



OFI Virtual Conference: Defining OFI Impact and Vision

November 17, 2020 Breakout Session

Indigenous Engagement

Overview of OFI Activities

OFI's Strategic Framework 2018-2022 states OFI's commitment to "ensure OFI's research – and the recommendations contained within – reflect the input of Indigenous peoples and stakeholders. The OFI Indigenous Engagement Initiatives will seek to foster respectful engagement and the creation of meaningful research partnerships with Indigenous groups by our research community. These initiatives seek to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action, Education for Reconciliation, calls 62: ii (TRC 2015), The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans, 2nd Edition: Chapter 9 (TCPS 2 2018) and aspires to align with the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP 2008).

As an initial first step, the Ocean Frontier Institute (OFI) has developed a draft Indigenous Engagement Guide is intended to be a 'living' document that will continue to evolve and reflect input as we begin to share it more widely. The Guides purpose is to facilitate efforts toward respectful and meaningful engagement with Indigenous governments, communities, and organizations. It informs OFI's researchers to provide considerate recommendations to reflect stakeholder and Indigenous priorities, values, and knowledge.

OFI will be working with project leads to develop plans to support this engagement and to identify appropriate cultural training opportunities for each research program. OFI will provide introductory Indigenous cultural training opportunities to all members of the OFI research community and assist with providing more in-depth cultural training for research programs when required or requested.

An Advisory Committee on Indigenous Engagement in Ocean Research is being formed to guide OFI's engagement with Indigenous communities and organizations to help ensure strong linkages and meaningful engagement between Indigenous communities and organizations and other ocean organizations in Atlantic Canada, while recognizing global aspects and impact on OFI's international collaborations and partnerships. The Committee will work with OFI staff and research community to help ensure the active incorporation of Indigenous interests and protection of Aboriginal and Treaty rights into coastal and ocean research to foster meaningful collaboration with Indigenous communities.

The following questions should help guide the Workshop discussions:

1. What current OFI activities in this area align with the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development?
2. With whom (groups, organizations, initiatives) would an alignment support a strong presence under the UN Decade – nationally and internationally?
3. Looking forward, what further actions might OFI take, and/or lead, in this area?
4. Identify who would be appropriate to work with OFI to take these actions forward.