

Tâpwêwin “great and careful consideration”: An Indigenous Partnership Research Protocol

Taylor Wilson, MDP Student, The University of Winnipeg (corresponding author)

taywilson260@gmail.com

1-204-801-2378

234-2235 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, MB

R3J 0L9

Rachel Kalaba, MDP Student, The University of Winnipeg

Ashley Saulog, MDP Student, The University of Winnipeg

Nontokozo Ndlovu, MDP Student, The University of Winnipeg

1.0 Introduction

This document was designed for clarity of priorities that the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association’s (NADA) has in potential research partnerships. This document will include an overview of NADA’s history and current priorities when working with Indigenous communities. It will outline the *Tâpwêwin* Research Partnership Framework including the Decision-Making Wheel teachings that are the guiding values, and the appendices - Pre-Screen (Appendix A), Application Review (Appendix B), and the Partnership Agreement (Appendix C) - that the applicants must complete and send to NADA for them make a careful consideration.

The Pre-Screen application’s primary objective is to streamline the application process for NADA’s selection team and potential partners to identify if the proposed research projects align with NADA’s values and priorities. The Pre-Screen allows us to screen out projects that do not fulfill our three major priorities and allow for a full review of the projects that do meet the priorities.

The Application Review is structured based on the four components: values, partnerships, decision-making wheel, and Indigenous knowledge. The Application Review is designed for NADA to make an informed decision on the project and partnership details and acts as a reflective practice for the applicants regarding their own organizational and project objectives.

Finally, the Partnership Agreement outlines the summary of NADA’s priorities and partnership framework that applicants must agree to abide by and uphold. The Partnerships Agreement gives full details of what is expected of the applicant after they have read through the Pre-screen and filled in the Application. This is a legally binding document that states the consequences and steps taken when the researcher or NADA decides not to follow what is expected of them. The agreement is rooted in the values of NADA and Indigenous People. It includes the following:

- Termination of Partnerships when not aligning with NADA’s values and Priorities.
- Termination can be done at any time of the research to protect Indigenous communities and the dignity of the organization.
- Withdrawal of support from NADA

- NADA should also adhere to these terms and that the researcher can withdraw from the research when NADA does not uphold these priorities.

The conclusion will summarize that utilizing a research partnership framework is essential for NADA and Indigenous communities to prioritize communities, continue reconciliation work, and further self-determination in diabetes research.

2.0 National Aboriginal Diabetes Association

NADA works to “address diabetes and promote healthy lifestyles among Indigenous peoples, gives information and resources for Indigenous peoples with diabetes and their families, communities and health care providers, programs and services for Indigenous people affected by diabetes”¹. For the past 24 years, NADA has been the only organization providing resources and fighting injustices of Indigenous people on issues of diabetes.

NADA aims to protect the dignity of communities, by providing resources for people to be more informed and aware of diabetes. NADA expressed concerns of having researchers who want to partner with them to research in Indigenous communities, but they often exclude them in findings and publishing of the findings. This contributes to publications that exploit Indigenous communities. Wilson explains that there is a need for researchers to have relational accountability with communities and participants as this will help in what should be disclosed and what not to be disclosed to the public². Researching in Indigenous communities means interfering with peoples’ day-to-day activities to get the information they are looking for. While researchers may not be aware of valuable and sacred knowledges in the community, much about Indigenous people has been exploited, breaking the trust of the researcher to participant or community.

Thus, this protocol serves to protect Indigenous people and their knowledge and stories. This protocol will help NADA and research participants to agree on partnership expectations.

2.1 *The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association’s Priorities*

Understanding NADA’s concerns, researchers wishing to partner with them should align with NADA’s priorities. The following section further discusses these priorities and how they align with NADA.

Reconciliation

What is reconciliation? It means the bringing together of Indigenous peoples and Canadian settlers to repair relationships and come to shared understandings about the history and self-determined future of Indigenous peoples. This means working to overcome inequalities between Indigenous peoples and Canadian settlers, including poverty and income, health, living standards, life expectancy, and prejudice and racism³. Reconciliation aims at building relationships and trust between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. NADA, the only organization representing Indigenous people with diabetes, aims at reconciling people with the information and findings collected in Indigenous communities, to aim at reconciliation and improvement rather than exploitation and discrimination.

- Research that will realize that the roots of diabetes are not self-inflicted but colonially inflicted to Indigenous peoples. (Call to Action 18)⁴

- Research that aims at advocating the government to improve Indigenous people's wellbeing. (Call to Action 19)⁴
- Research that will follow the four R's – respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and relationality. All these, act towards reconciliation and progress.
- Research that will respect the values of Indigenous peoples and make them their guidelines during research.

First Nations, Inuit and Métis are diverse populations whose health is affected by the myriad social determinants of health, as well as a complex history of colonialism, racism, oppression, and starvation. Social determinants have a significant impact on disease and recovery experiences within these communities.

Self-Determination

Henderson defines self-determination as, “Indigenous self-government where there is the formal structure through which Indigenous communities may control the administration of their people, land, resources and related programs and policies, through agreements with federal and provincial governments”⁵. NADA encourages self-determination for all communities to have the right to accept the research they want to be done and how they want it to be carried out.

- Research that will consult and be given consent by individuals, communities, and leadership where appropriate before conducting their research.
- Research that will respect leaderships, that exist beyond a political level, found in Indigenous communities.
- Research that will be community driven. (Call to Action 19)⁴

Prioritize Indigenous Peoples

Prioritizing Indigenous peoples and acknowledging them as the original inhabitants and caretakers of this land which is now called Canada³. Realizing that Canadian policies have continuously oppressed Indigenous people, leading to social problems, the move towards reconciliation and self-determination is navigating the priorities of Indigenous peoples, their wellbeing, communities and relations.

- Researchers need consent from Elders and the community at large to carry out their research stating clearly what they would be doing.
- The researcher should truthfully, and be held accountable to, disclose only what the community has agreed to be published.
- Researchers need to see the importance of Indigenous Knowledge and should be willing to have the community and Elders as co-authors.
- The researcher should be aware of Indigenous values and respect them throughout the research.

3.0 Purpose of Indigenous Focused Research Guidelines

NADA envisions diabetes-free communities that promote healthy environments and prevent and manage diabetes through partnerships with communities and organizations. We have been approached by numerous research projects by national organizations and charities interested in our support investing in diabetes research among Indigenous communities. The primary issue that we recognize among the proposals asking for our support is that the organizations are not using an Indigenous research framework to approach working with Indigenous communities

about diabetes. Research itself is a highly institutionalized system that should enable, heal, educate, be self-determining, and be informed by and respect the community⁶. By not abiding by an Indigenous research framework, organizations are undermining the value of Indigenous knowledge in diabetes research and thus not aligning with NADA's values of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, self-determination of research and programming involving their communities, and Indigenous communities being involved in research and programming processes that directly and indirectly affect their communities. As Kovach explains, knowing the protocols means ensuring that the activities reflect the community's teachings and are done well⁷. NADA has developed an Indigenous research protocol that is inspired by the decision-making wheel teachings and allows for NADA to address the importance of utilizing Indigenous research methodologies as a tool for challenging organizations to position their research interests in Indigenous knowledge. NADA has named the research protocol *Tâpwêwin* to explain First Nations laws that require striving to discuss such subject matters with great and careful considerations of potential partnerships between NADA, communities, and other organizations.

4.0 The Decision-Making Wheel as an Indigenous Research Partnership Framework

Carlson describes the importance of using “research methods that seek to equalize power, embrace humility, emphasize critical reflexivity, attend to subjectivity and emotion, promote the participation and self-determination of research participants and communities, engage in accountable relationships, give and share reciprocally, share control and ownership, and collaboratively contribute to social change”⁸. The decision-making wheel is based on the concept of Indigenous research frameworks, and it is a model for inclusion in research when working with Indigenous communities. According to Kovach, Indigenous research frameworks describe research methodologies that encompass tribal or Indigenous epistemologies⁷. This is the basis of why the decision-making wheel was chosen as the foundation for our Indigenous research framework. In relation to Indigenous epistemologies, the focus is bringing culture, Indigenous way of knowing and overall ‘self- in-relation’⁷. The decision-making wheel was adopted from *Full Circle: First Nations, Métis, Inuit Ways of Knowing* created by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF)⁹ (See Figure 1).



Figure 1 - *Full Circle: First Nations, Métis, Inuit Ways of Knowing* (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 2012)

The project was aimed at addressing the current shortage of curricular materials that focus on First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and culture. Furthermore, this model was adopted from the symbol of the circle or medicine wheel which was used throughout. It is important to note that not all First Nations, Métis or Inuit peoples use the medicine wheel, but it is useful as an organizational tool and provides a holistic and balanced approach and a model that can embrace researching with partners. According to the OSSTF the concept of the decision-making wheel refers to the unending journey that many Indigenous peoples continue to find themselves on as they claim and reclaim their culture, their land, and their identity⁹.

According to Ross the medicine wheel can be used for reflecting on one's life and striving for a balance that the wheel presents through four equal parts¹⁰. It's an imaginary circle upon which everything can be plotted. The concept is one which one can see themselves positionally rather than occupying a specific moment in linear time. As a result, space may replace time in self-determination, and used holistically the medicine wheel is supposed to be a teaching tool.

We picked this model based on the historical understandings that Indigenous peoples and communities are among the most studied on earth^{2,6,11}. Furthermore, this model encompasses Indigenous beliefs, values, and customs as part of the research process and thus the research becomes inherently Indigenous. Wilson narrates that an important aspect of the emerging styles of research is that Indigenous peoples themselves decide when and where they are studied¹⁰. Furthermore, as an Indigenous research paradigm grows and evolves, there is need to go beyond the tendency to compare with mainstream research, and the need to develop theory, practice and methods that are uniquely Indigenous, this is what our model is working to achieve in totality.

This model of research allows encompassing of Indigenous worldviews and 'being.' The concept chosen does not only allow Indigenous worldviews, but incorporates cosmology, worldview, epistemology and ethical beliefs². In this methodology, the circle is often seen and never ending, this is further supported by other scholars who have referred to the circle as a form of teaching or a healing circle¹⁰. We adopted the circle to acknowledge that Indigenous epistemologies are ongoing processes of research, learning, and re-learning.

In choosing the decision-making wheel as a conceptual framework, we acknowledge that conceptual frameworks make visible the way we see the world. Within this research framework we aim to provide insight into the researcher's belief about knowledge production, and how these beliefs will impact the research project. The content and form of conceptual frameworks assist in illustrating the researcher's standpoint, and therefore giving the reader insight into interpretative lens that influences the research. Kovach notes the connection between conceptual frameworks and the interpretation of findings⁷. She quotes anti oppressive researchers Potts and Brown — "we carry our framework, which is not inherently good or bad, around with us and it is through this framework that we view the data"¹². In acknowledging this concept and making it visible, it becomes an individual and collective process. Therefore, in our analysis, we note that the conceptual framework of the decision-making wheel is one that encompasses theoretical epistemologies or research frameworks. This type of process is one that unifies the above frameworks into Indigenous research. Kovach acknowledges such a process when dealing with research as necessary and that research is an act of searching, and so should be one that engages all cultures and be informed by that culture⁷.

Qualitative Indigenous research should be reflexive as well as reflective⁷. This model allows both reflective and reflexive practices. Furthermore, this is a model that offers an opportunity to decolonize the western components of partnerships. The introduction of Indigenous knowledge

in any form of academic discourse (research or otherwise) must ethically include the influence of colonial relationships and thereby introducing a decolonizing perspective. This model aims to improve the way research is done with and for Indigenous peoples, by not assuming to come to study Indigenous problems but instead to come and work and research with Indigenous communities and in that process, create partnerships⁶. In reflecting on the decision-making wheel as a research framework, Kovach notes that researchers have a task of applying conceptual frameworks that demonstrate the theoretical and practical underpinnings of their research, and, if successful, these frameworks illustrate ‘the thinking’ behind ‘the doing’⁷. Therefore, it is imperative that in our framework we acknowledge that the illustration is based on a practical way of creating partnerships with and for Indigenous communities that allows the ‘thinking’ and the ‘doing’ to take place.

5.0 Research Guidelines – *Tâpwêwin*

5.1 *Tâpwêwin* and the Framework Wheel

The title of this framework, *Tâpwêwin*, was chosen for two reasons. The first reason was based in its translation. The name of this framework is a Cree word meaning “speaking the truth” or “speaking with precision and accuracy”. The tangible part of this framework is its application process (see Appendices A-C). This application was designed to help NADA determine whether a partnership with interested researchers would be of benefit to Indigenous peoples and themselves. This application process requires researchers to be as transparent and honest as possible – speaking the truth. They are held accountable to their word as put out in the application through the Partnership Agreement (see Appendix C). The second reason *Tâpwêwin* was chosen was in its context. The word is often spoken in relation to treaties or partnerships. When treaties are signed, signatories are obligated to speak with *Tâpwêwin*¹³. This allows them to discuss the treaties with great and careful consideration. The use of *Tâpwêwin* implies that the partnership between NADA and researchers are ones that are made with great and careful consideration.

The framework was created in the image of a circle for many reasons. The circle signifies a continuum and holism. In many Indigenous cultures, a circle is a sacred concept, for example the medicine wheel. It represents balance, reciprocity, cohesion, and renewal. Central to our framework is values. When values are centered, everyone understands where each are coming from and can be accountable to and respectful of each other’s, and their own, values. The next layer of the framework is relationships. These relationships are built based on mutual respect and accountability. They are also equal in their power. No one partner is above the other. Once relationships are formed, we move to the decision-making wheel. This wheel represents the research process. These parts are then embedded in Indigenous knowledge. They should not exist outside of them or it can create imbalance. Then finally, throughout the entire wheel, we are always considering respect of others, research that is relevant and relational, being reciprocal in our relationships, and exercising responsibility over our own lives¹⁴.



Figure 2 - Tâpwêwin Research Protocol Wheel

5.2 Values

To establish if a relationship with you as a researcher is an appropriate partnership, NADA would like you to share the values that influence your research. Some research methodologies regard values as barriers to research, but in Indigenous research methodologies, these values are integral to their success. Openly declaring these values is reflexive, and we believe that positioning yourself through your values allows us to understand your interests and intentions⁶. Research that does not reinforce, or at the very least, respect, both NADA's and Indigenous people's values can be dangerous in that it does not support self-determination, reconciliation, and it denies Indigenous existence. By acknowledging your values, you are showing personal integrity and collective responsibility to our relationship.

5.2 Relationships

Relationships are an integral part of doing research, especially with Indigenous populations. The history of relations with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada has been tumultuous, and in an era of reconciliation and decolonization, it is essential these relationships are equal, accountable, collaborative, and reciprocal^{7, 8}. Communities, partners, and researchers are equal partners, and the whole purpose is to create equality within the research paradigm. This is to reduce the problem of a dominant scientific approach to Indigenous research. The relationship you enter with NADA is very much akin to a treaty. In First Nations traditions, these treaty relationships are governed by laws, values, and principles between the Creator and us¹³. Establishing a relationship based on these protocols builds trust between all parties. Through sharing all partnerships and each partners' roles and responsibilities in your project, NADA is better able to understand our role and responsibilities to you as a partner and see how we are all connected and accountable to one another.

5.3 The Decision-Making Wheel

There are four quadrants in the decision-making wheel. Each quadrant represents a different process that occurs during the timeline of a research project.

Idea: This quadrant represents the inception of a research project. The idea quadrant is situated in the Eastern doorway. This doorway represents the spring, the beginning of a journey. Research ideas can stem from previous research, grow out of interest, or more importantly, be brought to the attention of a researcher by a community. It is important that NADA understands where your research idea comes from so we may know if it is community-based (involving a community but brought in from the outside) or community-driven (self-determined by the community).

Decision: This quadrant represents the second stage of a research project – where you are planning, applying for ethics and funding, and making big decisions around your project. This quadrant is situated in the Southern doorway. This doorway represents the summer, when everything is new and growing quickly. This is the stage of research where the most important decisions are made, you are consulting partners and community members. Here is where your project is set up for success or failure. It is important that NADA understands your processes and plans so they can know whether they will play a role in guiding your project.

Action: This quadrant represents the hands-on part of your project. This is where you are implementing methods and collecting and analyzing your data. This quadrant is situated in the Western doorway. This doorway represents end of summer where you begin to harvest, enjoy the fruits of your labor, and prepare to finish. It is important that NADA understands your methods for data collection and analysis and how you will deal with unexpected changes. By doing so, they can make sure to keep you accountable to all involved.

Result: This quadrant represents the final stage of your project. It is situated in the Northern doorway. This doorway represents end of the year, or a remembrance period where you contemplate what has happened. It is a time of reflection and where you honor those who have been involved in your journey. This is where you report on your findings – back to the partners, community, and project participants. Reciprocity and accountability play a large role in this quadrant. It is important to explain to NADA how you will honor those who have played a role in your project.



Figure 3 - The Decision-Making Wheel

5.4 Indigenous Knowledge

The parts of our framework, as mentioned earlier, are embedded in Indigenous knowledge. Indigenous values, relationships, and decision-making cannot be discussed in isolation of Indigenous knowledge. Wilson discusses that an Indigenous research paradigm that aligns with Indigenous values and he states that every researcher should consider the axiology, epistemology, ontology, and methodology that they will use and make sure it aligns with the people or community in which the research is being done². Local and Indigenous knowledge refers to the understanding, skills, and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interactions with their natural surroundings. For Indigenous peoples, local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life¹⁵. Many communities involved in research are “held hostage to expert research from the West and to models of development that negate local and Indigenous knowledge”⁶. By sharing how your research is embedded in Indigenous knowledge – through epistemologies, ontologies, and methodologies – NADA is better able to understand how your research centers Indigenous peoples in a way that is respectful, reciprocal and shows how your research relates and is responsible to Indigenous peoples.

5.5 The Four R's – Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility, and Relationality

An essential part of the framework to always consider are the four R's. These are represented in Figure 1 as arrows, as they are an ongoing practice when doing research. Doing research is a long-term commitment, and throughout the entire process, each of the four R's should be considered and reconsidered as processes, methods, and relationships grow and change.

Respect: Respect is an integral part of any relationship. Acknowledging differences and respecting them is key to building trusting and long-lasting relationships. NADA needs to know that your research is going to respect us, the participants, the values, and the land your research is held on.

Reciprocity: A key concept in Indigenous cultures is reciprocity. Often research practices have been one-sided, in that researchers usually take what is shared with them and give nothing in return. Respectfully sharing your results is a significant example of reciprocity, but how else will you be reciprocal? NADA would like to know how you will give back to those who are sharing their experiences, knowledge, and lives with you.

Responsibility: In all research, there is a need to be responsible to your partners and participants, responsible for your methods and data, and responsible for your values and ours. By accepting responsibility, you enrich the research process and are enriched by it¹⁶.

Relationality: A vital part of research is relationality. There are two aspects to this concept. The first is considering how your research idea or topic relates to those involved in the project. Is your research project relevant to participants? The second is Indigenous axiology or relational accountability². NADA wants to know, are you accountable to your relations?

6.0 Conclusion

This protocol was developed to ensure partnerships between Indigenous communities, the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association, and the academy are reciprocal, respectful, and accountable. The protocol is embedded in reconciliation, self-determination, and hopes to ensure that Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of the research process. The protocol and

application were designed to reduce the workload for NADA as they are often approached by researchers and organizations to partner in research projects and do not have the human capacity to review all with careful consideration and in a timely manner. *Tâpwêwin* was created specifically for these kinds of processes to consider Indigenous epistemologies, ontologies, methodologies, and axiology's when it comes to research partnership involving Indigenous peoples.

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Appendix A: Pre-Screening Form

On these pages are questions to see if the application meets the minimum requirements for the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association’s research partnership. It is designed to make the application review process streamlined. If the applicant does not meet the required standards concerning their three priorities, they can then be screened out. If the applicant does meet the required standards, they will move forward into a full review.

Project Title:						
Research Lead:			Project Duration:			
Contact Information						
Description of Project:						
The following checklist is to understand if the research project follows the principles of NADA. There is no total score, but we are very interested in the responses. Please check the most appropriate rating. For each item, check only one box.		1 Very Little	2	3	4	5 Very Much
1. Do you are or anyone in your team have any of the following qualifications:						
i. Knowledge of or relationship with the community?						
ii. Knowledge of the culture and traditions of the community?						
iii. Training in Indigenous research methodologies?						
iv. Experience in research with Indigenous communities?						
A. Reconciliation						
2. Do members of the defined participating community in the research have concern with or experience with the issue?						
3. Is attention given to barriers to participation, with consideration of those who have been under-represented in the past?						
4. Are efforts to research the issue or topic supported by members of the community?						

5. Does the process allow for flexibility or change in research methods and focus, as necessary?					
6. Can the research facilitate collaboration between community participants and resources external to the community?					
7. Do community participants benefit from the research outcomes?					
B. Indigenous Involvement					
8. Are interested members of the defined community provided opportunities to participate in the research process?					
9. Does the research process apply the knowledge of community participants in the phases of planning, implementation, and evaluation?					
10. For community participants, does the process allow for learning about research methods?					
11. Are community participants involved in analytical issues: Interpretation, synthesis, and verification of conclusions?					
C. Self-Determination					
12. Can the research facilitate learning among community participants about individual & collective resources for self-determination?					
13. Did the impetus for the research come from the community?					
14. Is there attention to or an explicit agreement with respect to ownership of the research data?					
15. Is there attention to or an explicit agreement between researchers and community participants with respect to the dissemination of the results?					
<p><i>These guidelines are adapted from: Green LW, George A, Daniel M, Frankish CJ, Herbert CP, Bowie WR, O'Neill M: Study of Participatory Research in Health Promotion: Review and Recommendations for the Development of Participatory Research in Health Promotion in Canada. Ottawa: Royal Society of Canada, 1995</i></p>					

Appendix B: Full Application

The following questions are the full application. These questions are designed to get more detail regarding the research project. They follow the research framework set out in Tâpwêwin and will provide the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association with more information, so they may make an informed decision with 'great and careful consideration.' These questions are also designed to allow the applicant to reflect on their projects' ideas, methods, relations, and goals.

Values
1. Please position yourself.
Partnerships
2. Please list all partners and describe their involvement in the project (i.e. funding and obligations, community, other community partners like NADA, and research participants).
3. Please detail what a partnership with the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association (NADA) would involve.
Tâpwêwin – Idea
4. Please describe the origin of your project idea (i.e. is it from prior research, did you create the project in partnership with a community, was the project idea brought to you from community members?) and how it will benefit all involved?
Tâpwêwin – Decision
5. Please describe the process of getting your project started (i.e. do you have an Indigenous advisory committee, are their elders involved, what has the process been like, have things changed?)

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Tâpwêwin – Action

6. Please describe the methods and processes during the data collection stages of your project (i.e. how are you collecting data, do you have ethics and what does that entail, will there be payment/reimbursement for participants time/knowledge, will participants have the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on all draft reports, presentations, and papers?)
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Tâpwêwin – Results

7. Please describe what will happen once data has been collected and analysed (i.e. who will own data and results, who will have access to the data, will community/research participants have co-authorship on findings and reports, how will you share your results with the community, community partners, and research participants?)

Indigenous Knowledge

8. How will Indigenous knowledge be incorporated into the project at all stages (i.e. methodologies, elder involvement, research framework, dissemination of results)?
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Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility, and Relationality

9. Will the research project keep in mind, at all stages, respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relationality? If possible, please describe. <i>See Partnership Agreement for details.</i>
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Other

10. Please use this space to describe the research further or the explain the importance of doing this research.

11. While not necessary, you may attach documents (Project proposal, funding application, ethics, academic/advisory references, etc.). Please list any documents you have attached to this application.

Appendix C: Partnership Agreement

The following agreement outlines the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association's priorities and partnership framework for the applicant. By signing the agreement, the applicant agrees to abide within the priorities and framework set out by NADA, be accountable to their answers in the pre-screen and full application and understands that if they or NADA do not uphold these priorities and the framework, both parties are within their rights to terminate the partnership.

The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association's (NADA) mission is to lead the promotion of healthy environments to prevent and manage diabetes by working together with people, communities and organizations. Since NADA's inception, they have been an active leader in diabetes awareness and prevention and do so by supporting organizations and projects aimed at diabetes and related issues. NADA recognizes that diabetes is a systemic health issue amongst Indigenous peoples and that the process of doing research in this area is just as important as the results.

NADA would like to partner with researchers, organizations, and communities who uphold their priorities, listed below.

1. **Reconciliation** – “Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. For that to happen, there must be awareness of the past, an acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behavior.”¹
2. **Indigenous Involvement** – Indigenous people are involved in as many stages of the project as possible. This can include but not restricted to the creation of the research idea, the design of the research process, involvement in research methods, report writing, co-authorship, and presentations of findings.
3. **Self-Determination** – “All peoples have the rights of self-determination. By that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”² In research, this means that Indigenous peoples have the right to determine if research can be done when research can be done, and who can do the research.

To uphold these priorities in and amongst their partnerships, NADA has created a research framework to guide both their partnerships and the research being done with Indigenous peoples. Outlined below are the layers of their research framework – *Tâpwêwin*: “great and careful consideration.”

1. **Values** – All parties respect and acknowledge and will not compromise one another's values and ways of knowing,
2. **Partnerships** – Partnerships are equal, and all parties are accountable to one another.
3. **The Decision-Making Wheel** – The research process is well thought out from inception to result sharing.
4. **Indigenous Knowledge** – The research is embedded in Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, and values Indigenous knowledge at the same standard as Western knowledge.
5. **The Four R's** – Respect, reciprocity, relationality, and responsibility.
 - a. Respect for all involved and their worldviews.
 - b. Reciprocity in the relationships – people and knowledge.

¹ Indigenous Corporate Training. (2018). What reconciliation is and what it is not. *Indigenous Corporate Training Inc.* Retrieved from <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-reconciliation-is-and-what-it-is-not>

² United Nations. (1960). Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. *General Assembly.* Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml>

- c. Relationality – The research relates to Indigenous perspectives and experiences.
- d. Responsibility for actions.

This framework is a requirement for NADA’s support and partnership. By completing and submitting this application form, you have registered your interest in a research partnership involving staff and/or clients of the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association. This does not bind the National Aboriginal Diabetes Association in any way of participating in this study. If the NADA chooses to accept your partnership request and you sign this agreement, you:

1. Agree to uphold NADA’s priorities and research framework within your project, team, and relationships with any other partners, organizations, and the research participants.
2. Acknowledge your answers within the application and agree to uphold them as you move forward in your project.
3. Understand that by not upholding the priorities, research framework, and your word as set out in the application answers, that NADA can terminate the partnership at any time and withdraw their support.
4. Understand that if NADA fails to uphold their priorities and research framework as a partner, you may terminate the partnership.

All research partnership requests received are reviewed by our team. A member National Aboriginal Diabetes Association will contact you shortly in response to your application.

Researcher Signature

National Aboriginal Diabetes Association Signature

Date

Date