

# Request for Proposals: Literature Review on the History of Indigenous Peoples and Sport in Canada



## Overview

This Request for Proposal (RFP) invites qualified researchers and organizations to conduct a comprehensive literature review on the history of Indigenous peoples and sport in Canada. The proposed research aims to unearth and highlight the multifaceted relationship between Indigenous culture, sport, and the colonial legacy, providing a nuanced understanding of how sport has been both a vital aspect of Indigenous life and a tool of colonization.

This research is intended to inform policy and support sport organizations and partners in meeting Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

SIRC is seeking partners who share our commitment to inclusivity, respect for Indigenous knowledge systems, and promoting social justice in the realm of sport and recreation.

SIRC is working with an Advisory Committee to help guide all phases of the project. Members of the Committee include:

- [Janice Forsyth](#), Professor, University of British Columbia
- [Tricia McGuire-Adams](#), Associate Professor, University of Toronto
- [Carly Adams](#), Professor, University of Lethbridge

Proposals must provide a detailed description of the proposed approach that will be used to gather and analyze literature, and an indication of the types and scope of literature to be included in the review. Additionally, a brief project plan should be included, delineating key milestones, timelines, and the overall structure of the research process. The proposal must also identify the members of the proposed research team, highlighting their relevant qualifications, expertise, and experiences that contribute to the project's objectives. Research teams with Indigenous lived experience will be prioritized. We encourage innovative approaches that will enhance understandings in this critical area.

## Project Objectives

- **Historical Context:** Analyze the evolution of sport in Indigenous communities and its role in cultural identity.
- **Colonial Impact:** Investigate how sport was utilized by colonial forces to undermine Indigenous culture and practices and promote assimilation.
- **Contemporary Relevance:** Highlight current Indigenous engagement in sport and Indigenous physical culture revitalization efforts, demonstrating resilience and reclamation of identity and sovereignty through athletic expression.

## Areas of Focus

- **Traditional sports and games**, for example:
  - Examine the role of sports and games in Indigenous culture and community for areas such as physical, social, and spiritual development and document its significance
  - Investigate how Indigenous peoples have contributed to the creation of sport in Canada
- **Sport and colonization**, for example:
  - Investigate the ways in which sport was introduced and used as a mechanism for colonization in its different manifestations
  - Investigate the impact of residential schools and sport and instances where sport provided a sense of resistance or community
  - Explore how traditional Indigenous sport practices were suppressed, ignored, or appropriated
- **Current sport landscape**, for example:
  - Provide an overview of how Indigenous peoples engage with sport in Canada, including both mainstream and Indigenous-led programs
  - Compare and contrast sport opportunities in rural or remote Indigenous communities, or on reserve or off reserve
  - Analyze the current Indigenous sport system, including key organizations, programs, funding structures, or partnerships
  - Document the key Indigenous sport competitions and their role in fostering pride and athlete development
  - Identify and assess the barriers Indigenous peoples experience in accessing sport

## Requirements for methodology and approach

Acknowledging that existing research and literature tends to shape experiences through a pan Indigenous lens, this research should aim to contextualize, draw out, and highlight the specificities and experiences of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

The research project should take an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating perspectives from fields such as sport and recreation, history, anthropology, sociology, political economy, and Indigenous studies, ensuring that Indigenous voices, lived experiences, and worldviews are at the forefront. Project teams should prioritize Indigenous methodologies and contributions, ensuring the research is grounded in the voices and experiences of Indigenous peoples themselves.

Methods should include literature reviews and environmental scans of existing sources (both academic and grey literature). This project is not focused on building new knowledge, but rather, synthesizing and analysing what exists already.

## Deliverables and Timelines

**Final draft submission to SIRC for review and alignment:** September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025

A budget is available for this work of up to \$15,000. Should your proposal come in at higher than \$15,000 please justify your reasoning. Budgets and costs will be mutually agreed upon by SIRC and the research partners based on scope of work to be completed.

The final report is expected to be 10-12 pages excluding references and appendices.

**Interested applicants are invited to submit their proposals to [research@sirc.ca](mailto:research@sirc.ca) by Tuesday July 22, 2025.** Proposals should clearly outline the proposed approach, project plan, and qualifications of the research team.

Proposals will be reviewed as they are received, and the selection process will conclude once a suitable candidate has been identified.

We look forward to receiving proposals that reflect a deep commitment to Indigenous-led and culturally grounded research practices.