will include power points to provide a historical context for looking at Indigenous arts.

2.4 Teaching About Indigenous Art – The best curriculum developed around the world for understanding, and appreciating art by Indigenous peoples. It will include visual resources for use by educators.

### **3.0 IKC Education Projects**

The seamless transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next is the only way to assure that Indigenous realities will continue.

IKC Goal: Increase access to the best educational theory and practice in order to increase the transfer of Indigenous Knowledge.

3.1 Indigenous Educational Theory – A research collection of essays on rethinking Indigenous education, placed in a chronology and summarized by the IKC staff. This collection will grow through time and become a primary resource on the development of Indigenous thought and philosophy of education.

3.2 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Curriculum Development – The IKC will assemble a research collection of Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni -produced curriculum to serve educators, educational planners and community groups. This collection will provide an historical assessment of what has been taught what perspectives were shared, and how culturally-sensitive materials were handled. The collection will feature exhibition scripts on the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni from museums in the US and Canada, as well as those produced by Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni cultural centre.

3.3 Indigenous Studies Curriculum - National Resource Bank of Indigenous-design curriculum to be used by educators to provide students with a first-hand point of view from a variety of Indigenous communities. This collection of curriculum and teaching aides will allow our own schools to teach more effectively, and accurately, about other Indigenous peoples.

3.4 Indigenous Educational Resources – The research collection will provide the most up-to-date recommended educational resources such as textbooks, multi-media materials, and other resources that can be used in teaching about Indigenous cultures, histories, arts and languages.

3.5 Countering Stereotypes – There will be a special collection of materials on how best to dismantle cultural and racial stereotypes. Existing materials will be collected and accessible to educators. The IKC staff will develop and produce materials for educators and community groups to deal more specifically with Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni stereotypes.

#### 4.0 IKC Indigenous Cultures

*Our spiritualities, identities, languages, and systems of governance come from the land. The sustenance of our wisdom, worldviews, philosophies, and values comes from the land. The source of our knowledge and our teachers themselves come from the land and the spirit-world it encompasses.*

Leanne Simpson

Trent University, Canada (Indigenous Environmental Education for Cultural Survival)

*Culture is a complex, multifaceted concept. It is a term used to cover the social structure, languages, belief systems, institutions, technology, art, foods, and traditions of particular groups of people. The term is used to define a group's way of life and its own view of itself and of other groups, as well as to define the material goods it creates and uses, the skills it has developed, and the behaviors it transmits to each successive generation. . . Given the complexity of culture it is important to have an understanding of its nature and spatial distribution. It is useful—from a geographic point of view—to focus on the languages, beliefs, institutions, and technologies that are characteristics of a culture. (UNESCO)*

IKC Goal: Increase our understanding of the underlying philosophies of Indigenous cultures.

4.1 Epistemologies - Embodied Ways of Knowing – What kinds of knowledge are essential to maintain Ögwë'ö:we:ka:'? What Philosophies, Values, Ethics, and Morals are included in the concept of Ögwë'ö:we:ka:'?

Wikipedia defines **epistemology** as a branch of philosophy that studies the nature, methods, limitations, and validity of knowledge and belief. Epistemology primarily addresses the following questions: "What is knowledge?", "How is knowledge acquired?", and "What do people know?"

4.2 Oral History – Lesson from Life - What can be done to assure the continuation of our oral histories?

4.3 Traditional Ecological Knowledge – Enhancing Relationships to Nature - What is the scope of Indigenous Ecophilosophy that can be used to protect, preserve and revitalize the surrounding ecosystem?

4.4 Indigenous Science – Bicultural Approaches to Science - What is the ecological framework for environmental education that is based upon Indigenous principles and values?

4.5 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Epistemology – Knowledge and Belief

IKC Goal: Increase community understanding of local knowledge and belief. Get the learners reconnected to the land as the ultimate teacher and healer.

Our goals will be three-fold:

- a) Provide Background information on Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Philosophy
- b) Implement Programs to reinforce cultural-based learning
- c) Create a Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni culture blog that raises different philosophical issues each month and gathers opinions and perspectives on those issues from our subscribers.

Taking the view that Ögwë'ö:we:ka: means the customs, values, mores, ethics, philosophy, traditions, beliefs and patterns of behavior of the Ancestors, IKC will develop position papers on those aspects of culture. We will develop a discussion paper on the scope and focus of Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Epistemology that will include the following:

- a. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Philosophy* - the search for understanding of the basic truths of the native universe.
- b. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Values* - shared principles that are considered important in life.
- c. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Ethics* - the moral philosophy and principles that determine what is right and what is wrong in the mind of the traditional Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni .
- d. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Mores* - the customs that are considered essential to maintaining the characteristics of the community.
- e. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Life Skills* – set of skills acquired by education or direct experience used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life.
- f. *Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni Oral History* - recording, preservation and interpretation of historical information, based on collective memory, personal experiences and recollections of the speaker or storyteller.

To follow the White Roots of Peace to their source is to be on a healing journey, as well as a journey of self-discovery. No one takes that journey alone as there are many helpers along the way. The IKC believes that culture can only be comprehended by those living within it. At the same time, we can provide inspiration, incentives and information for those who are beginning their journey.

We will also redefine the above epistemology in Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni terminology, thereby expanding and clarify the meaning of these aspects of culture. In doing so we will attempt to answer the following questions from a Hodinohso:ni/Rotinoḥsyonni point of view:

**What's out there?** (Metaphysics) - Study of Existence and the nature of existence.

**How do I know about it?** (Epistemology) - Study of Knowledge and how we know about reality and existence.

**What should I do?** (Ethics) - Study of Action because it is impossible to make choices without knowledge.

**What actions are permissible?** (Politics) - Study of Force and how people should act in a proper society and what is proper

**What can life be like?** (Aesthetics) - Study of Arts and sense of life

## 6.0 IKC Health

Healthiness or wellness is a core feature of Indigenous societies that is in need of restoration as western medicine has not been able to stem the tide of our decline in overall health.

IKC Goal: Increase our understanding of the healthiness and wellbeing from indigenous points of view, and provide a critique of western practices as they are applied to our health.

### 6.1 History of Indigenous Health Practices – From the Sweat Lodge to Intensive Care

The research collection will contain documents and interpretive essays of how health and wellness practices have changed within our communities. This will provide a historical overview of how traditional practice undermined by colonized system of health care.

### 6.2 Current State of Indigenous Health – Fighting the Tidal Wave

This research collection will gather information and data to provide one stop shopping for health research. We will collect information from US and Canada.

### 6.3 Research Papers – The Current Thinking

There is a great number of research papers on Indigenous health, most aimed at the academic audience. This project will encourage Indigenous health studies learners to research these materials in order to provide Indian communities with more accessible the research findings and recommendations.

### 6.4 Indigenous Wellness Strategies – Return to the Teachings

This collection will provide a general survey of tradition-based health and wellness strategies, developed and employed within Indigenous communities. The intent of this collection is to provide community health planners with inspirational and practical models for local development.

### 6.5 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Health – Peacefulness/Healthiness/Righteousness

This special collection will examine the various community health programs and provide up-to-date data on what works and what is not working within Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni communities in NY, ON, PQ, WS, and OK.

### 6.6 Plant Knowledge – Medicines, Foods and Dyes

This collection will take the plants identified in the book Iroquois Botany and attached culturally-based information to what has already been published, such as the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni names of the plants, clear photographs for plant identification, and other relevant information to better

understand the cultural significance of each plant. There will also be background information on the ecology of the plants, the state of their health and ways to protect indigenous plants.

#### 6.7 Traditional Foods – Sacred Foods are Good Medicine

This section will contain the following:

- 1) Information of Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni Heirloom seeds
- 2) Seed Bank for assuring the perpetuation of heirloom foods.
- 3) Information on Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni gardening practices
- 4) Information on Indigenous nutrition
- 5) Educational material to encourage families on traditional foods and recipes

#### 6.8 Indigenous Garden Practices – Restoring the Seeds of Life

The IKC will operate a demonstration garden as both a place of learning as well as a way to perpetuate heirloom seeds. We will develop Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni educational strategies that use gardening as a form of experiential learning.

### **7.0 IKC History**

In order to better figure where we are headed, it is important to understand how we got in the situation we find ourselves today.

7.1 The Ancient Ones – This will be a collection of Indigenous stories about the First Humans. We will collect information that surfaced during the Kennewick Man court case, in which the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni submitted an amicus brief. This will also be a collection of Creation Story as told by the Indigenous knowledge holders within the communities of today.

7.2 First Contacts – This will provide an insider's point of view of the context and consequence of the first encounters of our peoples. The time of first contact is critical to the definition of aboriginal rights under Canadian Law. This research collection will collect stories, maps, place names and other relevant information to determine the scope and nature of the first cultural encounters between Indigenous People and Colonizing Nations.

7.3 Defining Events – This research collection will examine the background and legacy of 12 Defining Events in Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni History. This model will then be used to encourage other Indigenous communities and nations to provide the same type of summary. The documents and manuscripts for this section will increase through time.

7.4 Historical Outlines – A collection of historical outlines on a wide variety of events. Our primary focus will be on the use of wampum in the historic and oral history record. In addition, we will provide a historical summary of the events, personalities and documents that impacted on our history in every century since the first encounters.

7.5 Five Centuries of Image Making – This collection will provide four research components:

- a) Outline of five hundred years of image making
- b) Essays on the impact of stereotyping
- c) Strategies, techniques and resources for dismantling stereotypes

d) Images of stereotyping

## **8.0 IKC Language**

Our languages are critical to the survival and enhance of Indian knowledge. The IKC will focus on those areas of utmost need, not be addressed by any other community agency.

8.1 Cultural Mapping – Cultural mapping has been recognized by UNESCO as a crucial tool and technique in preserving the world's intangible and tangible cultural assets. This project would be to reclaim our relationship to land features by producing a modern map that renames places and features according to our own understanding. The IKC would provide for a series of community forums in which people bring their own understanding of these land forms and names and we create a large map of Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni territory. This will allow scholars in the future to use our frame of reference in looking at place names, and the significance of place. How can we use cultural mapping to preserve and promote cultural heritage, reinforce indigenous/ local knowledge, affirm dignity and strengthen community control over cultural resources?

8.2 State of Indigenous Languages – This research collection will assemble the major reports produced to document the current state of Indigenous languages. Working with the Indigenous Language Institute of Santa Fe, NM and other agencies across Canada, we will

8.3 Language Acquisition Theory – The current best practices of language acquisition for both first and second language learners.

8.4 Indigenous Case Studies – The successful strategies developed and employed by Indigenous languages teachers. The case studies will summarize the essential features of these programs to provide others with new ideas to pursue in the development of their own local program.

8.5 Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni Language Curriculum – This will be a compilation of the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni languages curriculum being employed by all of the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinohsyonni communities. This collection will document the current state of Language instruction and provide for the most effective lesson plans, assessments and teaching notes that will enable any teacher to develop more effective teaching materials.

8.6 Language Materials – This collection will be an archive of all research papers, proposals, reports and any other materials that discuss Indigenous languages.

8.7 Audio Archives – This collection will provide for the digitization of all audio resources acquired by the IKC for internal use by Language instructors and language curriculum developers.

8.8 Language Documents – This is an archival collection of historic language documents that need to be translated and re-written in modern linguistic style, such as the Henry Orthography.

## **9.0 IKC Law and Justice**

IKC Goal: Increase access into two concepts of law, governance and justice – Indigenous and western.

### **9.1 Governance**

*Traditional Governing Models* – This collection will document the form, structure and operations of traditional Indigenous forms of governance. These models are disappearing rapidly so we can use the internet to ask scholars and practitioners to send us examples of such.

## 9.2 Law

- a) *Indigenous Law* – There is no collection of laws from an Indigenous perspective. Instead, most academic and legal programs focus on laws by colonizing nations that are applied to Indigenous peoples. This collection will be a compilation of documents, manuscripts and copies of indigenous law.
- b) *The Great Law and Its Laws* – This research collection will gather all of the written and documented versions of the Great Law, with the caution that no written version is complete nor accepted by the Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni as authentic.
- c) *Law Regarding Indigenous Peoples* – While there is much information available about such laws, there is a need for a new organization of those laws with the context of the recently adopted United Nations Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples. We will work with legal scholars to provide this type of regrouping as an aide for legal affairs researchers.
- d) *History of International Indigenous Rights* – We will compile a historic outline to illustrate the themes, trends and achievements of the Indigenous rights movement.

## 9.3 Justice

How can Indigenous Nations achieve justice within the legal framework of the colonizing nations? Are there international avenues for justices that have the power of enforcement over offending nations? This collection will document all forms of justice available to Indigenous nations.

- a) Indigenous Models
- b) Canada Court Cases
- c) US Court Cases
- d) International Court Cases
- e) Community Justice
- f) Environmental Justice
- g) Gender Equity

## 10.0 **IKC Treaty**

IKC Goal: Create a comprehensive registry of treaties, agreements and compacts that impact on Indigenous lives.

10.1 Treaties – A research collection of treaty documents, with emphasis on Indigenous Scholars on Treaties, to include the following:

- a) Indigenous treaties and the United Nations Treaty Study
- b) Index of French Treaties

- c) Index of Dutch Treaties
- d) Index of British Treaties
- e) Index of US Treaties
- f) Index of Canadian Treaties
- g) Other Treaties
- h) Agreements
- i) Compacts

## **11.0 IKC Nation Building**

IKC goal: Provide access to the best practices and experiences in Indigenous nations building, using the Confederacy Eight Points of Jurisdiction as a way to organize these efforts.

### **11.1 State of Indigenous Nations: Leadership Development**

This research collection will include materials from the following:

- a) Honoring Contributions in the Governance of American Indian Nations (Honoring Nations) is a national awards program that identifies, celebrates, and shares outstanding examples of tribal governance. The program is administered by the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Honoring Nations was launched in 1998 with the support of the Ford Foundation, which sponsors similar governmental best practices programs around the globe.
- b) American Indian Leadership Program at Penn State to support intellectual development, create positive change, and function in complex environments, and help to define and shape the future of American Indians and Alaska Natives and their communities.
- c) MEDICINE SHIELD AMERICAN INDIAN LEADERSHIP THROUGH SERVICE INSTITUTE  
The Medicine Shield American Indian Leadership Through Service Institute seeks to develop traditional American Indian leadership models of community change based on community service, elder care initiatives, and the recognition of the importance of oral history among all tribal cultures. Students in the Leadership and Policy Studies courses serve as field researchers and policy advocates for this initiative.
- d) FNTI Hodinohso:ni/Rotinonhsyonni Leadership Initiative.
- e) The Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management, and Policy (NNI), housed at The University of Arizona's Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, serves as a self-determination, governance, and development resource for Indigenous nations in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere.
- f) Banff Centre for Aboriginal Leadership and Management Program, providing relevant, impactful leadership development programs designed for community leaders to lead change and achieve results.

### **11.2 State of Indigenous Nations: Economic Development**

This will be a series of essays on the cultural, ecological and economic consequences of resource development, as experienced by Indigenous communities.

### 11.3 Consultation Best Practices

This program will be to research, document and advocate for the best practices in Aboriginal; engagement, consultation and facilitation, with the end goal of protecting long-term Indigenous cultural practices and interests.

There will also be critiques of the current systems of consultation that diminish Indigenous rights, and recommended of countering those slippery slopes.

## 12.0 **IKC Research Ethics**

IKC goal: Provide best practices of defining and protecting Indigenous rights in a variety of research formats.

### 12.1 Indigenous Research Constructs

This research collection will provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date rethinking of research theory and methodologies from an Indian scholarship perspective.

### 12.2 Indigenous Research Standards

This research collection will gather the best practices in local research standards for Indigenous communities.

## 13.0 **IKC Wampum**

IKC Goal: Increase our understanding of the meaning of the wampum belts.

13.1 Wampum Inventory – This component will be a data base of all the known wampum belts, strings, ornaments, and other wampum items known in museum and university collections around the world.

13.2 Wampum Descriptions – This component will provide a summary of the meaning of the wampum belts, gathered from both written and oral history sources. It will include a photograph or drawing of the belt.

13.3 History of Use of Wampum – This component will summarize the use of wampum and contain other articles, essays and publication on wampum.