



# STRENGTHENING RELATIONS, WALKING TOGETHER

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## 2024-2027 NATIONAL INDIGENOUS STRATEGY

CBC  Radio-Canada

Illustrations by Design de Plume, a women-led, Indigenously-owned design team



# Strengthening Relations, Walking Together

## 2024-2027 National Indigenous Strategy

Relationships are at the heart of the CBC/Radio-Canada National Indigenous Strategy and will be key to its successful implementation. This Strategy would not exist without the contributions of many First Nations, Inuit and Métis storytellers, writers, creators and thinkers, working together to build trust and nurture fruitful collaboration across many differences in culture, language and areas of expertise. This Strategy positions connectedness, or the quality of our relationships, as essential to continue to learn, create and grow together. CBC/Radio-Canada sustains these relationships by growing trusting partnerships and opening new opportunities for meaningful, ongoing engagement. We are honoured to count APTN and the Indigenous Screen Office (ISO) amongst these partners. Through our Strategy, we look forward to building new relationships with Inuit TV, Uvagut TV, Indigenous radio stations across the country and countless other Indigenous-owned entities in this environment.

As the national public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada is committed to reflecting the diversity of Peoples and regions across this land. We seek to fulfill this responsibility in an ethical manner that respects, reflects and amplifies the diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis experiences. This requires strong and healthy relationships with Indigenous Peoples and individuals. These relationships are cultivated daily within our workforce, with those whose stories we share, and in our partnerships as a public service organization and cultural institution.

Through this 2024-2027 National Indigenous Strategy, CBC/Radio-Canada honours the connections built over many years. We commit to a path forward that sustains these relationships in a positive way that holds truth, understanding, and reciprocity at the centre.

*“ How do you build relationships in community?  
The best recommendation for engagement is about reciprocity and continuing relationships. What knowledge are you taking from community, and what can you give back? ”*

– Participant from the Halifax, NS engagement session.



Students and CBC Senior Producer Salome Avva host a live, mostly Inuktitut, public call-in radio show in Puvirnituk, a village of about 2,000 people located in Nunavik, in Northern Quebec. At the request of the community and the Puvirnituk public library, CBC helped train a group of high school students to use their school radio facilities. (CBC / Nicola Luksic)



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## Progress of Indigenous Programming at CBC/Radio-Canada

There have been trailblazers, inside and outside our organization, who have illuminated the path for First Nations, Inuit and Métis representation, self-expression and for truth-seeking. This National Indigenous Strategy stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of those who have come before us. We are searching through our history to surface their names. We present this evolving, non-exhaustive, timeline and invite other trailblazers and their families to come forward. If you or someone you know should be featured here, if we should add important content milestones or if you have photos to share, please write to us at: [Indigenous.Strategy@cbc.ca](mailto:Indigenous.Strategy@cbc.ca).

**1958** – CBC opens its Northern Service.

**1960** – The first Inuit and Dene broadcasters are hired by CBC, and Indigenous language services begin for the North.

**1965** – *Our Native Land* begins airing on CBC Radio. The first national radio program focused on Indigenous issues and cultures, *Our Native Land* chronicled the rejuvenation of Indigenous literature, art, culture and political activism on Saturday afternoons until 1985. Hosts included Johnny Yesno, Bernelda Wheeler, Albert Angus and Brian Maracle, who were part of the all-Indigenous production team.

**1972** – CBC Northern Services in Quebec begins broadcasting short Cree-language segments during its Inuktitut-language programming. Inuk broadcaster, the late Elijah Menarik, is believed to be the first person to use the Cree-language on the airwaves of CBC. He learned his Cree on Fort George Island, Que., after running away from a residential school there and living with a Cree family for two years.

**1972** – Bernelda Wheeler becomes one of the hosts of CBC Radio's *Our Native Land*. She works on the program until 1982, wearing various hats as a producer, investigative journalist, writer and becoming known as "the First Lady of Indigenous Broadcasting".

**1972-73** – Anik 1, 2 & 3 satellites launch. Canada becomes the first country in the world to use satellites for domestic communications. CBC/Radio-Canada radio transmission expands throughout the North. Largest northern centres also begin to receive television signals from southern CBC/Radio-Canada transmissions.

**1973** – Myra Cree becomes the first woman in the history of Radio-Canada to host the evening news.

**1974-76** – Indigenous broadcasters are hired and trained by CBC for daily radio and television coverage of the Berger Royal Commission Inquiry into a Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline. Joe Tobie, Louie Blondin, Jim Sittichinli and Abe Okpik, produced by Whit Fraser, become Indigenous language broadcast pioneers.





- 1975** – *Tarqravut* — Inuktitut for Our North — a weekly Inuktitut-language program produced in Montreal and later Ottawa is launched by CBC. The program runs until 1988, when it is replaced by Aqsarniit.
- 1979** – CBC Northern Services opens an Inuktitut-language radio station in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut.
- 1979** – The CBC Northern Services program unit based in Montreal is expanded to serve James Bay Cree and Inuit communities in Northern Quebec.
- 1979** – CBC Northern Services begins seasonal English and Indigenous language television production in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.
- 1980** – A transmitter-sharing agreement is signed by CBC Northern Services and Inuit organization Taqramiut Nipingat to support a network of correspondents in the 14 Inuit communities of Quebec.
- 1981** – Gloria Kitty-Pérusse, the first Cree woman employee, is hired by CBC Northern Quebec Service as a permanent announcer-operator.
- 1981** – CBC Northern Quebec Service publishes a repertoire of First Nations and Inuit songs collected from Northern Quebec on cassette, 33 rpm vinyl disk, and 7-inch tape.
- 1982** – Focus North, the first weekly television pan-northern current affairs program, is launched by CBC Northern Services and serves Yukon, Northwest Territories, and northern Quebec.
- 1982** – *Maamuitaa*, a weekly television magazine program in Cree, debuts on CBC Northern Quebec Service for the first time on November 10, 1982.
- 1983** – CBC Northern Service & CBC Network co-produce northern Canada's first ever live television election program, from Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, in English with Indigenous language inserts.
- 1985** – William Tagoona and Alec Gordon are the first two persons hired by CBC Northern Services to start an Inuktitut language radio bureau in Kuujuaq, Nunavik.
- 1986** – To enhance the pan-northern program *Focus North's* coverage of the Yukon, northern British Columbia and Alaska, CBC Northern Services opens a television production bureau in Whitehorse.
- 1986** – *Boréal Hebdo* a weekly radio show in French about the lives of Indigenous people and the people living in Northern Quebec debuts on CBC. On September 6, 2015, it becomes a daily show called *Soirée Boréale*.
- 1992** – CBC Northern Services moves its regional headquarters from Ottawa to Yellowknife. First northern-based director for the region officially changes regional name to CBC North. Andrew Cowan is Northern Services' first Regional Director, Austin Curly is the Assistant Regional Director, Fran Cutler is Radio Programming Director and Whit Fraser is news reporter.
- 1995** – Launching northern Canada's first-ever daily television news programs, CBC North introduces *Northbeat* in English, co-hosted by Paul Andrew (Dene) and George Tuccaro (Cree), and *Igalaaq* in Inuktitut, hosted by Rassi Nashalik (Inuk).



- 1995** – True North Concert from Rankin Inlet, hosted by CBC North, becomes the first one nationally televised to showcase northern cultures, languages and performers to all of Canada.
- 1998** – Arctic Winter Games is broadcast on network television for the first time by CBC North, bringing unique Arctic traditional sports and cultural performances to all of Canada.
- 2004** – The Prairie Aboriginal Content Unit (Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta) is created by CBC to develop Indigenous storytelling content for both radio and television.
- 2004** – New Voices the CBC Radio's strategy which enabled thousands of new voices and points of view to be aired on programs such as *Outfront*, *Global Village*, and *Legends*, focuses on safeguarding endangered Indigenous languages through voice recordings.
- 2007-2008** – A one-day conference, *Aboriginal Matters*, in Regina, brings together more than 20 CBC Indigenous journalists and senior News management to share successes and challenges in covering Indigenous issues.
- 2008** – CBC Radio commissions *The Journey (Pimootewin)*, the first opera in the Cree language, a collaboration between Tomson Highway and Melissa Hui.
- 2012** – *8th Fire: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada & the Way Forward* premieres on CBC. Hosted by Winnipeg-based journalist Wab Kinew, the four part documentary explores Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Canada.
- 2013** – Radio-Canada International (RCI) relaunches as a digital-only platform with a new section of this site, *Autochtones, l'autre histoire*.
- 2016** – CBC Aboriginal changes its name to CBC Indigenous.
- 2016** – CBC begins its Indigenous Languages archives project to digitize over 75,000 hours of original language audio content from CBC North.
- 2016** – *Missing & Murdered*, a new CBC podcast and web series hosted by CBC News investigative reporter Connie Walker is launched. The first season looks at the unsolved cold case of Alberta Williams, a young Indigenous woman who was murdered in northern British Columbia. The second season joins a family as they search for their sister Cleo Semaganis Nicotine.
- 2016** – *Espaces autochtones*, a web and mobile portal dedicated to Indigenous matters, is launched by Radio-Canada.
- 2018** – Radio-Canada launches ICI Grand Nord.
- 2018** – Radio-Canada establishes the Bureau autochtone mobile (BAM), a project committed to hiring Indigenous journalists that ensures voices from Indigenous communities are heard on all platforms.
- 2018** – CBC Indigenous launches *Beyond 94*, which measures Canada's progress in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. A team effort between the Indigenous Unit, CBC Saskatchewan, CBC Manitoba and CBC North.



**2019** – Radio-Canada broadcasts ADISQ’s inaugural Indigenous artist of the year award at the annual televised gala.

**2020** – Radio-Canada launches *Laissez-nous raconter : L’histoire crochie*, a podcast that explores words whose meanings have been twisted by centuries of colonization. CBC’s English adaptation *Telling Our Twisted Histories* is released in 2021.

**2021** – CBC live broadcasts the gold medal hockey game in Inuktitut and Eastern Cree at the Tokyo Olympics.

**2021** – Radio-Canada launches its first Indigenous radio program *Kuei! Kwe!* on ICI PREMIÈRE with host Melissa Mollen Dupuis.

**2022** – CBC/Radio-Canada signs first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with APTN to foster greater collaboration, sharing of resources, and coproductions.

**2022** – Radio-Canada releases *Pour toi Flora*, the first fictional drama written, directed and produced by Indigenous creators for a major French-language network, which went on to win multiple awards.

**2022** – Radio-Canada airs its television special *Le Grand Solstice* where music of all kinds, central to the cultures of Indigenous Peoples, is celebrated.

**2023** – CBC wins 12 awards at the Indigenous Journalists Association conference held in Winnipeg.

**2023** – CBC, Radio-Canada and APTN launch *Bones of Crows* by Indigenous filmmaker Marie Clements, a first ever miniseries produced in English, French and Cree.

**2023** – Radio-Canada’s Bureau autochtone mobile (BAM) changes its name to Résonance.

**2024** – CBC/Radio-Canada launches first-ever National Indigenous Strategy.



*“ We come from tender places. Story is one of the greatest technologies ever created. ”*

– Participant from the Whitehorse, YT re-engagement session.



Lucie-Geneviève Petiquay, an Atikamekw from Wemotaci, is interviewed by Etienne Rivard in a report by Projet Résonance, a Radio-Canada Indigenous bureau. (Radio-Canada / Guylain Côté)



# Weaving Connections

## A message from our President and CEO

In 2018, one of my very first official station visits as the new President and CEO of CBC/Radio-Canada was to Iqaluit, Nunavut. Many Inuit told me just how much CBC North is a lifeline in their communities. And I've heard it many times since — CBC/Radio-Canada is vital to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities from coast to coast to coast.

We have a long history of serving Indigenous Peoples. In 1958, CBC/Radio-Canada established its Northern service, and we became the first national broadcaster in Canada to put Inuktitut- and Na-Dene-speaking hosts on the air. I celebrate the trailblazing Indigenous journalists at CBC/Radio-Canada, such as Brian Maracle and Bernelda Wheeler, for their work hosting CBC Radio's *Our Native Land*. Today, CBC North offers news in eight Indigenous languages — its Cree unit recently celebrated its 50-year anniversary! — and our digital platforms CBC Indigenous, *ICI Grand Nord* and *Espaces autochtones* celebrate the richness of Indigenous life in Canada.

But I have also heard clearly that there are questions about whether the public broadcaster could have done better, and can do better.

With the launch of this National Indigenous Strategy, we're committing to better relationships; to advancing Truth and Reconciliation; to exploring our past and working towards a stronger future where the diversity, cultures, stories, languages, perspectives and leadership of First Nations, Inuit and Métis are integral to the public broadcaster.

Hundreds of people contributed to the development of this Strategy. We heard from a broad range of Indigenous Peoples and allies, including more than 130 CBC/Radio-Canada staff, and members of the public who attended more than 20 engagement sessions across the country. Their input was crucial. So was the leadership of Robert Doane, Nahka Bertrand and CBC/Radio-Canada's entire National Indigenous Strategy Working Group, who worked tirelessly on this strategy. Thank you.

As this Strategy comes to life at the public broadcaster, we will continue listening, engaging and strengthening relationships to ensure we respectfully incorporate Indigenous needs and truths in all we do. We are determined to address the past and build a future that we can all be proud of, together.

Catherine Tait  
President and CEO  
CBC/Radio-Canada



## **A message from the CBC/Radio-Canada Indigenous Strategy Working Group**

The past few years have been a remarkable journey of connection, listening and understanding. The National Indigenous Strategy comprises ideas and truths from across the land, including shared conversations between First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-Indigenous people.

The work you see here today is the culmination of a long journey. In January 2021, CBC/Radio-Canada proposed to develop and implement its first National Indigenous Strategy at its [licence renewal hearings](#) before the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). An Indigenous Strategy Working Group was struck shortly thereafter and the work began to map out a way forward for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and non-Indigenous people, working together.

It is the beginning of a national commitment – a new starting point of understanding to help guide Canada’s national public broadcaster for years to come. We hope the Strategy will clear a path for more First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals to find their way to our organization, as a new generation of storytellers in safer spaces leads us into the future.

We realize that we are standing on the shoulders of giants and this gives us hope for the future.

CBC/Radio-Canada  
Indigenous Strategy Working Group



## The Heart of Responsibility

*“ In my view, it is more than just a question of equity and inclusion – Indigenous Peoples are distinct and a founding peoples in this country that need to be reflected distinctly by the public broadcaster. The [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] has said that the media needs to engage in its own acts of reconciliation (...) We need to turn the lens on ourselves. ”*

– Participant from CBC/Radio-Canada, internal engagement session.

### Why a National Indigenous Strategy now?

CBC/Radio-Canada’s Northern services and its Indigenous language programming go back more than sixty years. Given this long history of collaboration, people may ask, “why now?”.

This is a critical moment. The 2015 [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (TRC), the 2019 Final Report of the [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#) (MMIWG) and other reports and recommendations covering historical and ongoing truths asked Canadian media to uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples as part of ongoing acts of reconciliation.

As outlined in the [Broadcasting Act](#), CBC/Radio-Canada must reflect the diversity of Canada with special attention to the role of Indigenous Peoples, and contribute to the development of talent and culture across the country. To do this fully, we must recognize and elevate Indigenous Peoples, through relationship-building and collaboration.

The 2024-2027 National Indigenous Strategy is a roadmap to realize our ambitions. It will give direction, provide objectives and goals that reflect our collective commitment to strengthen relations with First Nations, Inuit and Métis across all areas of CBC/Radio-Canada. It will help us celebrate their stories and recognize their contributions on this land since time immemorial.



## Reimagining our future, reflecting on our past

Truth and Reconciliation is not a goal – it's a process. Renewing relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis calls for respectful, sensitive and collaborative partnerships. It also calls for an exploration of our collective past and recognition of possible harms committed. As Canada's public broadcaster, CBC/Radio-Canada's archives can shed light on this past, help educate future generations and help us move forward.

A better understanding and acknowledgement of the past will help us chart our course as a public broadcaster, learn from our experiences and build a better future for all.

*“ The archives have so much important information (...) these stories are priceless and in our language. They are the Elders explaining what it means to be Dene or Métis. Identification for our youth is very important and they need to hear this – it is where we come from. The information that the CBC has must be shared. ”*

– Participant from the Yellowknife, NWT engagement session.



Cree Grand Chief Ted Moses and Dianne Ottereyes Reid at a taping of *Maamuitaau*, CBC North's Cree-language television show, in the mid-1980s. (Maamuitaau/ CBC North)





## Services and Platforms



**CBC North**'s goal is to bring together the diverse communities that make up our country's vast North, offering them award-winning radio and television services in English, French and eight Indigenous languages – Cree, Dehcho Dene Yati, Dëne Sųłíné (Chipewyan), Gwich'in, Inuktitut, Inuvialuktun, Sahtu Got'ine Godi, and Tłıchq̓ (Tlicho).

Opened in 1958 across the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Labrador, within two years, it began hiring reporters who spoke Inuktitut and Dene, launching CBC North's Indigenous language services. In the decades that followed, these services expanded to include Cree language content, live television broadcasts via satellite, and new stations in Nunavut, Northern Quebec and the Northwest Territories. The technology to broadcast live and the launch of daily television news programs changed access to information for, and about, Northerners. For years, larger communities would get taped programs shipped by plane from the South that could be five days to four weeks old.



**CBC Indigenous** elevates First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives and experiences through informed and innovative storytelling, with journalism rooted in the heart of communities, shedding light on the realities, complexities and diversity of Indigenous life in Canada.

It was started in 2004, when CBC created the Prairie Aboriginal Content Unit to develop Indigenous storytelling content for both radio and television. This Unit eventually expanded its mandate and launched a digital service. It became CBC Aboriginal in 2011 and changed its name to CBC Indigenous in 2016. Starting with just two staff and now with a team of more than a dozen, CBC Indigenous has evolved to become an award-winning, story-breaking powerhouse for CBC News, elevating First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives and experiences at the public broadcaster. In 2018, CBC Indigenous launched Beyond 94 to measure Canada's progress in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. CBC Indigenous is now focusing on training and development initiatives to bring more Indigenous-led journalism to streaming and podcasting platforms.



Espaces autochtones is the crossroads where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can meet, learn and interact about Indigenous realities in Canada. The site offers comprehensive coverage of Indigenous news, covering current issues, challenges and achievements, as well as the history and culture of Indigenous communities.

Launched in 2013 as a section offered on the Radio Canada International (RCI) website, *Autochtones, l'autre histoire* grew to become, three years later, a web and mobile portal dedicated to Indigenous matters. Espaces autochtones' editorial line is based on four main themes: justice, governance, culture and urban living.

*Espaces autochtones* is the only French-language media to cover Indigenous news on a daily basis. Its primary objective is to show the diversity and plurality of Indigenous Peoples, and to act as a bridge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.



Inuk broadcaster Elijah Menarik (left) was the first host of *Tarqavut*, CBC North's first Inuktitut television program, which came out of Montreal in the 1970s. *Tarqavut* moved to Iqaluit in 1987 and was renamed *Aqsarniit* in 1988. (CBC North)



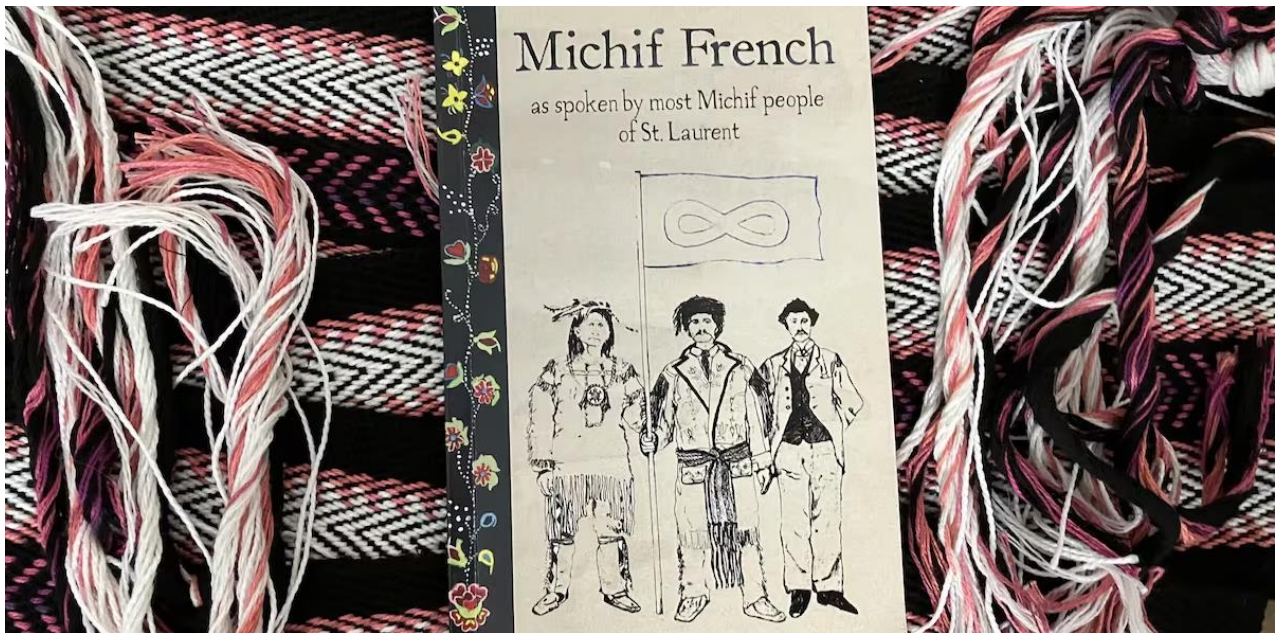
## Transparency and accountability

We believe in ethical, accountable relationships with those who have provided input into and are affected by our work. Each year, we will release a report, informed by staff and audiences, on activities stemming from the implementation of the 2024-2027 National Indigenous Strategy. We'll highlight achievements while providing insights from lessons learned.

In addition, we are obligated by our CRTC conditions of licence to consult Indigenous Peoples and producers on programming every two (2) broadcasting years. We will host meaningful dialogues with Indigenous rights holders, stakeholders, creators and independent producers. This will help ensure that our programming meets the needs of, is relevant to, and reflects the diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis across Canada. We will file reports with the CRTC, and these will be made public. We will begin our first consultations in the broadcasting year 2023-2024.

*“ Participants said that a distinction must be made between Inuit, First Nations and Métis, who are not the same peoples. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



Espaces autochtones reported on the revival of French Michif, a dialect of the Métis language. Saint-Laurent, Manitoba Elders recorded the pronunciation of words in French Michif as spoken in their village. (Radio-Canada / Isabelle Montpetit)



## Key principles

It is important to respect and promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples, as set out in the foundational documents below, which have been pivotal to the development of this strategy:

The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration).

The American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (American Declaration).

The Final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP).

The Final Report of the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain provincial public services in Quebec: listening, reconciliation and progress (Viens Commission).

While all rights in the UN Declaration are understood to have equal status, the right to self-determination has been described as a “foundational” right, without which other human rights cannot be fully enjoyed. Article 3 of the UN Declaration speaks to this right, which is the right of Indigenous Peoples to “freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”<sup>1</sup> This right of Indigenous Peoples to make their own decisions is an integral part of every aspect of Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to the state and to other institutions of society.<sup>2</sup>

Guidance from the foundational documents listed above helps to create a more authentic media environment honouring the history, cultures and heritage of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada. Ensuring that our policies and practices are in alignment with them will demonstrate the public broadcaster’s commitment in the eyes of both Indigenous Peoples and the public at large.

These foundational documents represent valuable resources for guiding and informing the public broadcaster’s policies and practices regarding Indigenous Peoples. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is integral to the Strategy.

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<sup>1</sup> [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\), The Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(EMRIP\) Country Engagement Mission \(8 – 13 April 2019\) – New Zealand: Advisory Note, 14 July 2019.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)



*“ To remain viable in an increasingly cutthroat industry undergoing major shifts, many participants felt the answer was to forge closer connections with the communities and their influencers, artists and content creators. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



Mâmawi musique is the weekly music feature by Moe Clark, a multi-disciplinary Métis artist who introduces us to Indigenous music from all horizons.





## How we engaged with Indigenous Peoples and communities



- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. April 26   Winnipeg, MB      | 11. August 30   Ottawa, ON         |
| 2. May 31   Saskatoon, SK       | 12. September 6   Toronto, ON      |
| 3. June 9   Yellowknife, NT     | 13. September 14   St. John's, NL  |
| 4. June 27   Vancouver, BC      | 14. September 27   Thunder Bay, ON |
| 5. June 29   Whitehorse, YT     | 15. May 23   Wendake, QC           |
| 6. July 12   Iqaluit, NU        | 16. June 15   Val-d'Or, QC         |
| 7. July 18   Membertou F.N., NS | 17. August 13   Montreal, QC       |
| 8. July 19   Halifax, NS        | 18. August 14   Montreal, QC       |
| 9. August 3   Edmonton, AB      | 19. August 23   Sept-Îles, QC      |
| 10. August 16   Kahnawake, QC   |                                    |



To map a new way forward, we designed a process to engage First Nations, Inuit and Métis staff, people in the industry, and Indigenous Peoples from coast to coast to coast.

- 30 internal engagement sessions enabled us to reach 130 CBC/Radio-Canada staff.
- 21 engagement sessions were held across Canada, fourteen in English and seven in French, to meet audience members, broadcasters, content creators and industry experts.
- An online survey provided further opportunity for public engagement, eliciting dozens of responses affirming the results of earlier engagement sessions.

This Strategy is further informed by engagement with and lessons learned from CBC/Radio-Canada initiatives, including the Indigenous Languages Archiving Project, CBC Indigenous, the Indigenous language programming of CBC North, *Espaces autochtones*, the *Reporting in Indigenous Communities* course (a workshop offered to content teams), the Indigenous Pathways to Journalism development program, CBC New Indigenous Voices, and the All Nations Employee Resource Group.

*“ Many [participants] said they greatly enjoyed the series Pour toi Flora, feeling that it represented them. But they found that the subject matter remains tough and would like to see more positive portrayals. Some said they would like to see reality shows focusing on their lives. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



Iqaluit Engagement Session, July 2022. (CBC/Radio-Canada /Robert Doane)

*“ Our Elders are our history – they are very important. They love CBC – they love listening to people talk in their own languages. It would be good to share more old stories from the past – it makes our Elders feel good. ”*

– Participant from the Yellowknife, NWT engagement session.



The CBC North archive holds thousands of hours of recently digitized interviews and conversations with Inuit, in Inuktitut, going back decades. This vault of material includes stories about the land, animals, medicine, respect and more. In the podcast Inuit Unikkaangit, (meaning: *Our Stories* or *Inuit Stories*), CBC archivist Mary Powder replays these valuable teachings for the descendants of the storytellers, some of whom are hearing them for the first time. (CBC North)

*“ CBC needs to come out to the communities – not when stuff hits the fan or if there is a pow wow event – they need to come and reach out to the communities all year long. Build that bridge of trust. Follow up with the community and ask the community what story they would like covered. ”*

– Participant from the Kahnawake, QC engagement session.



In 2015, by inviting Indigenous women to the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre for a discussion, Radio-Canada's investigative program *Enquête* heard the disturbing testimony of several Indigenous women as they spoke out for the first time and revealed the abuses they were experiencing at the hands of police officers. In response to these allegations, the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec was created. (Enquête / Radio-Canada)



# Our Strategic Framework



## Vision

As Canada's public broadcaster, we ensure the diversity, cultures, stories, languages and self-determination of First Nations, Inuit and Métis are integral to CBC/Radio-Canada.



## Mission

To reflect, respect and amplify diverse Indigenous perspectives across the public broadcaster, in order to advance Truth and Reconciliation and grow trusting partnerships.



## Values

In addition to CBC/Radio-Canada's values of Creativity, Inclusiveness, Relevance, and Integrity, the Strategy is guided by the values of Respect, Reciprocity, and Compassion.



## Pillars





“ CBC should cover more positive stories of successful Indigenous women. ”

– Participant from the Saskatoon, SK engagement session.



Top row: Bernelda Wheeler (host of *Our Native Land* and considered the First Lady of Indigenous Broadcasting in Canada), Rosanna Deerchild (host of *Unreserved*), Juanita Taylor (host of *Northbeat* and Senior Reporter for *The National* in the North). Bottom row: Myra Cree (host of *Second regard* and the first woman to host Radio-Canada’s evening news), Emma Saganash (host of the Cree television program *Maamuitaau*), Mélissa Mollen Dupuis (host of *Kuei! Kwe!*).

*“ Many [participants] felt that a greater Indigenous presence was needed in general content and prime-time news, on opinion and expert panels as well as on popular radio shows.”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



CBC Senior Managing Director Mervin Brass and CBC Producer Lenard Monkman. (CBC/Radio-Canada / Doug Little)

*“ Participants felt that they still have to fight to have their voices heard on subjects that concern them, and that when they are listened to, their words are distorted such that they take on a negative slant. Sensationalist perspectives on their communities must end, the majority of participants said. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



# 1. Narratives

## *Grounding principles of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in our stories and content development processes*

As Canada's national public broadcaster, we serve our audiences by providing credible local, regional and national news and by reflecting the stories of all communities across this land.

We develop emerging talent to ensure that all voices are heard across our platforms. Our content, both news and entertainment, is subject to conditions and obligations set by the national regulatory agency, the CRTC. These obligations include consulting with Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous producers every two years on our programming. We restated our commitment to reflecting Indigenous realities in our current strategy, [Your Stories, Taken to Heart](#) and again in our recent licence renewal submissions to the CRTC. As a result, CBC/Radio-Canada has set targets to increase its expenditures on programming created and produced by Indigenous creators over the next five years.

Looking ahead, we will actively bring the principles of Truth and Reconciliation to our stories and content development processes, mindful of the fact that Indigenous Peoples are holders and stewards of their own cultures, stories and lands. In order to deepen our knowledge, we will continue to build partnerships with Indigenous-owned broadcasters such as APTN and organizations like the Indigenous Screen Office (ISO).



Lineup of captivating content including, top row: CBC Kids show *Molly of Denali*, the podcasts *Laissez-Nous Raconter* (*Telling our Twisted Stories*) and *Kuper Island*, and the dramatic comedy APTN series *Mohawk Girls*. Bottom row: acclaimed miniseries *Pour Toi Flora* (*Dear Flora*) and *Bones of Crows*, commissioned by CBC/Radio-Canada and APTN, comedy film *Run Woman Run*, and Indigenous music show *Minotan!*





## Supporting a vibrant Indigenous creative industry

Indigenous self-expression is necessary. From coast to coast to coast, First Nations, Inuit and Métis reporters, artists, storytellers, filmmakers, and producers are creating a wide range of rich content for television, cinema, radio, and digital media. Their narratives elevate untold stories and enable communities to affirm their cultures and languages. We recognize the important work of existing Indigenous media organizations, specifically APTN, ISO, Inuit TV, Uvavut TV, and many Indigenous radio stations who act as vehicles for innovation, engagement and self-affirmation.

The pool of Indigenous talent is strong and ever-expanding yet new and established First Nations, Inuit and Métis professionals face many barriers accessing jobs in news and media and having their content reach mainstream markets (e.g., story diversity, financing and networks, mentoring, marketing and promotional capacity, broadcasting infrastructure, lack of culturally sensitive processes). As the public broadcaster, we have a responsibility to support a vibrant Indigenous media landscape (e.g., TRC Call to action #84). All people in Canada benefit from content of all genres by and about Indigenous Peoples.

We want to work better together and be responsive to Indigenous Peoples' interests. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between APTN and CBC/Radio-Canada in March 2022 is helping us create more First Nations, Inuit and Métis programming, increase access to and awareness of this content, and connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across the land. Our agreement allows us to leverage each media organization's strengths to improve the support, financing and exposure provided for Indigenous independent productions.

This pillar about Narratives will ensure our content complies with cultural and linguistic frameworks specific to Indigenous Peoples, while respecting our [Journalistic Standards and Practices](#) (JSP).

The Strategy will strengthen our commitments to the production and promotion of content created by Indigenous Peoples, while working to reduce harms against First Nations, Inuit, and Métis narrators, collaborators and audiences. In keeping with the [Indigenous Languages Act](#) and the [Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages](#), we will sustain Indigenous language content and support language revitalization efforts.

We will also update our retention and archival policies and processes to increase access to and use of Indigenous content by Indigenous Peoples.



Lastly, we will raise awareness among our teams of news professionals so they may address First Nations, Inuit and Métis issues and realities in a more respectful and authentic manner.

### Key initiatives:

- Develop a shared content strategy to bolster efforts and deepen commitments to Indigenous news and entertainment content
- Reduce harms against Indigenous story sharers, contributors and audiences for example through trauma-informed journalism and the ethical handling of culturally significant materials and subjects
- Encourage use of Indigenous languages and support efforts of First Nations, Inuit and Métis to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen Indigenous languages, consistent with the [Indigenous Languages Act](#) and the [Global Action Plan of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages](#).



Members of the Métis delegation gathered in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican shortly before their meeting with the Pope to discuss Canadian residential schools. (Radio-Canada / Marie-Laure Josselin).



*“ A particular example mentioned by attendees was seeing the National Hockey League coverage in Canada translated into Cree. It was a fantastic example of meaningful inclusion. ”*

– Final Report, English engagement sessions.

*“ CBC should showcase how First Nations contributed to Canada. Our languages, medicines and foods, and our perseverance and resilience. ”*

– Participant from the Vancouver, BC engagement session.



With the Ullumi podcast segment, Isabelle Chapadeau shares her knowledge of northern art, nature, education and Indigenous cultures, along with issues of the day important to Inuit. (Radio-Canada)



## 2. People

### *Growing Indigenous representation at all levels of the organization*

We are firmly committed to strengthening the presence and voices of Indigenous Peoples within CBC/Radio-Canada. Through this pillar, we commit to increasing the presence and participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis employees at all levels of our organization, recognizing the richness of their perspectives, cultures and lived experience.

Growing Indigenous representation across the organization will strengthen relations and foster balanced, informed and respectful dialogue with Indigenous Peoples from coast to coast to coast.

Together, we're working towards a future where First Nations, Inuit and Métis voices are not only included and reflected, but celebrated throughout our content. We recognize that the diversity of Nations, and its reflection in our workforce and workplace, is a strength that supports our commitment to journalistic and programming excellence.

### **Key initiatives:**

- Increase equitable access for Indigenous individuals to jobs, leadership positions, and professional development opportunities
- Improve and promote culturally appropriate benefits and support for First Nations, Inuit and Métis staff
- Incorporate more First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives in the offerings of our Learning & Development sector
- Increase the representation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis art, culture and languages across CBC/Radio-Canada facilities and communications.



Members of the All Nations Employee Resource Group (CBC/Radio-Canada / Doug Little)

*“ Difficulty conforming to the culture was also cited as a retention issue. Indeed, a sizeable portion of respondents felt that the barriers to joining Radio-Canada were huge, especially for anyone who felt out of place there. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.

*“ If CBC is committed to reconciliation, they must understand the complexities and challenges of identifying who is and who is not Indigenous. ”*

– Participant from the Halifax, NS engagement session.



Valérie Fortin, designer of the CBC North Quebec goose logo, with employees Edna Voyageur, Matthew Iserhoff Sr., Emily Rondeau, Marie-Paul Rouleau, and Gaston Cooper, in 1992. (CBC North Cree Unit)



### 3. Relationships

#### *Cultivating good relations with Indigenous Peoples*

Cultivating good relations with Indigenous Peoples is vital to fostering reconciliation, cultural diversity and mutual respect. This pillar involves jointly developing principles of reciprocity and trust; it also implies actively listening to the concerns, needs and ideas of Indigenous Peoples.

CBC/Radio-Canada recognizes and values opportunities to build presence, relevance and trust with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis rights holders, communities, audiences and partners. Our commitment to good relations means supporting economic reconciliation by increasing opportunities for Indigenous businesses within our procurement processes.

We will enhance our involvement in, and support for, platforms and events that recognize and amplify First Nations, Inuit, and Métis voices. Our success in establishing good relations with Indigenous Peoples will be measured by the quality and extent of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis engagement around the targets and initiatives supported by this National Indigenous Strategy.

#### **Key initiatives:**

- Facilitate meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples, cultivating relationships of reciprocity and trust, for example by diversifying partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and growing respectful relationships between staff and local First Nation, Inuit and Métis Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Continue to expand our partnership and collaboration with the Indigenous Screen Office, Canada's only national Indigenous-led funding body for the screen sector as well as APTN, the first national Indigenous broadcaster in Canada and the world.
- Support economic reconciliation, for example by implementing a strategy to include more Indigenous-owned vendors in the procurement process.

*“ The difficulties [for Radio-Canada] in assessing content relevance and audience satisfaction were attributed to a lack of measurement tools, unfamiliarity with the media consumption habits of Indigenous audiences and non-existent communications with First Peoples. ”*

– Final Report, French engagement sessions.



## The Indigenous experience in a francophone environment

At CBC/Radio-Canada, we recognize the breadth and diversity of experiences of Indigenous Peoples in French-speaking regions, whose realities can be influenced by the contexts of territory, customs, history and culture specific to each Nation and community.

For instance, the experience of Indigenous Peoples in the French-speaking parts of Quebec is rooted in a complex interplay of historical events and cultural sharing. The uniqueness of that experience stems from the mix of friendships, collaborations and tensions characterizing historical and ongoing colonial relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Quebec society.

We are mindful of the challenges this has created for Indigenous cultural preservation, languages and participation in the Canadian media industry. We also recognize Indigenous Peoples are dedicated to culture and language revitalization. As the national public broadcaster, we support the promotion and production of content reflecting the languages and cultural values of Indigenous Peoples living in a French-speaking environment.



ICI Grand Nord: the French-language public broadcaster north of 60 (Radio-Canada)

*“ You should have a database with the proper pronunciation of Indigenous names. Traditional names – but make sure you include the previous non-Indigenous names as well for reference. ”*

– Participant from the Vancouver, BC engagement session.

*“ We need to consider what is the obligation of our national institutions? This is a national commitment and challenge. We need to reconsider our core mandate and look at how we address the non-partisan work of reconciliation. ”*

– Participant from CBC/Radio-Canada, Internal engagement session.



CBC *Midday Café* host Leonard Linklater stops on the Alaska highway, about 300 km from Whitehorse in Kluane country, to get a cell signal and check-in with a CBC Yukon producer. (CBC / Cheryl Kawaja)



## 4. Truth and Reconciliation

### *Taking meaningful action toward reconciliation*

CBC/Radio-Canada upholds the rights of Indigenous Peoples and acknowledges historic and ongoing harms of colonization. We recognize the importance for our content to portray Indigenous Peoples with dignity.

- We commit to equitable representation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in our workforce.
- We commit to tracking progress in our response to the [TRC Calls to Action](#) and the [MMIWG Calls for Justice](#) that pertain to CBC/Radio-Canada.
- We commit to aligning our policies and guidelines with the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), which is fundamental to our approach.
- We commit to pursuing the truth regarding CBC/Radio-Canada's role in harms against Indigenous Peoples and determining appropriate actions to take.
- We commit to working with Indigenous communities to establish best practices for honouring Indigenous identity.



Flowers grow and shoes hang from a fence at the site of the former Notre-Dame residential school, to remember and honour the children who never returned home from residential school. (Radio-Canada / Catherine Gosselin)



Taking these steps and fulfilling these commitments will help us create a more authentic media environment reflecting the history, cultures and heritage of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

### Key initiatives:

- Review and amend our policies and directives for alignment with the UN Declaration
- Initiate a study of CBC/Radio-Canada's past coverage to better understand its reflection and representations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- Seek guidance from Indigenous Peoples on best practices for Indigenous-led verification of Indigenous identity or authenticity.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> We acknowledge that self-identification raises a lot of concerns about conceptions of identity. We commit to working closely with Indigenous Peoples organizations for guidance.

*“ When it comes to podcasts, attendees noted that CBC Indigenous is fantastic with streams. (...) They liked [the Finding Cleo podcast] because it was told by those involved and it was not another person speaking on behalf of others.”*

– Final Report, English engagement session.



Stephanie Cram is the host of *1870: Homeland of the Métis*, the second season of *Muddied Water*, a CBC podcast that explores the history of Métis in Manitoba. (CBC / Stephanie Cram)





## Building a Vibrant Future

It is an honour for us at CBC/Radio-Canada to help share First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives from coast to coast to coast. CBC/Radio-Canada is grateful to the Indigenous Nations and communities across the country that have shared so much with us. The development of the 2024-2027 National Indigenous Strategy has involved all levels of the organization. As a public broadcaster, committed to public service, it is our duty to ensure that every department, from the executive to the frontline, is responsible for creating change.

This Strategy creates a framework to support CBC/Radio-Canada employees and map a way forward. We will continue to walk alongside First Nations, Inuit and Métis staff, audiences and communities. We are incredibly grateful for the friendships we have with Indigenous Peoples. We must now do the work required of us – to take shared responsibility for reconciliation that has been so long carried by Indigenous Peoples inside and outside of the organization.

The National Indigenous Strategy is more than words on a page, it is a vibrant promise of ongoing, two-way engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

For deeper insights into the Strategy or to ask questions about our commitment, connect with us: [Indigenous.Strategy@cbc.ca](mailto:Indigenous.Strategy@cbc.ca)



Lawrence Nayally, host of CBC's *Trail's End*, interviewing Fred Sangris, the Chief negotiator for the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. (CBC / Mark Hadlari)



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We'd like to say a heartfelt thank you and honour the work of all those who contributed to the development of the first CBC/Radio-Canada National Indigenous Strategy.

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