



Ontario



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Call for Papers

“Fostering Biimaadiziwin” A National Research Conference on Urban Aboriginal Peoples

February 23 & 24, 2011
Delta Chelsea, Toronto, Ontario

Conference Sponsored by the Office of the Federal Interlocutor
for Métis and Non-Status Indians of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Hosted by the National Association of Friendship Centres,
University of Sudbury and Trent University
In Partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada, Public Safety Canada,
Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and the Government of Ontario
and the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network
with the National Aboriginal Health Organization

Introduction

The National Research Conference on Urban Aboriginal Peoples will be held in Toronto, Ontario on February 23 and 24, 2011. The conference will be ‘forward looking’ and will engage new approaches, bringing together a rich network of Canadian researchers and academics, policy-makers, community members and practitioners.

Over the last half century, the city has become home for many Aboriginal peoples. Social scientists have described the problems that have occurred as a result of the transition from rural/reserve communities to urban communities. Public policy approaches have understandably focused on advancing ways to improve the quality of urban Aboriginal lives through programs aimed at improving education and health, increasing job skills and access to education, improving health and community development. Urban Aboriginal peoples have also been working hard to create good lives for themselves and their communities. These efforts have often been invisible.

Conference Theme: Biimaadiziwin (The Good Life)

This conference focuses on research and dialogue that explores the ways that Aboriginal peoples are pursuing Biimaadiziwin (meaning ‘the good life’ in the Nishnaabemowin) in urban environments. The good life is premised on a balance of four elements: body, mind, emotion and spirit. To foster Biimaadiziwin, Aboriginal peoples are building and strengthening neighborhoods and communities; improving education; creating businesses and organizations; governing themselves; sharing and utilizing traditional knowledge; establishing

groups of spiritual practice; learning their Indigenous languages; creating art and literature; overcoming various challenges; working with non-Aboriginal peoples and institutions; and contributing to the overall social, cultural and economic fabric of the city, among other important activities.

What is the meaning of Biimaadziwin in a diverse urban Aboriginal context? How do local communities identify their issues and how do they organize to address them? What programs and services have been developed, what organizations have been established, and what partnerships and initiatives have been created to advance the goals of Biimaadziwin? What are the factors in success of these organizations, partnerships and initiatives? These are some of the questions that this conference is interested in exploring. Rather than focusing on the problems, we are interested in exploring solutions and what is working. The conference theme is a conscious move away from the social deficit model which has been used to study urban Aboriginal issues and towards a model focused on building upon strengths and assets.

Session Themes

Themes should reflect ***urban Aboriginal perspectives of First Nations, Non-Status Indians, Métis, and Inuit.***

- Aboriginal health: good health and well-being of Aboriginal people living in urban settings, factors that help to build resilience, approaches that are being implemented to reduce the burden of chronic and infectious diseases, as well as best practices to prevent and promote health, intersectoral approaches based on the social determinants of health, and barriers that might influence health and well-being as well as presentations that discuss national survey data
- Research partnerships: How effectively engaging urban Aboriginal communities to identify research priorities, establishing reciprocal relationships, and enhancing community owned knowledge can contribute to improved quality of life for urban Aboriginal peoples
- Innovative partnerships and initiatives between diverse Indigenous communities and organizations in an urban context (e.g. cross-cultural approaches, linkages between First Nations and urban Aboriginal service providers, urban and rural/remote communities): What works, how and why? What are the factors and enablers for success?
- Community safety can include initiatives that are either mainstream or Aboriginal specific, proceeding from crime prevention to policing through the court system and corrections. This theme will explore mainstream and Aboriginal specific responses, and will look at ways to respond more effectively to Aboriginal needs by better integrating overall solutions. We are interested in identifying elements of collaboration that respond to issues of urban Aboriginal community safety
- Urban demographic trends and shifts, and their implications for public policy

- Urban Aboriginal economic development, urban governance and jurisdiction
- Social research: education; employment, housing, urban programs and services delivery, and justice, e.g. education; employment, housing, urban program and service delivery and justice
- The urban arts and media
- Youth
- Elders and traditional knowledge
- Gendered research and Indigenous feminism
- Indigenous research methods and ethics
- Urban culture, citizenship and identity
- Urban community development and community engagement
- First Nations, Inuit and Métis culture, citizenship and identity in an urban environment

Research Streams

We are interested in papers, presentations, panels and policy roundtables from various research and practice environments, such as community organizations, academia, advanced students and government that explore and examine how urban Aboriginal (First Nations, Non-Status Indians, Métis, and Inuit) and non-Aboriginal communities, organizations, and institutions are pursuing this important Aboriginal community and public policy goal. We are also interested in examining how different levels of government are supporting this goal and how they might support it in the future.

We are specifically interested in research that addresses this goal from national, provincial/territorial and local perspectives from the following research streams:

1. Aboriginal community organizations, people and research practitioners
2. Academics
3. Graduate Students
4. Policy practitioners

Submission Guidelines

Deadline for submissions is November 15, 2010. Late submissions will not be accepted. Research papers are due in advance of the conference by February 1, 2011. Proponents of selected abstracts will be notified by December 30th, 2010. Travel and accommodations to the conference will be covered for selected speakers.

Proposals must identify a session theme, research stream, and the type of session proposed. Proposals outlining the intended research should be approximately 450 words.

Research paper proposals selected for publication should result in papers of 4,500 to 9,000 words (15 to 30 pages, 1.5 lines spaced) that meet the standards of university-level scholarship. The papers will be published on the conference website and may also be published in edited volumes and/or academic journals addressing common themes. If selected for publication, the papers will be subject to a double-blind peer review after the conference.

Proposals will be selected for the following:

15-minute papers: Individual proposals accepted by the conference peer review committee will be organized into panels or workshops. Presentations submitted in the framework of a panel or round-table must be submitted by the chair. Proposals will include a 150-word abstract.

15-30 minute visual, multimedia, and poster presentations: Individual proposals accepted by the conference peer review committee will be organized into panels or workshops. Proposals will include a 200-word abstract, along with a description of the visual or multimedia aid that will be used.

90-minute panels: Panels will be composed of 3 presentations, followed by a 30 minute discussion. Proposals will include a 150-word abstract describing the theme of the panel, a list of participants (including the chair and the discussant) and 150-word abstracts for each presentation.

Policy roundtables: Roundtables will be 90 minutes and less formal than panels. Participants will not propose formal communication but will address a specific theme or issue to be submitted by the organizers of the roundtable. Proposals will include a 250-word abstract describing the theme of the policy roundtable (one chair should be proposed to lead the discussion who is familiar with the theme or issue).

***For more information contact Conference Coordinator, NAFC
(info@nafc.ca) or the Academic Lead, David Newhouse, Trent University
(dnewhouse@trent.ca)***

***Proposals (paper; visual, poster or multimedia presentation; panel; or
policy roundtable) should be submitted electronically to
Conference Coordinator, NAFC (info@nafc.ca)
by November 15th, 2010 by 4pm EST.***