



"We believe that, when armed with appropriate resources, Native peoples hold the capacity and ingenuity to ensure the sustainable, economic, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of their communities."

First Nations Development Institute Research Policy and Research Protocols

Research Philosophy

Driven by a fundamental belief in and respect for tribal sovereignty and Native wisdom, First Nations Development Institute's research is aimed at preserving, protecting and strengthening American Indian control over the assets that they own—including financial, natural, physical, institutional, human, social and cultural assets. Believing that that research is essential to making informed policy decisions, First Nations seeks to identify relevant policy issues and promote promising practices that will strengthen American Indian capacity and control of their assets. First Nations strives to conduct research that is culturally sensitive, acknowledges and respects Native American worldviews, and benefits Native communities.

Research Policy

First Nations' research center works closely with First Nations' grantmaking department to collect research data from our grantee field sites to identify key policy issues, lessons learned and promising practices. This connection with field practice sites assures that our approach to research is grounded in the experiences of community members and community projects. The goal is to identify successful practices that will help American Indians regain control of Native assets and empower Native communities to direct their own economic futures. In addition to working with our grantees, we also collect evaluation data on several of our programs and trainings and periodically conduct research on a broad range of asset-building topics.

First Nations Development Institute recognizes the challenges associated with conducting research in Native communities, and acknowledges Native nations' sovereign rights to control the use of the data in research reports. Because of the sensitive nature of conducting research in Native communities, First Nations uses the following research protocols:

1. **Informed consent:** All grantees and case study partners are informed of how the research data will be used. Research partners are given an informed consent sheet that provides information about the goals of the research, the research project key staff, and the rights of those participating in the research. If a tribe has an Institutional Review Board (IRB), First Nations Development Institute will work with the IRB to gain permission to collect data from community members and community programs.
2. **The right to "opt out" of participation in research projects:** All research partners may refuse to participate in a research project if they are not comfortable with the goals of the research or any other aspect of the research.

3. **Ownership of research data:** We acknowledge that data and stories belong to a tribe or community, and we commit that we will only use collected data for the stated purpose of our research, and that the ownership of data and stories will revert to a tribe or a group after the research has been completed. We will protect confidentiality and anonymity whenever possible. Our research partners have the right to approve the final use of the data in any published work.
4. **The right to review the research product before it gets published:** First Nations Development Institute staff will make every effort to supply research partners with a draft of any final research report for them to review and provide feedback on before First Nations publishes it. For more information about First Nations Development Institute's approach to conducting research in Native communities, please contact the research center staff: NARC@firstnations.org.