

# Traditional Knowledge & Responsible Partnerships with Indigenous Communities

## What is Traditional Knowledge?

“From an indigenous perspective, Traditional Knowledge (TK) encompasses all that is known about the world around us and how we apply that knowledge in relation to those beings, physical and otherwise, that share our world. From this knowledge emerges our sense of place, our language, our ceremonies, our cultural identities, and our ways of life. As knowledge keepers pass away, the continued existence and viability of TK is threatened. It is crucially important to preserve the diverse teachings in TK and employ them to strive for balance among the physical, the spiritual, emotional, and intellect, and all things that encompass ‘wolakota’ [to be a complete human being].”

— Albert White Hat, Sr., Sicangu Lakota

## A Responsible Community Partnership...

- ✓ Meaningfully and respectfully engages community members as partners;
- ✓ Recognizes past injustices inflicted on Native Americans and on this community;
- ✓ Builds trusting relationships;
- ✓ Respects traditional knowledge and allows community values and perspectives to guide the partnership;
- ✓ Fosters open, transparent communication;
- ✓ Becomes active and present in the community.

## How Do We Respect Traditional Knowledge?

### ETHICS

Fostering the importance of culture & the right to self-determination

### KNOWLEDGE

Fostering a healthy, holistic way of life & cultural resiliency

### PRACTICE

Fostering & engaging community involvement



*Shirley Lewis, Squamish Nation*



## Why Responsible Community Partnerships are Important

Even though trusted partnerships and research practices have emerged, we still have much to learn. It is important for community members to become empowered to promote health and well-being for sustainable cultural resiliency. Positive courses of action require transforming historically exploitative research practices in order to rebuild trust between indigenous people and academic researchers. There is no “one-size fits all” approach to creating responsible partnerships.

## Examples of Responsible Partnerships:

- Center for Aboriginal Health Research: <http://cahr.uvic.ca>
- Center for Alaska Native Health Research: <http://www.uaf.edu/canhr/>
- Haskell Environmental Research Studies Center: <http://www.nsfepscor.ku.edu/hers/index-hers.html#program>
- Kisapa Consulting: <http://www.kiksapa.com/>
- Northwest Indian College, Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project: <http://www.nwic.edu/content/muckleshoot-food-sovereignty>
- Native Peoples, Native Homelands: <http://www.nativepeoplesnativehomelands.org>



Center for Genomics & Healthcare Equality

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