

An Indigenous Perspectives Circle on the future of Higher Education

Topic:

In these times of decolonization of knowledge and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, Higher Education can play a leading role the way in partnering and supporting Indigenous communities as they address the damages to their lives, lands and relationships nationally and globally. Indigenous ways of knowing, being and learning have been systematically excluded from the world's higher education institutions. We now know that it is beneficial to all learners and can help restore our relationship with the land and life that surrounds us.

This circle will be organized respecting Indigenous protocols. We will hear from Indigenous higher education and community leaders, Elders, students and thought leaders on the following:

- Recovery, reclamation, revitalization and maintenance of Indigenous Languages, as 2022 is the inaugural year for the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. Much work is necessary in this area such as data development and protection; teaching and learning Indigenous languages for all age groups.
- Building bridges of understanding and collaboration between Indigenous ways of being, knowing and the Eurowestern world and culture that Higher Education is situated in at this time.
- Indigenous higher education institutions and their right to accredit graduates from their institutions, which are based on Indigenous ways.
- Discontinuing the colonizing process in higher education to attract and serve Indigenous learners in all disciplines especially STEM.

Theme:

This Indigenous circle will respond to the WHEC theme on Inclusion, but also can be seen as an important contribution from an Indigenous perspective to the Roadmap for 2030.

The design of the activity led by Indigenous Leaders will follow Indigenous protocols beginning with territorial acknowledgements, ceremonial elements and centering of the conversation by Dr. Lorna Wanosts'7a Williams, a Lil'wat First Nations scholar, Professor Emerita of Indigenous Education, Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and Canada Research Chair in Education and Linguistics. Professor Williams has also been involved in the creation of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages. There will time for dialogue and engagement.

Time and support:

The in-person Indigenous Circle will be 90 minutes and will require technical support for a hybrid session (i.e. online as well).

Those involved:

It will be led in person by Dr. Lorna Williams, a Lil'wat scholar and Officer of the Order of Canada associated with the University of Victoria in Canada and Dr. Marie Battiste, a celebrated Mi'kmaw scholar of the Potlotek First Nation, now at Cape Breton University in Canada with participation from:

Dr. Elmer Guy, President of the Navajo Technical University and co-Chair of the World Indigenous Higher Education Council,
Dr. Laurie Robinson, Executive Director of the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council in Ontario, Canada and
Dr. Sonajharia Minz an Indian academician and an adivasi activist. from Chotanagpur and Vice-Chancellor in Sido Kanhu Murmu University, Dumka
Dr. Elisabeth Kaine, Huron-Wendat First Nations, UNESCO Chair in the Transmission of First People's Culture to Foster Well-Being and Empowerment, Quebec,
Robin Rowe, Anishinaabe-kwe, Indigenous Data Lead, Health Data Research Network, Canada
Tracy Herbert, CEO, First People's Cultural Council
Wangoola Wangoola Ndawula, Nabyama, Mpambo Afrikan Multiversity, Busoga Kingdom, Uganda

Expected Outcomes:

A publication designed by Indigenous graphic designers and a video from these contributions will be made available globally through the UNESCO Chair in CBR and Social Responsibility in Higher Education and the World Indigenous Higher Education Council.

Organizers:

UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education
Canadian Commission for UNESCO
World Indigenous Higher Education Council
First People's Cultural Council

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