

Our Commitment to Anti-Racism, Diversity, Decolonization, and a Collaborative Community

It is understood internationally by museums, museologists, pedagogical experts, artists, curators, researchers, and community members alike, that all museums are colonial sites rooted in a history of racism. The Nelson Museum understands that we are a part of this history and must continue to take steps to dismantle the hegemonic presentation of history and break down systemic racism in our policies and within our own walls.

Our work will be guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action; the First Nations Principles of OCAP (ownership, control, access, and possession); equity, diversity and anti-racism policies from the sector; research ethics; Indigenous Law and Protocol; and radical museology based in meaningful and authentic relationship-building with all members of our community.

At the Nelson Museum, Archives and Gallery, we believe that the connection to art, history, and land is what makes our town so special. We understand our role in preserving our past, and also our responsibility to our community, especially our next generation, to always keep listening and learning, adapting to new information, and presenting the most conclusive, inclusive picture of history.

This work extends to archival practices and naming, curatorial work, programs, collections practices and repatriation, the gift shop, day-to-day operations, and governance structures and policies. Further change needs to happen now so that we can break the cycle of exclusion and erasure.

The Nelson MAG has committed to take responsibility for our role in anti-racism and reconciliation and has put forth the following list of actions, which reaffirms our commitment to amplifying missing voices, creating space for marginalized groups in our community, and being a trusted educational resource.

1. We are committed to following the TRC Calls to Action, UNDRIP, and the First Principles of OCAP, and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Research involving Indigenous People and the Reconciliation Framework by the Steering Committee on Canada's Archives. We will be rooted in the work of Indigenous leaders, academics and Elders. We will not share, license, or otherwise display Indigenous artifacts, or share Indigenous history, without express permission from the Nations.
2. We will work in ethical, reciprocal relationship with the Indigenous Nations which includes, but is not limited to:
 - A. Confirming a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sinixt Confederacy, the Ktunaxa Nation, and the West Kootenay Métis Association.
 - B. Working with the Sinixt Diaspora and the Hereditary Chief of the Ktunaxa Nation
 - C. Creating opportunities for meaningful and seasonal access to territory and land
 - D. Building meaningful partnerships and programming
 - E. Establishing yearly internships, job placements, scholarships, and/or research opportunities for youth as determined in partnership with the Nations

3. We are reviewing and updating our hiring practices to ensure we are actively seeking qualified candidates from underrepresented groups throughout the Museum, including volunteer, staff, and board positions.
4. Our yearly exhibitions will include no fewer than 3 BIPOC, Indigenous, and LGBTQ2S+ artists.
5. Review and edit the Shop Policy to ensure inclusion and support of local Indigenous artists and BIPOC artists
6. In the Archives, the renaming project is underway to properly identify and name Indigenous subjects in archival photographs, and include Indigenous place names.
7. We have signed the BCMA Repatriation Call to Action and are working in partnership with the regional Indigenous Nations, with guidance from the Repatriation Handbook (Haida Gwaii Museum) and in full compliance with the Ethics Guidelines of the Nations.
8. We will undergo an Equity Audit in 2022 to further understand and enact the required changes to our policies and further inform our decolonization work with our partners

Astrid Heyerdahl, Executive Director Sheila Achilles, Chair of the Board Board, Staff, and Volunteers of the Nelson Museum, Archives, and Gallery



Statement from Lesley Garlow, Education Manager

As the Education Manager within a museum, archives, and gallery setting, as an anti-oppressive and emancipatory social worker with a specialization in Indigenous governance, and as a Haudenosaunee Woman, these are a few key considerations informing ethical practice moving forward towards Truth and Reconciliation. Building a future for our communities.

First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities. Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

Resource List

To be updated/expanded quarterly

UNDRIP

TRC Calls to Action

First People's Principles of OCAP

Government of Canada, Tri-Council Policy Statement, Chapter 9 [Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples of Canada Archives and Reconciliation](#)

Indigenous Law

- <https://www.uvic.ca/law/assets/docs/ilru/What%20is%20Indigenous%20Law%20Oct%2028%202016.pdf>
- https://indigenousbar.ca/indigenouslaw/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/iba_ajr_final_report.pdf<https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/fpcfr/2010-v5-n2-fpcfr05254/1068933ar.pdf>https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=scwk_faculty
- <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/6-suggestions-for-effective-negotiations-with-indigenous-communities>
- <https://www.firstpeopleslaw.com/public-education/blog/annotated-aboriginal-law-2021#:~:text=First%20Peoples%20Law%20is%20the,Imai%20for%20over%20two%20decades.>

Desautel case

- https://www.scc-csc.ca/WebDocuments-DocumentsWeb/38734/FM010_Appellant_Her-Majesty-the-Queen.pdf
- [https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-13.html#:~:text=35%20\(1\)%20The%20existing%20aboriginal,are%20hereby%20recognized%20and%20affirmed.&text=\(2\)%20In%20this%20Act%2C,and%20M%C3%A9tis%20peoples%20of%20Canada.](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-13.html#:~:text=35%20(1)%20The%20existing%20aboriginal,are%20hereby%20recognized%20and%20affirmed.&text=(2)%20In%20this%20Act%2C,and%20M%C3%A9tis%20peoples%20of%20Canada.)
- <http://caid.ca/CamDec2012.pdf>

Education

- <http://www.fnesc.ca/first-peoples-principles-of-learning/>
- https://www.etfo.ca/getmedia/67d7eb05-4c08-414a-8979-7d98d94899bc/210504_Anti-OppressiveBooklet.pdf
- <https://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/manyhands-principles.pdf>
- <https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NWAC-action-plan-FULL-ALL-EDITS.pdf>

Climate Justice and TRC

- <https://cpj.ca/towards-reconciliation-and-climate-justice/>
- https://www.indigenousclimateaction.com/s/pcf_critique_FINAL_executive_summary.pdf
- <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/r8kmtz/production/265c8ad6d5c63bc401f642f594b33ddfbc158b5c.pdf>

Further Reading list

- https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/sites/default/files/indigenous_repatiation_handbook_v01_scren_jw_20190327.pdf
- <https://fernwoodpublishing.ca/book/research-is-ceremony-shawn-wilson>
- <https://utorontopress.com/9781487525644/indigenous-methodologies>
- <https://www.revelstokemuseum.ca/shop-product-listings/swift-river-by-laura-stovel>
- <https://www.canadianscholars.ca/books/research-as-resistance-2nd-edition>
- https://www.etfo.ca/getmedia/67d7eb05-4c08-414a-8979-7d98d94899bc/210504_Anti-OppressiveBooklet.pdf
- <http://www.peacecouncil.net/noon/understanding-haudenosaunee-culture>
- <https://www.firstpeopleslaw.com/public-education/blog/annotated-aboriginal-law-2021#:~:text=First%20Peoples%20Law%20is%20the,Imai%20for%20over%20two%20decades.>