O ce of Indigenous Initiatives, Queen's University

Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Restorying Indigenous Leadership

JULY 2021

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Inclusive Voices Incorporated is honoured to be chosen to support the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's University, on the land of the Haudenosaunee, Onkwehón:we, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty partners – the Anishinaabe. Inclusive Voices Incorporated acknowledges the Indigenous People as the original owners and stewards of the lands we live, play, visit and engage upon. Without recognizing the ongoing legacy and respect of the Original Owners of this land, our presence today, as was in the past and onward into the future, would not exist as we know it.

On behalf of the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives, the consulting team of Inclusive Voices Incorporated – Terri-Lynn Brennan, Leela Viswanathan and Martha Wood – would like to thank everyone who took the time to share in the development of this plan. We have

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The O ce of Indigenous Initiatives (OII) at Queen's University has established several positive shifts across the institutional landscape in only three years of existence: it has supported the growth in Indigenous students, sta , faculty and guiding community voices; it has led the renaming and reclaiming of physical spaces; and it is becoming a critical resource hub for Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the Queen's and ka'tarohkwi communities.

In order to achieve its full potential, the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives requires a comprehensive plan that involves a review of the roots of its formation, where it nds itself in the present, and how it can continue to grow its voice and physical presence as a self-determining, integral part of Queen's. With this in mind, the OII, with the ongoing support and collaboration of the Principal's O ce with an intention of peace, strength and a good mind, must focus on the critical need to assist, promote and protect all Indigenous sta , faculty, students and community partners. A rming the OII's autonomy and its role in personnel management and senior level decision making will con rm the university's commitment to honouring The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) 1996, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) 2007, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action 2015, and Queen's own Task Force Recommendations Report of 2016.

This plan is the result of conversations held between October 2020 and June 2021 which focused on the last three years of Indigenous initiatives at Queen's, and the role of the OII, in particular how has the o ce been received, how it serves the community, and what is needed to ensure continued support and growth. After reviewing the feedback and comments of 304 Queen's community members and Kingston/ka'tarohkwi partners, including 73 self-identifying/known members of the Indigenous community, it is clear the OII has enormous potential to ensure Indigenous initiatives lead a thriving and innovative Queen's University.

The conversations identi ed four focus bundles that will frame next steps for the OII:

- – identifying decision-making opportunities to promote the role and responsibilities of the o ce across the university and community.
  - *Challenge:* The broader relevance and role of the OII and Indigenous initiatives is not fully understood or integrated into the development, planning and strategic priorities of the institution.
- – positioning the OII to take shared and equal ownership of an Indigenized/ restoryed landscape.
  - *Challenge:* Without multiple safe and welcoming spaces, Indigenous members of the internal Queen's and external ka'tarohkwi communities are at risk of never feeling sense of place on campus.
- – enabling all Queen's members to stand with and behind the OII in its e orts to teach, share and grow peace and safety across the region.
  - *Challenge:* There are polarized variances in levels of participation, commitment, and respect for Indigenous initiatives across the institution.
- – growing connections to Indigenous neighbours, communities, and organizations to ensure Indigenous stories, knowledge and lifeways ourish.
  - *Challenge:* There are not enough sta to harness the wisdom, knowledge, experience and stories of Elders, Knowledge/Faith Keepers, community leaders and academic changemakers.

Advancing the OII will be achieved through a revised vision that provides the o ce autonomy to prioritize the end goal of any Indigenous entity in the 21st century: self-determination. The mandate will focus the next ve years of the o ce on privileging the rights and opportunities of Indigenous Peoples associated with the university.

New Vision

The O ce of Indigenous Initiatives is self-determining and self-governing at Queen's University

New Five-Year Mandate

To mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually support, promote and protect all Indigenous sta , faculty, students and community partners with peace, strength and a good mind

Furthering the OII will then be accomplished with a series of recommendations and actions to be implemented and applied starting in 2021, summarized under the following,

Strategy Bundles

– Elevate the role of Indigenization through restorying to rebuild and reorganize Queen's reporting structure

– Ensure Queen's spaces and places re ect Indigenous social cohesion, political autonomy, and cultural protection

– Strengthen Queen's educational and administrative workforce; support and promote Indigenous forms of expression

– Advance diverse Indigenous community relations, promote equity, invest in increasing access to local, national, and international leaders and stories

FORGING A NEW PATH FOR THE OFFICE

talking circles, designed, led, and analyzed by regional Indigenous student and community leadership put voices on paper to present the Task Force Report,Yakwanastahentéha | Aankenjigemi | Extending the Rafters", in 2016. Creation of the OII in 2017 was the rst of the 25 recommendations from the report to be implemented.

Using the Task Force Report as a guide, the o ce established its mission to build community, advance reconciliation/conciliation and integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the fabric and life of the university. Four Directions Indigenous Student Center began to harness its responsibility to provide student support while the OII embarked on becoming a central location of faculty and sta support for the institution. Unfortunately, since 2017, with limited sta and time to promote its purpose and role across the institution, the OII it has reactionarily juggled deliverables. The OII has also had to respond to a number of a racist atrocities that have occurred across Queen's and is currently exhausting itself in maintaining healthy, safe, and supported community members.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2026

Incorporating feedback from numerous conversations with Indigenous and non-Indigenous voices from October 2020 to May 2021, the Strategic Planning Phase I Findings Report revealed these issues:

- there is a lack of consensus on what the OII does and the various responsibilities of the o ce. AVP, Indigenous Initiatives and Reconciliation, Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill, who came to this role after many years in the Faculty of Education and as Director of Four Directions, remains a comfortable and known voice for colleagues across the institution. To many individuals across the institution, Jan is the OII.
- the physical safety of and supports for Indigenous students, sta and faculty are limited and pocketed across the institution. Four Directions has been working hard and making e ective successive steps to welcome Indigenous students at Queen's; but there is still a need for a safe, welcoming, and Indigenous-led sense of place on the campuses for sta , faculty, and community members.
- the implementation of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing is in uencing curriculum changes, especially across the Humanities and Arts, but is slow in other faculties. Indigenization is a di cult term to use to in uence funding/donorship, external partnerships and epistemological changes, since the understanding of "Indigenization" is mixed and thus not easily positioned to drive change in a system that is inherently colonial and white.
- the decentralization and siloing of units and faculties at Queen's works against a common language, coordinated approach and the desire to build healthy relationships

The hegemonic university system currently in place is not conducive to Indigenous Peoples feeling valued, respected and successful. It is di cult for Indigenous peoples to commit to a traditional Western academic institution and strive for growth as a person and a professional within it. There is a clear and desperate need to initiate short and long-term e orts to protect and heal Indigenous voices and bodies across the institution. The OII needs to begin this next journey with a strong, singular vision of self-determination to grow its position and power so that it can protect Indigenous voices and bodies at Queen's.

Therefore, this plan recommends the OII to adopt the following:

- The O ce of Indigenous Initiatives is self-determining and self-governing at Queen's University

To mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually support, promote and protect all Indigenous sta , faculty, students and community partners with peace, strength and a good mind

Internal self-determination, external restorying, community wellbeing and sustainability, cooperative management

While maintaining their ongoing:

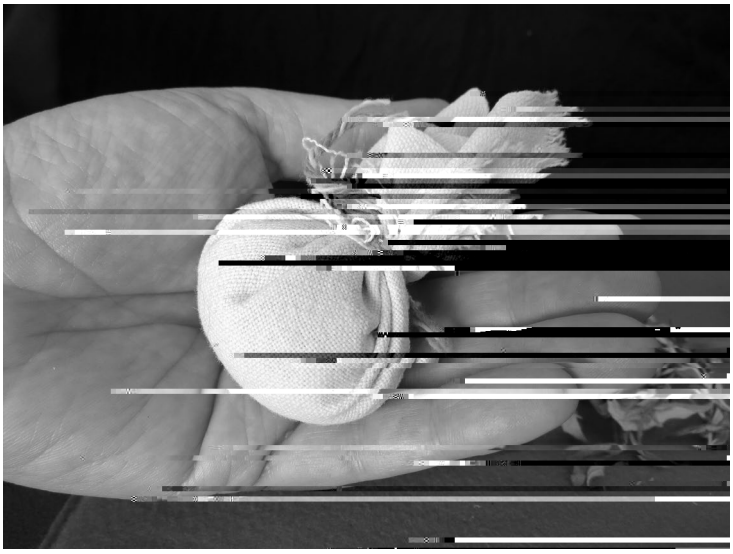
- Minwaadendamowin (respect) and inclusivity, Skennen (peace), raising awareness, strong relationships, Kahsatstensera (power), access and support, consensus-based decision-making, Kahnikonriyo (righteousness/the good mind), Debwewin (truth) telling, Gwekowaadiziwin (honesty)

Scope of Understanding Self-Determination

Self-determination is a rst priority within a state ofeconciliation

Indigenous responsibility to community. Restorying can also share narratives that express Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in a modern, global context to assert their respective community rights and interests[7].

Storytelling in response to the needs and wants of the community, is also inherently tied to leadership. Listening and learning from the voices of Indigenous community members increases leaders' credibility and their ability to do good[8] Leadership is also about getting out of the way in order to open up space for genuine contact to be made and where current and emerging needs can be expressed and explored. With wise, respectful leadership, Indigenous communities can embrace Indigenization through storytelling/ restorying: recollecting the stories of the past, paying attention to the stories of the present, and appealing for new voices to lead the story of the future.



7 Ibid.

8 Voyageur, Cora, Laura Brearley, and Brian Calliou. (2015). "Indigenous Leadership and Approaches to Community Development." In Restorying Indigenous Leadership: Wise Practices in Community Development, edited by Cora Voyageur, Laura Brearley, and Brian Calliou, 3-29. Ban : Ban Centre Press.

IN HONOUR OF RECLAMATION

1st BUNDLE – LEADERSHIP

Indigenous Leadership presupposes that the collective voices of the community will guide its priorities. There is no autonomous leader, no one voice to direct the path, no one point of in uence exerted over other people to structure activities and relationships. The Indigenous voices that o ered their guidance, experience, and wisdom on the future of the OII, reinforced this process as a necessary component for the o ce and for the institution to embrace. Indigenous leadership also relies on listening to the community to shape, organize and embrace the vision, values and knowledge that resonates with the community it serves. Reclaiming Indigenous leadership is about raising awareness and rea rming consensus-based decision making.

- **A** – Elevate the role of Indigenization/Restorying in rebuilding and reorganizing Queen's reporting structure

Impact

Indigenization/Restorying creates a healthy and safe university life.

Current State

IN HONOUR OF RECONCILIATION

3rd

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ENABLING ACTIONS

3.1 Establish and guide the mandate to increase training and ceremonial opportunities for students, sta and faculty in Indigenous histories, languages, and cultures

3.1.1 In collaboration with the Aboriginal Caucus and Principals O ce, prioritize opportunities and support for self-determined policy, procedural decisions and activities that can be safe and respected entry-points for Indigenous sta , faculty and community groups and partners to grow in personal learning and development

3.2 Lead the hiring of dual Elders/ Knowledge Keepers for each department/o ce/ faculty/unit associated with the university

3.2.1 De ne opportunities and limitations for shared support, resources, and personnel among institutional sta to maximize e ciencies

3.3 Transfer the responsibility for sta and faculty Indigenous

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ENABLING ACTIONS

4.1 Strengthen the presence and voice of the Aboriginal Caucus across the Ka'tarohkwi, Dish with One Spoon region

4.1.1 Expand on Queen's TRC recommendations to build relationships between the institution and regional First Nations and Métis communities

4.2 Align e orts to reduce overlap of services and programs to increase community awareness of and access to Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's

4.2.1 Hire a Community Connector to develop a needs assessment matrix in collaboration with community groups and partners

4.3 Partner with provincial, national, and international academic networks to ensure that Indigenization is consistently discussed at senior decision-making tables

4.3.1 Investigate and assess the progress made with post-secondary institutions that have established and developed campus-wide e ective Indigenous initiative o ces

4.3.2 Invite and maintain representative collaboration with international partners

CONCLUSION

The task of the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives over the next ve years is to establish a landscape of Indigenous presence and celebration. By fully endorsing a restorying framework built on a vision of self-determination as essential to community wellbeing, the OII and Queen's University have an opportunity to advance local sustainability, pride of place and indigenous inclusion to lead innovative strategies across the global post-secondary academy.

The period from 2021 to 2026, which this plan covers, will o er the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives an opportunity to see Indigenization through storytelling contribute to a vibrant and safe Queen's University, where all Indigenous peoples see themselves represented through leadership, land, reciprocity and alliances.

Self-determination is more than gaining autonomy in governance. For Indigenous peoples, self-determination is inherently linked to our Resiliency as a people, a Reclamation of land and space, the Resurgence of Indigenous ways as legitimate knowledge, and Reconciliation of the past with the present, to protect and nurture the future.

Through stories we recognize the Nibwaakawin (wisdom) of Elders and Knowledge/Faith Keepers, personal Dibaadendiziwin (humility) as Leaders and our inherent Aakodewewin, (bravery) to protect the land. Through restorying we learn to Zaagidiwin (love) one another as a community should, while embracing our Kahnikonriyo, Kahsatstensera and Skennen.

Inclusive Voices Incorporated would like to acknowledge the decolonizing framework used for this plan was created, designed and copywritten by A. Adair and Associates. The engagement framework used for this plan was created, designed and copywritten by Inclusive Voices Incorporated.

APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In Honour of RECLAMATION

Strategy: LEADERSHIP – Elevate the role of Indigenization/Restorying in rebuilidng and reorganzing Queen's reporting structure

Impact: Indigenization/Restorying creates a healthy and safe university life

Outcomes: Indigenization/Restorying is a leader in Queen's growth and transformation

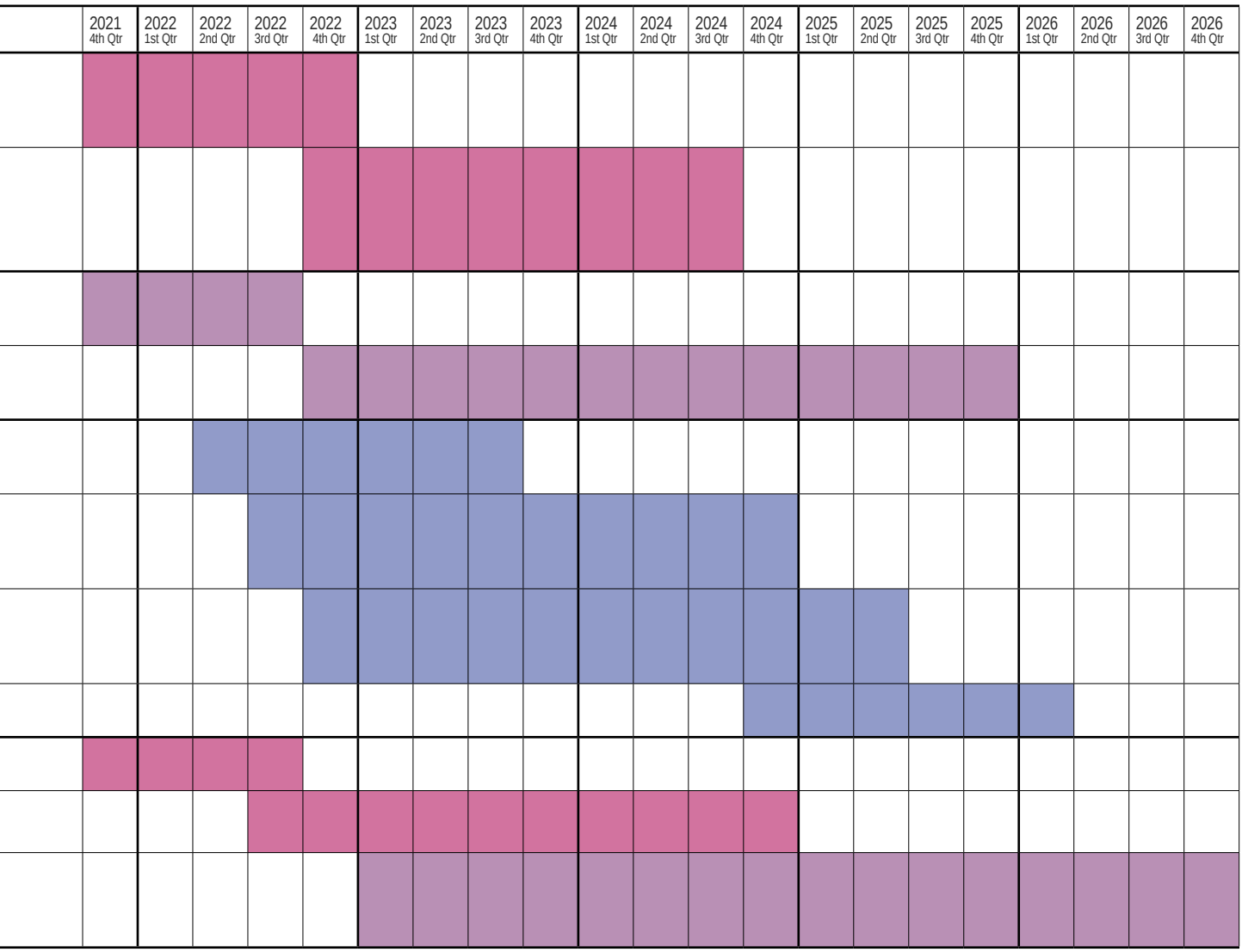
Recommendations	Enabling Actions	Tasks

In Honour of RECIPROCITY

Strategy: – Strengthen Queen's educational and administrative workforce; support and promote Indigenous forms of expression

Impact: Indigenous knowledges, ways of being and stories are shared and taught across the university

Outcomes:


2021 4th Qtr
2022 1st Qtr
2022 2nd Qtr
2022 3rd Qtr
2022 4th Qtr
2023 1st Qtr
2023 2nd Qtr
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2023 4th Qtr
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2025 2nd Qtr
2025 3rd Qtr
2025 4th Qtr
2026 1st Qtr
2026 2nd Qtr
2026 3rd Qtr
2026 4th Qtr

Strategy: ALLIANCES– Advance diverse Indigenous community relations, promote equity, invest in increasing access to local, national, and international leaders and stories

Impact: Indigenous community voices are highly valued in decision making at Queen's

Outcomes: Improved political, social, and economic Indigenous relationships, engagement, and participation

Recommendations	Enabling Actions	Tasks
4.1 Strengthen the presence and voice of the Aboriginal Caucus across the Ka'tarohkwi, Dish with One Spoon region	**4.1.1** Expand on Queen's TRC recommendations to build relationships between the institution and regional First Nations and Métis communities	Engage the Aboriginal Caucus to partner in the design and delivery of the annual Stabilizing Indigenous Language Symposium toward sustaining their leadership with the symposium going forward
		In collaboration with the Aboriginal Caucus and Aboriginal Council, develop an Alliance Investment Plan inclusive of budgetary requirements for Indigenous sta , faculty, and students to invest safely in annual events/symposia, seasonal ceremonies, teachings, and on-theD 1310 >>BDC 0 0 8 l5 T5ipC1 6ymposium toward su

APPENDIX B: RECONCILIATION PROTOCOL EXAMPLE

As referenced in **3.1.1**

Dated for reference:

BETWEEN:

Queen's University Indigenous Community and Partners, as represented by the O ce of Indigenous Initiatives

AND

Queen's University Governing Bodies, as represented by the Principals' O ce

WHEREAS:

The Parties hold di ering views with regard to sovereignty title, ownership and jurisdiction over the Ka'tarohkwi/Kingston lands currently in association with Queen's University, as set out below.

The O ce of Indigenous Initiatives asserts that:

Ka'tarohkwi/Kingston is Anishinaabe and Hadenosaunee lands, including the waters and resources, subject to the rights, sovereignty, ownership, jurisdiction and collective Title of the Anishinaabe and Hadenosaunee who will manage these lands in accordance with its laws, policies, customs and traditions.

The Principals O ce asserts that:

Ka'tarohkwi/Kingston is university land, subject to the sovereignty of the Governing Bodies of Queen's University, as a regulated body by the Ministry of College and Universities, Province of Ontario, and the City of Kingston municipal laws.

Notwithstanding and without prejudice to the aforesaid divergence of viewpoints, the Parties seek a more productive relationship and hereby choose a more respectful approach to coexistence by way of land and resource management on Ka'tarohkwi/ Kingston through shared decision-making and ultimately, a Reconciliation Agreement.

This Protocol con rms an incremental step in a process of reconciliation of OII and Principal's titles.