

Our Response to the BC DRIPA Action Plan

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL | *Helping to move each other forward*, released in 2023, is one of many strategic planning documents that expresses the University of Victoria's commitment and responsibility to support the implementation of British Columbia's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Act (DRIPA) Action Plan (2022-2027)*. This appendix to Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL outlines how the renewed Indigenous Plan aligns with the provincial strategy.



What is the *BC DRIPA Action Plan*?

The commitments of the Province of British Columbia to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) are legislated through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and further specified by the *BC DRIPA Action Plan*, published in 2022. To learn more about the Declaration Act and to read the *Action Plan*, please refer to: <https://declaration.gov.bc.ca/>.

The *BC DRIPA Action Plan (2022)* offers a “whole-of-government approach to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration over time” and the plan “is meant to help everyone who lives in British Columbia understand the importance of reconciliation” (p. 3).

Written to guide the development of a cohesive, province-wide approach for upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples, all 89 Actions were drafted with the explicit expectation that they are to be further developed and implemented through long-term partnerships with Indigenous Peoples. This report summarizes how UVic has committed to advancing these actions.

Our shared aspirations and priorities

Like the *BC DRIPA Action Plan*, Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL emphasizes the importance of Indigenous leadership and engagement in guiding the good work to come. Furthermore, Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL echoes the *Action Plan* in acknowledging the colonial impact of post-secondary institutions on Indigenous Peoples and their languages, lands and knowledges. The work ahead is our collective responsibility.

This appendix to the renewed Indigenous Plan (2023) details the alignments between specific actions listed in the *BC DRIPA Action Plan* and the priorities named in Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL. Additionally, this supplementary report on UVic's response to the *BC DRIPA Action Plan* details the ways that the goals of Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL advance and align with the thematic aspirations of the provincial framework.



Theme 1. Self-Determination and Inherent Right of Self-Government



The *BC DRIPA Action Plan* (2022) outlines an aspiration for British Columbia where: “Indigenous peoples exercise and have full enjoyment of their rights to self-determination and self-government, including developing, maintaining and implementing their own institutions, laws, governing bodies, and political, economic and social structures related to Indigenous communities” (p. 10).

Our shared aspirations

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL | Helping to move each other forward is guided by our commitment to support Indigenous Peoples exercise self-determination and self-government by respecting the application of Indigenous laws and legal orders, maintaining leader-to-leader relationships, and working in partnership with Indigenous Nations and governing bodies (p.8).

The work ahead calls on members of the university community to work collaboratively to align our practices and system with local laws, protocols and values, and to ensure university programs and services are responsive to emergent priorities and needs identified by Indigenous partners, advisory councils and community members.

Theme 2. Title and Rights of Indigenous Peoples



The *BC DRIPA Action Plan* (2022) expresses the goal that: “Indigenous People exercise and have full enjoyment of their inherent rights, including the rights of First Nations to own, use, develop and control lands and resources within their territories in B.C.” (p.14). Further, it reaffirms Indigenous Peoples’ “right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development, use and/or stewardship of their traditional territories and other resources” (p.14).

Our shared aspirations

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL expresses the university’s commitment to respecting Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ laws and protocols in land use planning and dispute resolution procedures. The renewed Indigenous Plan also seeks to ensure that our policies and practices respect the distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL further calls on the university community to respect Skʷeʔs | ṮẸ SKÁLs I, ṮẸ Ś, XENANs | the Laws and Philosophies that have been shared, so that we:

- Héʔəkʷ ʔə cə čəlénən ṯə | HÁEQ ŁTE OL ṮẸ ČELÁNEN ŁTE | Remember our ancestors and birthright, with the goal that “All members of the university community understand and demonstrate how to live, learn and work in right relationships with local lands, waters and laws” (p. 14); and we
- Nəčəmaat kʷəns čeʔi | ČÁNEUEL OL | Work together, to create an environment where “All members of the university community respectfully contribute to a culture of collaboration and cooperation” (p. 18).

Our Shared Priorities

BC DRIPA Action 2.6 Co-develop strategic-level policies, programs and initiatives to **advance collaborative stewardship** of the environment, land and resources, that address cumulative effects and respects Indigenous Knowledge. This will be achieved through collaborative stewardship forums, guardian programs, land use planning initiatives, and other innovative and evolving partnerships that support integrated land and resource management.

- Xʷ|W̱ Priority 1.4.1 (b) Partner with local communities to align university policies and practices with Indigenous laws, ensuring that we follow local protocols and address colonial relationships with the local Peoples and land so that we are: (b) developing land stewardship initiatives and plans to heal and restore the lands occupied by the university.

Theme 3. Ending Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination



The *BC DRIPA Action Plan* (2022) aspires for a British Columbia where “Indigenous Peoples fully express and exercise their distinct rights, and enjoy living in B.C. without interpersonal, systemic and institutional interference, oppression or other inequities associated with Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination, wherever they reside” (p.18). This includes ensuring that “Indigenous learners feel welcomed, respected, and comfortable learning and being Indigenous in schools and other educational institutions” (p.18).

Our shared aspirations

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL is guided by our commitment to honour diverse Indigenous identities, experiences and teachings and to ensure that we respect Indigenous languages, lands, laws and ways of knowing and being in all that we do as a university community. UVic aspires to

create inclusive and accountable environments for learning, teaching, service and research, transforming our policies and systems so to uphold an anti-racist community of care.

The renewed Indigenous Plan encourages the university community to respect the teachings that have been shared with us, so that we:

- Nəwəš šxʷ cən ʔəy̓ šqʷeləqʷən | ÁMEKT TFEN ÍY, ŚKÁLEZEN | Bring in your good heart and mind, where “The health, well-being and equitable treatment of all people are prioritized in the policies, practices, systems and structures of the university” (p.22).

Our Shared Priorities

BC DRIPA Action 3.3 Conduct an **external review of Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination** in the provincial public education system, and create a strategy, including resources and supports, to address findings.

- **Xʷ|W Priority 1.1.4** Collaborate with partners on campus to develop and deliver training programs to address anti-2SLGBTQIA+ discrimination and Indigenous-specific racism.
- **Xʷ|W Priority 3.1.2** Integrate Indigenous cultural competencies and anti-racist/oppressive practice as key components for evaluating staff, administrator and executive job performance and faculty service, research and teaching, expanding our ideas of excellence.
- **Xʷ|W Priority 3.2.1 (c)** Ensure that classroom experiences respect students and instructors as people who hold knowledge, carry family and community responsibilities, and follow diverse pathways in life by: (c) providing instructors access to training to address and prevent anti-Indigenous racism using strengths-based and trauma-informed practices.
- **Xʷ|W Priority 3.4.1 (a-c)** Expand dispute resolution protocols to uphold a community of accountability, responsibility and care by:
 - a) creating avenues for addressing anti-Indigenous racism, discrimination and lateral violence through dispute resolution protocols that flow from; Indigenous teachings and processes;
 - b) addressing systemic inequities and experiences of anti-Indigenous racism by ensuring that university units and other relevant bodies (e.g., bargaining units and student societies) are equipped with the appropriate tools to assess and improve the campus climate; and
 - c) developing and resourcing Indigenous-specific positions across campus to improve systems and structures and resolve disputes.

BC DRIPA Action 3.4 Implement a **mandatory course** or bundle of credits related to First Peoples as part of graduation requirements in B.C. and co-create culturally relevant provincial resources with Indigenous people for use by all educators across the K-12 education system.

- **X^w|W Priority 1.2.1** Revise core learning outcomes for all graduating students to include Indigenous cultural competencies and knowledge of colonial histories, current realities and
- inherent rights to self-determination.
- **X^w|W Priority 1.2.2** Create core courses that meet baseline criteria and provide opportunities for students in units without Indigenous-specific courses.

BC DRIPA Action 3.5 Provide resources to Indigenous organizations to **improve public understanding of Indigenous histories, rights, cultures, languages** and the negative impacts of Indigenous-specific racism.

- **X^w|W Priority 4.2.3** Review and revise core courses and learning outcomes to ensure all students are equipped to respond to relevant national and international Indigenous plans and calls to action by program completion.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.2.4** Expand Indigenous core curriculum across all programs to ensure students are prepared to address their anti-Indigenous racism in their future employment.

BC DRIPA Action 3.8 Develop and implement community-driven activities to **end violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people**, beginning with the foundational activities in *A Path Forward: Priorities and Early Strategies for B.C.* and steps towards achieving the mandate commitment to develop a gender-based violence action plan.

- **X^w|W Priority 1.1.4** Collaborate with partners on campus to develop and deliver training programs to address anti-2SLGBTQIA+ discrimination and Indigenous-specific racism.

BC DRIPA Action 3.14 Advance the collection and use of disaggregated **demographic data**, guided by a distinctions-based approach to Indigenous data sovereignty and self-determination, including supporting the establishment of a First Nations-governed and mandated regional data governance centre in alignment with the First Nations Data governance Strategy.

- **X^w|W Priority 4.4.1** Develop a comprehensive reporting and implementation strategy, ensuring that metrics are transparent, accessible and aligned with the *Disaggregated Demographic Data Collection in British Columbia: The Grandmother Perspective*.





Theme 4. Social, Cultural and Economic Well-being

The *BC DRIPA Action Plan (2022)* expresses the goal for: “Indigenous Peoples in B.C. fully enjoy and exercise their distinct rights to maintain, control, develop, protect and transmit their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, languages, food systems, sciences and technologies. They are supported by initiatives that promote connection, development, access and improvement, as well as full participation in all aspects of B.C.’s economy. This includes particular focus on ensuring the rights of Indigenous women, youth, Elders, children, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQIA+ people are upheld” (p. 22).

Our shared aspirations

Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL recognizes the important role that post-secondary institutions can play in supporting Indigenous language revitalization, Traditional Knowledge and community-led research. As an academic community, we commit to integrating Indigenous pedagogies, languages and ways of knowing being in teaching and learning (p.11). The renewed Indigenous Plan commits to strengthening Indigenous student, faculty and community research projects through sustainable capacity-building and mentorship programs. The goals and priorities of the renewed Indigenous Plan were drafted through several engagement sessions with Indigenous students, staff, faculty, community members and Elders who identified a diverse range of needs, values and aspirations.

The renewed Indigenous Plan reminds the university community that our commitments and actions today are setting and clearing paths for those who will learn, teach and work at UVic for years to come. The priorities of Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl | W̱ẸNENISTEL are guided by the teaching:

Leʔt šxʷ helə ʔə cə makʷ sčəʔi səʔ | S,HOL ET MEQ EN ENÁ SE SCÁ | Be prepared for the work to come, supported by an institution where “Funding, resources and capacity are sufficient to deliver sustainable and responsive educational experiences, services, programs and supports to all members of the university community” (p.26).

Our Shared Priorities

BC DRIPA Action 4.2 Develop and implement an **effective recruitment and retention strategy to increase the number of Indigenous teachers** in the K-12 public education system.

- Xʷ|W̱ Priority 2.1.1 Create strengths-based and relationship-oriented approaches to Indigenous student outreach, admissions, registration, orientation and retention.
- Xʷ|W̱ Priority 4.1.4 (a-c) Ensure flexible, navigable pathways for Indigenous students, staff and faculty to pursue academic and career opportunities, supported by mentorship programs.

BC DRIPA Action 4.4 Identify, develop and implement mechanisms and approaches to enable boards of education to better support Indigenous students, **including increasing and ensuring equitable access to education** and safe environments.

- **X^w|W Priority 2.1.1** Create strengths-based and relationship-oriented approaches to Indigenous student outreach, admissions, registration, orientation and retention.

BC DRIPA Action 4.5 Co-develop a policy framework for Indigenous post-secondary education and skills training that includes:

(a) supporting post-secondary institutions to be **more culturally relevant and responsive** to the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities;

- **X^w|W Priority 1.2.3** Ensure that programs and courses integrate and are evaluated with respect to Indigenous teaching and learning practices, ethics and knowledges.
- **X^w|W Priority 1.2.4** Create opportunities for Indigenous students to engage with their own experiences, knowledges, lands and languages as well as with diverse ways of knowing and being.
- **X^w|W Priority 2.2.2** Offer, resource and sustain opportunities for co-teaching and learning in diverse classroom, community-immersed, place-based and experiential settings.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.2.1** Identify areas of educational programming of interest and value through continued engagement with Indigenous students and communities.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.2.2** Provide sufficient sustainable base funding for programs and courses that respond to community requests, needs, interests and priorities.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.3.2** Create funding opportunities to support community-initiated projects and to expand capacity for pursuing research and knowledge priorities.

(c) ensuring that Indigenous learners have **access to student housing** that is safe, inclusive, and enables them to thrive personally, academically, and culturally;

- **X^w|W Priority 4.1.1** Expand and ensure resources for housing, food security, childcare and wellness to offer holistic supports and services to Indigenous students, staff and faculty.

(d) developing mechanisms for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and communities to play an integral role in public post-secondary institutions' **decision-making**; and

- **X^w|W Priority 3.1.1 (a)** Recognize and celebrate the ways Indigenous students offer their talent, leadership and knowledges, both in and beyond the classroom, by: creating procedures to facilitate respectful compensation and appropriate honoraria for time and energy spent by students in university service.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.1.2** Support and sustain Indigenous leadership, participation and programming by creating permanent, continuing and high-level positions across the university.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.4.2** Increase Indigenous senior leadership in decision-making across the university, including designated seats for Indigenous representatives on governance bodies.

(e) identifying legislative amendments needed to ensure all public post-secondary institution **boards include at least one Indigenous person**.

- **X^w|W Priority 4.1.2** Support and sustain Indigenous leadership, participation and programming by creating permanent, continuing and high-level positions across the university.
- **X^w|W Priority 4.4.2** Increase Indigenous senior leadership in decision-making across the university, including designated seats for Indigenous representatives on governance bodies.

BC DRIPA Action 4.27 Review the principles and processes that guide the **naming** of municipalities and regional districts, and evolve practices to foster reconciliation in local processes.

- **X^w|W Priority 1.4.1 (c)** Partner with local communities to align university policies and practices with Indigenous laws, ensuring that we follow local protocols and address colonial relationships with the local Peoples and land so that we are: (c) increasing the visibility and use of local languages, place names and art on campus and in communications materials.

BC DRIPA Action 4.30 Support **Indigenous language revitalization** through sustainable funding.

- **X^w|W Priority 1.2.5** Expand Indigenous language programming at all levels (from certificates to PhD) and develop and support degree programs in Indigenous languages.

Alignment Summary Table

The alignments detailed in the previous pages are summarized in Table 1, below:

BC DRIPA ACTION PLAN ACTIONS	Xʷkʷənəŋ istəl WŁENENISTEL PRIORITIES
2.6	1.4.1b
3.3	1.1.4 3.1.2 3.2.1c 3.4.1a-c
3.4	1.2.1 1.2.2
3.5	4.2.3 4.2.4
3.8	1.1.4
3.14	4.4.1
4.2	2.1.1a, c-d 4.1.4a-c
4.4	2.1.1a-f
4.5a	1.2.3 1.2.4 2.2.2 4.2.1 4.2.2 4.3.2
4.5c	4.1.1
4.5d	3.1.1a 4.1.2 4.4.2
4.5e	4.1.2 4.4.2
4.27	1.4.1c
4.30	1.2.5

Table 1: BC DRIPA Action Plan Alignments with the renewed Indigenous Plan (2023).

