



PARTNERS

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) is the oldest, largest and most representative membership organization that works to advance the interests of tribal governments by protecting tribal sovereignty. The NCAI Policy Research Center is a tribally-driven think tank that supports Native communities in shaping their own future by gathering credible data, building tribal research capacity, providing research support, and convening forums addressing critical policy questions.



The First Americans Land-grant College and Organization Network (FALCON), a non-profit association of tribal land grant administrators, directors, and faculty, was established in 2003 to ensure the well being of America's indigenous peoples and their tribal nations through the excellent dedication of Tribal College Land Grant professionals. FALCON fosters communication, cooperation and professionalism among Tribal College Land Grant education, promotes and preserves American Indian culture and language in all its professional activities, and supports members in maintaining the unique identity of Tribal Colleges and Universities.



The National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) is a national voice for American Indian children and families. NICWA, a private, non-profit membership organization based in Portland, Oregon, is the most comprehensive source of information on American Indian child welfare and the only national American Indian organization focused specifically on the tribal capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect. Their members include tribes, individuals—both Indian and non-Indian—and private organizations from around the United States concerned with American Indian child and family issues. Together, NICWA's partners, board, and staff work to protect the most vital resource of American Indian people—our children.



The Administration for Native Americans (ANA) was established in 1974 through the Native American Programs Act (NAPA). ANA is the only federal agency serving all Native Americans, including 562 federally recognized Tribes, American Indian and Alaska Native organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations and Native populations throughout the Pacific basin. The mission of ANA is to promote the goal of self-sufficiency and cultural preservation for Native Americans by providing social and economic development opportunities through financial assistance, training, and technical assistance to eligible Tribes and Native American communities.

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Research that Benefits Native People: A Guide for Tribal Leaders is the work of numerous tribal leaders, researchers, practitioners, and students.

During the beginning stages of the project, Terry Cross, Executive Director, National Indian Child Welfare Association, worked with project staff at the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center to conceptualize and outline this curriculum.

John Phillips, Executive Director, First Americans Land-grant College and Organization Network (FALCON) also contributed significantly. Dr. Phillips largely wrote the curriculum modules and presented them to tribal leaders, community members, and students at all five pilot locations. He has been invaluable to the development of the curriculum content, both the participant workbook and the trainer's guide. In addition, Leslie Newman, an independent consultant, worked alongside John Phillips, in providing thoughtful review of the content, gave input during multiple stages of the project, and assisted in the coordination of the train-the-trainer program. Puneet Sahota, a recent PhD recipient and MD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at Washington University in St. Louis, contributed to the research regulation sections of the curriculum, obtained permissions for articles and resources, and offered substantial feedback. James Garrett, an independent consultant, served as faculty in numerous community pilots. We would also like to thank Julie Wan and Karen Edwards for editing the curriculum and Nicole Clark of Stanton Design for layout and design.

Many staff and former staff at the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center have served in various roles during the project's development. Sarah Hicks, Director of Policy and Programs, spearheaded the development of the curriculum since its

inception. Dr. Hicks significantly contributed to the curriculum's vision and content, and presented curriculum modules during the pilots. Peter Morris, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, served as the liaison to our partners and consultants, reviewed numerous drafts, and assisted in the planning of each pilot. Jacqueline deArmas, former Program Associate, contributed to the early stages of outlining the content for this curriculum, and Christina Daulton, Program Manager, shepherded this project from concept to reality—coordinating the final module content, staffing the pilots, overseeing the design process and development of a complementary trainer's guide and plan for the train-the-trainer program.

We would like to express our appreciation to the many participants who volunteered to join in the piloting of the curriculum. This curriculum could not have been developed without the honest feedback, insight, and questions of each participant. Many thanks to the tribal leaders, community leaders, and students who participated during the pilots in Tazlina, Alaska; Phoenix, Arizona; Reno, Nevada; and Washington, DC.

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During this year's National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Policy Research Center's *Annual Tribal Leader/Scholar Forum*, I shared with our assembly of tribal nations my thoughts about the importance of research in our communities. I reminded them that we want to be sure that research occurring in our communities has its proper place in supporting our people: the health of our people, the education of our people, and the well-being of our people. In addition, we want to make sure that any research project conducted in our communities has an implementation plan. What good is data without an action plan to implement the findings and impact the people that you are doing the research for?

This is why NCAI's new curriculum—*Research that Benefits Native People: A Guide for Tribal Leaders*—is such an important tool for tribal leaders, their staff, and Native citizens. Historically, researchers and anthropologists have visited our communities to extract information from us, frequently misinterpreting and misusing it, and have minimized the validity of our Indigenous knowledge. As sovereign nations, tribes have a role in the research that is conducted in their communities and in regulating that research which occurs on their land and with their citizens.

This five-module curriculum answers the many calls from tribal leaders who for years have wanted resources to make better decisions about the proposed research in their communities and researchers who want to come into their communities. The curriculum provides tribal leaders with considerations for establishing and utilizing research review policies and boards to protect communities from harm, selecting a suitable research partner, applying values and ethics as guides throughout research projects, and understanding program evaluation. Most importantly, the curriculum reinforces the validity of our Indigenous ways of knowing and reminds us and others that their value is equal to western research standards.

I am grateful to NCAI and its Policy Research Center in providing our tribal nations with this invaluable publication and training. Six years ago, our leadership established the Policy Research Center as a place where information could be developed to proactively prepare tribal leaders and support Indian Country in shaping its own future. This Center has engaged with a range of Native and non-Native partners to ensure that our communities are valued partners in research, that tribal sovereignty is paramount, that Indigenous knowledge is valued and respected, and that when a research project ends, communities are stronger for the experience. *Research that Benefits Native People: A Guide for Tribal Leaders* symbolizes the mission of NCAI and its Policy Research Center, and will become a foundational resource that our leaders turn to for generations to come.

JOE GARCIA
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