



*The* CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM  
*Le* MUSÉE CANADIEN *du* CANOT

### **CCM Principles for Engaging and Consulting with FNMI communities**

The Canadian Canoe Museum holds in trust over 600 canoes and kayaks for the citizens of Canada and its visitors. Canada's First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) designed, built and used the first canoes and kayaks, and the Museum has an ethical role to play in honouring the cultural histories and stories within our collection. Since inception, CCM has given priority to incorporating Indigenous stories from select communities whose crafts are reflected in the collection.

The following principles make explicit the basis for our approach to engage with and learn from FNMI communities:

1. CCM aspires to be a leader in honouring the intent of international and national statements regarding respecting the rights and culture of Indigenous peoples and their nations.<sup>1</sup>
2. CCM will be guided by the recommendations of the 2015 Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada.<sup>2</sup>
3. CCM is aware of prior and ongoing FNMI consultations within the Canadian museum sector and their recommendations, and aspires to emulate best practices.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Documents include: United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (endorsed by Canada in 2016); Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples (2018); Canadian Archaeological Association Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal People (2018).

<sup>2</sup> The Executive Summary notes: "museums and archives have interpreted the past in ways that have excluded or marginalized Aboriginal peoples' cultural perspective and historical experience...as history that had been formerly silenced was revealed, it became evident that Canada's museums had only told part of the story." (pg. 303) "There is an urgent need in Canada to develop historically literate citizens who understand why and how the past is relevant to their own lives and the future of the country. Museums have an ethical responsibility to foster national reconciliation, and not simply tell one party's version of the past." (pg. 308)

<sup>3</sup> "Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships Between Museums and First Peoples" (Task Force Report by Assembly of First Nations and Canadian Museums Association 1994) - "the desire and authority of First Peoples to speak for themselves should be recognized and affirmed by Museums...appropriate representatives of First Peoples will be involved as equal partners in any museum exhibition, program or project dealing with Aboriginal heritage, history or culture" (pg. 7). Note: in 2017, CMA established the "Museums and Indigenous Issues Project" and CCM is in communication with CMA about the scope of the project and its Terms of Reference.

4. CCM acknowledges that FNMI individuals and communities are authors of their culture and stories. All nations will be invited to express their perspectives and share their knowledge across CCM's platforms including physical and digital means (permanent gallery, temporary exhibitions, artisanal workshops, programs and online collections).
5. CCM recognizes its responsibilities to the source communities and their individuals in sharing and interpreting these offered stories.
6. CCM is committed to providing opportunities for multiple and differing perspectives, worldviews and voices, in partnership with FNMI communities.
7. CCM will collaborate to create an inclusive and accessible research centre where academic and indigenous knowledge keepers are welcomed and where knowledge and cultural practices may be shared.
8. CCM will maintain relationships with communities during the building of the new museum and after, and continue to find meaningful ways to encourage FNMI communities to engage in, or refresh, their involvement after the Museum opens.
9. CCM will continue to consult with knowledge holders, subject experts and academics in the field of Indigenous Studies as exhibit and program content is developed.
10. CCM will develop appropriate policies and guidelines to support these principles, including repatriation policies.
11. To ensure indigenous voices are included in CCM conversations at all levels, CCM is committed to consideration of FNMI candidates on its Board and committees, in its various volunteer efforts, and in the recruitment of staff positions.

Impact of Principles for Exhibit Design Committee and  
formation of the Interpretive Plan

- a) Begin the engagement/consultation with the local Indigenous communities, specifically the Williams Treaties Nations, the Metis Nation of Ontario (Peterborough chapter), Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre and communities not officially recognized by the Federal government. Consultation will begin with local communities including Curve Lake FN, Hiawatha FN, Alderville FN and Scugog FN.
- b) The identification of other FNMI communities across Canada with whom CCM will engage will be informed by the strengths and representation within the museum's collection and expand from there as needed. We will seek out knowledge holders while also honouring local protocol.
- c) Identify and celebrate with all FNMI communities with whom we have collaborated over the life of CCM, and apprise them of our developments as appropriate, even if they are not directly consulted
- d) Maintain communications with each community with whom we have engaged/consulted during the building of the museum, the development of the design phase, and after the new Museum's opening