"How many times do we have to say it before it happens?": Indigenous participants' desired supports at the University of Manitoba

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for
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Executive Summary

In this report, I detail the efforts of the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous) at the University of Manitoba to address the following commitment from the [Indigenous Senior Leadership Report](#): "Establish a network of supports for Indigenous scholars and staff across faculties and administration units through such means as mentorship and leadership programs, and research collaboration programs."

To address this priority, I conducted an [internal](#) and external environmental scan on existing supports at the University of Manitoba and other institutions. Next, I, along with a group of others, conducted a series of focus groups and one interview with Indigenous people affiliated with the University of Manitoba to discuss how the University could best support them. This report details five recommendations based on these focus groups and the single interview. Below, I summarize these recommendations.

The first recommendation is systemic institutional changes. Participants noted many ways that the systems making up the institution should change to support Indigenous people, including changes to administrative responsibility and accountability, updating job descriptions, increasing Indigenous content, increasing the number of Indigenous employees, increasing and improving Indigenous success programs, and updating institutional practices.

The second recommendation was to support Indigenous people's access to community and culture. The university could do this by improving access to existing supports, increasing access to culture on campus, supporting grassroots initiatives, increasing access to and supporting the growth of the Indigenous community, building more Indigenous spaces, and increasing representation on campus.

The third recommendation was to support Indigenous people within the context of their lived experiences. Namely, the University of Manitoba should address racism on campus, provide basic resources like food and essential school supplies, create an accommodating environment for families, provide new and culturally relevant mental health services, and support Indigenous student experiences through various programming.

The fourth recommendation was that non-Indigenous people have a responsibility to listen, learn, and support Indigenous people's efforts for institutional change. This role includes institutional changes, such as authentically valuing Indigenous engagement, doing Indigenous engagement work, strengthening leadership, and authentically providing support, as well as individual changes, like non-Indigenous people supporting Indigenous-specific event planning.

Lastly, recommendation five was to embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing. The university can do this by supporting Indigenous research/researchers within faculties, working with Indigenous people to outline how to do Indigenous research in a good way, embedding Indigenous approaches to mediation and appreciation, supporting Indigenous identity experiences, engaging in Land Back initiatives, and valuing community and cultural experience.

Contents

Introduction

In 2018, two Indigenous leaders at the University of Manitoba, Dr. Barry Lavallee and Dr. Lynn Lavallée, resigned from the institution. They both cited racism in their reasons for leaving the University, as well as a lack of support (CBC News, 2018; Kusch, 2019). In the wake of these resignations, the University of Manitoba established the Indigenous Senior Leadership Advisory Committee. In August of 2019, the Advisory Committee released their report and recommendations. Among many others, one recommendation was to establish a network of support for Indigenous scholars and staff including mentorship, leadership, and research programs (University of Manitoba, 2019). To begin to address this recommendation, I conducted an internal environmental scan and an external environmental scan (Efimoff, 2021). In addition to these environmental scans, we also conducted focus groups and an interview about the supports Indigenous people want at the University of Manitoba, which I detail in this report.

The Current Study

This project was conducted in collaboration with Courtney Clark (MSc student in Biomedical Engineering) and Kayla Villebrun-Normand (MSc student in Community Health Sciences), and under the supervision of Ruth Shead (Director of Indigenous Engagement, Communications and EleV Partnership, Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous)) and Dr. Heather McRae (Director for Indigenous Engagement, Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management). We hosted focus groups and an interview to understand what types of support Indigenous students, staff, and faculty want from the University of Manitoba.

Method

We recruited participants for interviews and focus groups through online posts, emails to listservs, and direct messages to public-facing emails. In total, we recruited 19 participants. We hosted two student focus groups ($n = 6$; three graduate students and three undergraduate students), two staff focus groups ($n = 8$), one faculty focus group ($n = 5$), and one interview with a retired faculty member. Though we attempted to host a second faculty focus group, we were unable to do so because this group was particularly hard to reach likely because we conducted focus groups in the summer months. Participants ranged in age from 23 to 55 ($M = 39$, $SD = 9.43$), Indigenous identity (13 First Nations participants, eight Métis participants, and one Mestizo participant), and length of time at the University of Manitoba (seven months to 30 years). We included participants from all three campuses: 14 participants from the Fort Garry campus, four from Bannatyne, and one from William Norrie. Participants also varied in department or unit of work or study, including the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Ongomiizwin, the Indigenous Student Centre, Indigenous Engagement, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Access Program, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Social Work, Asper School of Business, and Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous). This research was approved by the University of Manitoba research ethics board (protocol number HE2021-0229).

Data Collection and Analysis

In preparation for hosting the focus groups, I met with Elder Carl Stone and Elder Wanda Murdoch to seek guidance on how to open the sessions in a good way. Elder Wanda Murdoch opened the first session and sat with us for part of the discussion. Courtney Clark and I hosted the focus groups. Focus groups lasted between approximately 45 minutes and two hours each. The interview was nearly two hours long. We hosted all focus groups and interviews on Zoom and video and audio recorded the sessions. To guide the interviews, we used an interview guide prepared in collaboration with Indigenous Knowledge Holders (Appendix A). Once sessions were completed, Kayla Villebrun-Normand transcribed the content using NVivo Pro (version 12). I then read the focus group transcripts to ensure accuracy.

I analyzed the data through a multistage process. To start, I read through each transcript in its entirety, making notes on preliminary codes and themes in a research journal. I also endeavored to practice reflexivity by noting places where my own experiences might unduly influence my analysis (Levitt et al., 2018). Next, I read through the transcripts and coded them, line-by-line, in NVivo Pro (version 12). Then, I read through each transcript again, filling in any missing codes that I identified in later focus groups. Lastly, through an iterative process, I combined and discarded codes to create a code map that I thought well-represented the data.

Recommendations

I identified five broad recommendations in the data. Beneath each, I provide several ways to achieve these recommendations, as described by participants. Appendices B through E present this information in different ways. In Appendix B, I list the suggested supports in bullet form; in Appendix C, I list the mentorship, leadership, and research supports; in Appendix D, I present powerful quotes from participants organized by recommendation; and in Appendix E I list recommendations from students, staff, and faculty separately. Please note that this list of recommendations is **not exhaustive** as they are based on the experiences of participants in the current study.

Recommendation 1: Systemic Institutional Changes

In all focus groups and the interview, participants noted systemic institutional changes that would support Indigenous students, staff, and faculty. Systemic institutional changes are those changes that the institution has direct control over, and often refer to changes in guiding documents, policies, or practices.

Administrative responsibility and accountability

Administrative units on campus need to be held accountable for their responsibility to Indigenous students, staff, and faculty, as illustrated by the following quote: *"But there are a number of things where I have engaged in where it ends up becoming a football between the*

Faculty and Administration. Administration says "we can only recommend, the Faculty has to fund it" and the Faculty says "well Administration hasn't made it a priority so we're not funding it" right? So how do we make sure that things don't fall into that kind of a crack?" – Dr. Cary Miller.

- **Create administrative positions for Indigenous engagement in faculties.** People in these roles would sit on hiring and tenure and promotion committees and broadly work in Indigenous engagement.
- **Include an Indigenous person on tenure and promotion committees for Indigenous faculty.** This request could go to the OVPI to find an Indigenous person to sit on a tenure and promotion committee for an Indigenous faculty member if there is no Indigenous person available in a given department/faculty.
- **Negotiate with unions.** Administration may need to negotiate with faculty/staff unions to make some of these changes happen. For example, having an Indigenous person on a hiring committee for an Indigenous position might require union engagement.
- **Prioritize Indigenous faculty teaching in their area of expertise.** Manage course offerings so that Indigenous faculty can share their expertise in Indigenous-specific courses instead of solely filling gaps in course offerings.
- **Train managers and leads to be supportive of Indigenous employees.** For example, managers and leads need to be understanding of life circumstances like attending celebrations, ceremonies, grieving, etc. Leadership in Human Resources should engage with Indigenous and racialized employees to co-construct policy guidelines for culturally affirming supports.
- **Create and enforce accountability structures.** These structures will hold those in power accountable for supporting Indigenous people.
    - **Create Reconciliation Action Plans in each faculty.** Enforce the creation of measurable and actionable Reconciliation Action Plans in each faculty that are revisited annually.
    - **Improve communication and relations between faculties and administration.** This will help ensure Indigenous initiatives are supported and come to fruition.

Update job descriptions for Indigenous positions

Indigenous employees are often expected to do much more than what is in their job description, as illustrated by the following quote: *"It struck me that in the six months that I've been at the campus, I've been asked to be on so many committees to bring an Indigenous voice. I've been asked to like seven!"* – Meaghan McNeill. Changes to job descriptions could help alleviate this.

- **Include time for engaging with Indigenous community.** Indigenous staff and faculty often spend time informally mentoring or helping other Indigenous community members, such time should be included in the work week and job descriptions.

- o **Include mentorship in the job description and compensate for it.** Simply adding mentorship to the job description, however, is insufficient; something would need to be removed or more people would need to be hired to make time for mentorship.
  - o **Include space for Indigenous people to give back to community in job descriptions.** For example, attending community events or participating in Indigenous-related research. Such changes may need to include union engagement and be integrated into performance evaluations, teaching releases, etc.
- **Create and enforce guidelines for amount of time spent on committee work.** For example, job descriptions could include guidelines around the number of hours an employee should spend on committee work per week outside of their job description.
- **Provide structure around "other duties as required."** This line in a job description often results in Indigenous staff sitting on several committees and completing more tasks outside of their job description than non-Indigenous staff, which can impact their ability to get their job done promptly.
- **Create support for emotional labor.** Indigenous staff and faculty experience emotional labor when they are expected to and do teach their colleagues about Indigenous content and deal with vicarious trauma due to working on the front line with students or sensitive content. Supports should include increased compensation and additional mental health or cultural support, such as access to Elders. Job descriptions could have a trauma tag that results in a higher salary and access to more mental health support. Most Indigenous-specific roles would likely have this trauma tag. Further, time should be reserved each week for employees to access these supports.
- **More time for helping Indigenous students.** Indigenous students often have complex life circumstances, and it often takes longer for staff to connect them to resources.

Increase Indigenous content

Indigenous students, staff, and faculty all called for the need for more Indigenous content.

- **Offer more Indigenous-related courses.** For example, courses on Indigenous medicinal practices for students in health sciences.
- **Include content about the past and present.** In this content, discuss past and current harms and connect past harms to current harms.
- **Mandatory Indigenous content for all students.** Create mandatory courses with Indigenous content for all students.

Hire more Indigenous employees

Hiring more Indigenous employees will increase existing Indigenous employees' capacity and create more support for the Indigenous community on campus, as illustrated by the following quote: *"When I think about something like mentorship… We don't have people earmarked for*

that, we don't have people that are specifically setting aside time within their job to do that, that's not even a part of anyone's job description that I know of. And so, that's a great recommendation… but I really don't see how they're going to bring that to fruition with people who are already telling them that we are overworked." – 40-year-old First Nations woman, staff member

- **Administrative leads in faculties.** See "Administrative responsibility and accountability" section.
- **Consultant in Human Resources.** The person in this role could help to rewrite Indigenous job descriptions.
- **Case management.** This person could help Indigenous students navigate various resources on campus and act as a pivot point for all other services, such as accessibility services, psychological services, academic counseling, etc.
- **Mental Health Counselors.** Available to counsel Indigenous students, staff, and faculty on mental health and personal issues.
- **Accessibility Services.** To assist Indigenous people on campus with accessibility needs.
- **Financial Aid Officers.** To help Indigenous students with scholarships, band funding applications, host workshops, etc.
- **Financial Services.** To fast track payments to Elders and community members, and ensure respectful engagement with Indigenous people.
- **Faculty and instructors.** More Indigenous faculty and instructors to teach courses.
- **Staff.** More Indigenous staff overall to help with capacity issues.
- **Resource Manager.** Employee to collate and manage resource portal of all the resources for Indigenous people on campus.
- **Undergraduate research advisor.** To support undergraduate Indigenous students to conduct their research in a good way that aligns with Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.
- **Mentorship Coordinator.** An employee to manage and organize a mentorship network for students, staff, faculty, etc.

Support more Indigenous student success programs

Student participants, participants who were recently students, and faculty appreciate existing student success programs like the Aboriginal Nursing Cohort Initiative (ANCI), Pathway to Indigenous Nursing Education (PINE), Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE), Indigenous Circle of Empowerment (ICE), Wawatay (Faculty of Science), Access, and grant-writing workshops. That being said, there is room for improvement, in particular regarding the drop-off of support after the first year, as illustrated by one student's experience: *"I just finished my first year and I'm kind of like "OK what now? Do I have to send in another application? Who do I have to talk to? You know what does that even look like for me?"… I'm totally lost. And just having information about that and what to do, where to go, I think would be really helpful"* – a gender-fluid First Nations and White 28-year-old student.

- **Create supports after the first year or bridging supports.** Students greatly valued first-year support but found that there was a gap in communication and support after the first year. Creating bridging supports or having better communication on supports for the second year and later would be helpful.
- **Create program-specific orientations.** Student participants would value program orientations where they could see the campus or space of their program, meet some faculty, learn about program expectations, etc.

Update institutional practices

Institutional practices, policies, and documents need to be updated to support Indigenous students, staff, and faculty.

- **Build capacity.** Students, staff, and faculty discussed issues with capacity. Hiring people to fill the roles listed in the "Hire more Indigenous employees" section would help. In addition, more people in the existing roles would help, such as more Elders, Indigenous student advisors, event planners, communications employees, and the many roles designed to help Indigenous students. Providing compensation and new roles for mentorship programs would also help to build capacity and ensure the sustainability of a mentorship program.
- **Support the creation of an interdisciplinary teaching and research hub.** This hub would connect Indigenous students and faculty across campus and community to conduct meaningful research and teaching.
- **Provide monetary support.** Monetary support is required for many of the changes in this report. In particular, participants talked about needing budget lines specifically for Indigenous initiatives that do not disappear at the end of a cycle or grant, as well as research grants for Indigenous faculty members.
- **Changes to policies, processes, and documents.**
  - **Create government engagement process.** Create a process for Indigenous faculty to communicate with the government about research opportunities.
  - **Update hiring processes.**
    - **Process for awareness about Indigenous hires.** Create a process for the OVPI to be made aware of new Indigenous hires so they can welcome and orient new hires.
    - **Provide equitable compensation.** Compensate equitably for emotional labor, cultural expertise, informal and formal mentorship roles, and work outside of job description and formal work hours. This means if a role with an Indigenous focus requires more emotional labor or cultural expertise than the parallel job without an Indigenous focus, the Indigenous role should be paid more and provided with more and culturally appropriate wellness resources.

- **Embed Indigenous approaches.** For example, making space for smudging or meeting Elders or Knowledge Keepers associated with the hiring unit as part of the hiring process.
- **Create an Indigenous-specific employee orientation.** This orientation can cover the existing Indigenous-specific and general supports for Indigenous employees and could include a resource manual. It could also embed Indigenous approaches (e.g., include ceremony and community building during orientation, as appropriate).
- **Support Indigenous faculty to obtain lab space/equipment.** Some faculty indicated difficulty obtaining lab spaces and equipment. One obtained equipment initially during negotiations, but it was soon taken away. Another has been passed up for a larger lab space to other new hires despite having a productive and well-funded lab.
- **Create an orientation for winter faculty hires.** Faculty hired in the winter term have to wait until the fall term for orientation; this puts those with a January start date at a disadvantage.
- **Update recruitment advertisements with Indigenous information.** Include information about the Indigeneity of Winnipeg in job advertisements. Put the university's commitment to Indigenous achievement and engagement front and center in all ads, including those for executive or administrative positions.
- **Increase wages to increase retention.** Increased wages can help increase retention, especially if other institutions pay more for the same position.
- **Create supports for new faculty's negotiation.** Support new Indigenous faculty in their negotiation with their departments.
- **Update tenure and promotion policies.** These should include a variety of non-traditional criteria, including Indigenous cultural practices as related to research and publishing in knowledge mobilization and Indigenous outlets. Further, create a process for pre-tenure faculty to indicate people who should *not* review their tenure application due to the potential for biased review.

- **Employ or promote more Indigenous people into leadership roles.** Participants greatly valued having Indigenous people in leadership roles, and wanted more, including having Indigenous people on hiring committees, as leads in faculties, and as student leaders in student unions.
- **Create a safe process for mediation with instructors.** This process should be transparent, clear, and easily accessible to allow students to challenge instructors' anti-Indigenous racism. Given large power differentials, students should be protected and supported through the process.
- **Create a policy for supports during crises.** Create a clear policy for how Indigenous people on campus should access support during times of crisis. For example, during the discovery of unmarked graves at a former residential school site in Kamloops, many Indigenous people on campus were negatively emotionally impacted. Should staff take a day off to manage this grief? Should

the University close for a half day? Should professors give their students extra time on assignments? Extra support during crises and clear direction on how to access such support would help.

  - o **Provide time off for Indigenous days.** Close the university for Indigenous-related days like Indigenous Veterans' Day, National Indigenous Peoples' Day, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Solstices, Equinoxes, etc., so that Indigenous people on campus can be with community on those days and non-Indigenous people on campus can learn by attending Indigenous events or gatherings.
- **Increased training opportunities.** In particular, participants noted recurring Indigenous/racialized leadership training and access to professional development funds to take courses outside the University of Manitoba. Standard leadership training may not be effective given cultural differences.

Importantly, for these changes, participants were <u>expressly uninterested</u> in tokenism, such as having one Indigenous person on a committee but not meaningfully engaging with their perspectives or not meaningfully translating Indigenous-related policies into practice. Participants were also uninterested in further consultation without action and consultation without follow-up.

Recommendation 2: Support access to Indigenous culture and community

Participants discussed the ways the University could support them in accessing culture and community on campus. The University could better advertise existing supports, increase accessibility, offer more cultural and community engagement opportunities, support grassroots Indigenous initiatives with a hands-off approach, build more Indigenous spaces on campus, and increase representation on campus.

Access to existing supports

Participants indicated that existing supports were inaccessible due to lack of awareness, barriers, and inaccessibility due to location or timing, as illustrated by the following quote: *"I'll just start off by saying that, with the exception of Migizii Agamik, I didn't know that any of these supports we're available, and I've been here [several] months. So, a way to support Indigenous faculty is to find out that we exist, and direct us to these things. If we don't know that they're available it's very difficult to engage with them"* – Anonymous participant.

- **Increase awareness of existing supports.** In all focus groups and the interview, participants were unaware of existing supports and unsure of where to go to find out about Indigenous supports. Increasing awareness, through other mediums than emails, is vital for accessibility. It was also clear from the discussions that the OVPI and University more broadly need to better communicate ongoing initiatives. For example, participants were unaware of existing working groups discussing pressing issues like

Indigenous Identity Fraud, an Indigenous Research Ethics Board, a network of Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders, etc. A progress report could be written, or advertised if one exists, about progress toward the recommendations in the Indigenous Senior Leadership Report. Better communication around such initiatives is required.

- o **Advertise community events.** Advertise Indigenous events occurring off-campus to build community more broadly.
- o **Advertise supports throughout the year.** Some participants noted a decrease in the advertisements of support throughout the academic year.
- o **Create a resource portal for Indigenous supports.** Create an online portal that contains information on all Indigenous supports at the University of Manitoba. See the "Hire more Indigenous employees" section for notes about hiring someone to collate resources and manage this portal.

- **Remove barriers to support.** Existing supports can be difficult to obtain. For example, the Indigenous Initiatives Fund is a competitive grant and is typically not a direct support for those who are applying. As another example, some participants found it difficult to access culturally appropriate counseling through the Employee and Family Assistance Program.
- **Maintain online options.** Online options became broadly available during the COVID-19 shutdowns. These online options made accessing resources easier for many participants. Maintaining online or offering hybrid options would be beneficial.
- **Create flexible scheduling of Indigenous opportunities.** Scheduling Indigenous opportunities around student classes or typical work hours (e.g., hosting more evening events) would help some participants attend.

Increase access to culture

The University of Manitoba should increase access to culture on campus to support Indigenous campus members. This includes access to ceremony, cultural reconnection, Elders, land-based learning opportunities, Indigenous language, and Indigenous medicine through offering more programming, distributed engagement opportunities across campus, support during the summer months, and cultural resources on the Bannatyne campus. One participant illustrated their experience reconnecting with their Indigenous identity on campus: *"I think what I definitely experienced in myself was a lot of guilt and shame for not having known more and then not knowing where to start and not knowing if I even deserved or could take up that space"* – Chanterelle.

- **Increase access to ceremony.** Many participants noted difficulty accessing ceremony on campus. Creating ceremonial spaces on the Bannatyne campus, ensuring all buildings are smudge-friendly, and offering sweats and other ceremonies on campus would help.
- **Support cultural reconnection on campus.** Many Indigenous folks start to reconnect to their culture on campus, and the process can make them feel guilty or ashamed for not knowing enough, or they may feel judged or excluded by other Indigenous students. Providing reconnection resources that explicitly invite those reconnecting could help.

- **Distribute Indigenous engagement opportunities across campus.** Indigenous engagement opportunities are often siloed across the university, available only in places like Migizii Agamik or Ongomiizwin. Participants who did not work in these units expressed a desire for their units to provide Indigenous engagement opportunities.
- **Increase access to Elders.** Participants greatly value guidance and support from Elders. Access to Elder support could be facilitated by hiring more Elders (see the "Hire more Indigenous Employees" section), creating a network of Indigenous Elders and knowledge-holders, and creating a formal process for engaging with Elders.
- **Offer more land-based learning opportunities.** Participants greatly valued land-based learning opportunities and would like more opportunities to learn on the land.
- **Increase access to medicine.** Participants valued learning about Indigenous medicine and wanted more opportunities to gain this knowledge. This desire aligns nicely with the desire for more land-based learning opportunities.
- **Increase language access.** Participants also greatly valued opportunities to learn Indigenous languages. Such opportunities should be provided free and accessibly on campus. Participants noted the irony of paying to learn a language that had been stolen from their ancestors on the land upon which the University of Manitoba sits.
- **Create cultural support for staff.** Staff participants noted that many Indigenous cultural supports were tailored toward students and would value staff-specific opportunities.
- **Increase supports during the summer months.** Staff participants noted the lack of support and activity throughout the summer months and would value more Indigenous engagement opportunities in the summer months.
- **Increase access to culture on the Bannatyne campus.** Bannatyne campus does not have a ceremonial space like the Fort Garry and William Norrie campuses do. This makes it difficult to engage in ceremony on the Bannatyne campus. Ongomiizwin often fills some of these needs, but as an academic unit, is under capacity to acts as a service like Migizii Agamik.

Support grassroots initiatives

The University should make space for Indigenous folks to create grassroots initiatives. As illustrated by one participant: *"It's got to be done by Aboriginal Peoples, or it's not going to work."* – Fred Shore.

- **Support grassroots initiatives.** Grassroots initiatives are successful at addressing Indigenous community needs. Supporting grassroots initiatives means the University needs to provide space and support for Indigenous community members to gather, collaborate, and create initiatives. Importantly, the University should not try to control the direction of these initiatives. Allowing Indigenous community members, including those in the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous), to create the supports they want will result in the most meaningful supports.

Increase access to and support the growth of Indigenous community

Participants found many of their greatest supports came from the community of Indigenous people on campus who often selflessly supported each other, as illustrated by the following quote: *"So things like [community gatherings], like it really fostered a sense of community within the group of us that attended and at times… we all leaned on each other, and created new relationships, so yeah I think that those kinds of things are at least in my experience, that's been the most effective in feeling supported on campus."* – A 23-year-old Métis female, staff member.

- **Create and fund Indigenous support groups within faculties.** Support groups within each faculty will help Indigenous people find supports specific to their faculties and their experiences within their faculties.
- **Support Indigenous people in finding community on campus.** Most participants discussed the value they found in connecting with other Indigenous people on campus. The University can support these connections through many means:
  - Keep Indigenous students together in academic programs where possible.
  - Facilitate more small class sizes that are a safe space.
  - Facilitate work and social gatherings among staff like Indigenous Connect meetings or social outings. E.g., support monthly "cultural days" on campus, similar to faculty "research days", where Indigenous people on campus can come together to communally debrief and reflect.
  - Facilitate informal gatherings among Indigenous people on campus; these gatherings could include food.
  - Fill empty Indigenous positions, including the Métis Inclusion Coordinator position.
  - Create more opportunities for staff to work collaboratively.
  - Increase summertime events and activities for staff.
- **Support Indigenous gatherings for change-making.** One participant discussed at length the importance of Indigenous people having space to gather so they could make meaningful changes. They stressed that the university might not like those changes, but needs to be prepared and open to support the direction of Indigenous grassroots initiatives if the University is serious about supporting Indigenous community.
- **Support Indigenous people supporting other Indigenous people.** Participants spent a great deal of time helping other Indigenous people on campus and shared stories of how other Indigenous people had helped them. This work was often informal and not compensated. Some participants noted that faculties would take credit for the supports that individual Indigenous people within the faculty provided and felt this was unfair. Participants made it clear that the main supports they found on campus were those that they created for themselves (i.e., Indigenous-created supports). The university could help strengthen this community support by supporting a formal mentorship network (see below).

- **Create a mentorship network.** Participants in all sessions noted the importance of mentorship and many called for a formal mentorship network. For this mentorship network to be successful, the university should:
  o Hire a mentorship network coordinator and team members.
  o Provide compensation (i.e., payment) for mentors and mentees.
  o Provide time and space in workload for mentors and mentees (e.g., scheduled time for mentorship in the work week).
  o Provide opportunities for students to be mentees after year one.
  o Include mentorship opportunities for research, teaching, and culture (e.g., being paired with a Knowledge Holder or Elder), as well as employee roles.
  o Include various mentorship workshops, such as Indigenous research workshops or grant-writing workshops.
  o Create opportunities for mentorship both within and across departments/units.
  o Create a process to carefully vet and select mentors, as well as safe processes to discuss how mentorships may not be working or need to be changed.
- **Recruit and support more Indigenous students to build Indigenous community.** Some participants talked about the need to recruit more Indigenous students, especially in underrepresented areas like health care and the natural sciences, to build more community on campus.

Build more Indigenous spaces

Some participants discussed the need to have more Indigenous spaces on campus, as illustrated by one participant: "a lot of the times on [the Bannatyne campus], it gets put onto Ongomiizwin… if it was at Fort Garry, it wouldn't be on a Faculty, it would be through the Office of Indigenous Engagement" – 55-year old First Nations woman, faculty.

- **Build more circle rooms and smudge-friendly spaces.** Participants valued circle rooms and smudge-friendly spaces on campus and wanted more of them.
- **Create an Indigenous centre at Bannatyne.** Ongomiizwin on the Bannatyne campus often is utilized like Migizii Agamik at Fort Garry, but Ongomiizwin is an institute, not a service centre. The University should create an Indigenous service/engagement centre at Bannatyne similar to the Indigenous Student Centre in Migizii Agamik, or properly staff and finance Ongomiizwin to offer these services.
- **Build and subsidize Indigenous student housing.** Create/build Indigenous student housing.

Increase representation on campus

Participants noted the importance of representation of Indigenous identity on campus and indicated that they wanted more representation, as illustrated by one participant: "*I have noticed that like identifiably Indigenous things are isolated to very specific pods on this campus. So, they're at Migizii Agamik, or they're in the hallway of Indigenous Studies in the Faculty of*

Arts, or they're in a room which is specifically for an Indigenous Student group, but they're not across campus anywhere" – 40-year-old First Nations woman, staff member.

- **Increase representation of diverse Indigenous groups.** Participants who were not Anishinaabe or Métis noted a lack of representation of their culture on campus. For example, one Cree participant noted that their people are not represented on campus or in cultural teachings/activities provided on campus.
- **Increase physical representation on campus.** Participants noted two main ways to increase physical representation on campus. First, by including Indigenous design principles throughout, by, for example, using earth-toned colors and building more circular spaces. Second, by including more Indigenous art, artifacts, paintings, etc., throughout campus.

Participants greatly valued the supports provided by Migizii Agamik and Ongomiizwin and spoke at length about their love for these spaces and all who worked in them.

Recommendation 3: Support Indigenous people in the context of common lived experience

Participants' common lived experiences include racism, lacking basic resources, strong ties to family, mental health concerns, and unique student experiences. The University of Manitoba can better support Indigenous people through these lived experiences using the steps below.

Address racism

Many participants shared their experiences with racism, the negative effects of such experiences, and the desperate need to address racism, including microaggressions, on campus. For example, one participant shared how their colleagues did not consider them to be a "real" scholar or assumed they were a "diversity hire." To address racism, the University must create a campus-wide racism policy. The policy should…

- **Be well advertised.** Ensure everyone on campus knows about the policy so that no one can feign ignorance. Create mandatory training on the policy, in addition to the anti-racism and cultural competency training mentioned below.
- **Clearly define racism.** Clearly defining racism will ensure that everyone is aware of what is, and isn't, considered racism. Be sure to include microaggressions in this definition and call things racism when they are racism (e.g., don't call something racist a "misunderstanding," when it is, in fact, racism).
- **Outline a clear process to address racism.** This will make sure there are no surprises along the way.
- **Be transparent in all steps of the process.** Ensure that all parties involved know what is going on at all steps of the process.
- **Enforce ramifications for racism.** The policy must have "teeth" and be enforced to be effective.

- **Never discipline the complainant for raising their concerns around racism.** One participant indicated they had been reprimanded for raising concerns about racism in the past. Ensure this does not happen.
- **Mandate recurring anti-racism and anti-colonial training for everyone on campus.** This includes students, staff, faculty, admin, etc. This training should include local information about Manitoba, Winnipeg, and the University of Manitoba's role in colonial violence against Indigenous people. It should also include content about the past, the present, and the intrinsic connection between the two (e.g., how past harms continue to cause harm today).
- **Mandate cultural sensitivity/competency training for everyone on campus.** This includes students, staff, faculty, admin, etc. This training would be distinct from the anti-racism/anti-colonial training.
- **Hold those with tenure accountable.** One participant noted that if a tenured professor had an inappropriate relationship with a student or harassed a fellow faculty member, there would be recourse; there should also be recourse available for racism with tenured faculty.
- **Address racism in systems and policies, not only individual actions.** Individual instances of racism are, of course, troubling and need to be addressed. Often overlooked, however, is an avenue to address policies that are racist or systemic racism. Anti-racism policies must address systemic racism as well.

Provide basic resources

Students expressed a desire to have basic needs met on campus, both those in their lives and those about school. For example, one participant shared: *"I wish that maybe we had a large community garden that can feed our students that need food"* – Deanna Garand.

- **Provide school resources.** Students would value access to printing, scanning, faxing, etc., as it relates to school.
- **Provide healthy food options in the food bank.** One participant noted the need for healthy and fresh food options, not solely canned goods, in the food bank on campus. They suggested a community garden on campus for the food bank.

Accommodate families

Participants greatly valued when units provided accommodation for their families, through, for example, allowing children at work or providing time off for family emergencies. In the words of one participant: *"I'm also just thankful for the family environment that is part of Migizii Agamik. I know where sometimes my [child] has come to work with me for whatever reason, or my [pets] have come in too, like it's just a really great supportive environment"* – Anonymous participant. The University could better support Indigenous people on campus with families in many ways.

- **Offer engagement opportunities in the early evening.** Participants with children who were working noted it would be easiest to attend in the early evening.
- **Make events and the office family-friendly and let employees know this is the case.** Make work and event space child and family friendly.
- **Understand and accommodate family emergencies.** Provide flex time for family emergencies.
- **Create flexibility in class schedules for child pick-up.** Some students struggled because required classes overlapped with child pick-up times. Creating flexible class schedules or having after-school transport to campus and childcare at campus would help.
- **Provide child respite.** Some parents would value child respite services.

Provide new mental health services on campus

Multiple participants noted the need for more or improved mental health services on campus, as illustrated by the following example: *"I hear this student's story, and it's terrible and it's traumatizing, and then I get vicarious trauma, and then I don't have the supports in place to be able to let some of that go, or I don't have the time to let some of that go because I'm working so hard, catching up after having dealt with that one student for half a day, every day"* – A 40-year-old First Nations woman, staff member.

- **Provide addiction counseling on campus.** One participant, who was on the road to recovery, noted that they found success in an Indigenous-specific addictions counseling program.
- **Prevent and address burnout.** Many participants noted they experienced burnout, commonly from high workloads, consistently needing to be the Indigenous voice in a room or on a committee, or dealing with traumatic content as part of their role. Burnout could be prevented and addressed by lessening workloads, increasing compensation, and providing adequate counseling services.
- **Provide Indigenous-specific counseling services.** Participants noted a need for Indigenous counselors or counselors trained in trauma-informed approaches and Indigenous context.
- **Provide time/resources to cope with front-line trauma.** Staff participants noted experiencing vicarious trauma from their front-line positions dealing with student crises. To address such trauma, having more mental health supports for those working in these types of roles would be beneficial. Further, flexible scheduling would help, as this would allow staff to take time away from work to access these extra resources or to simply take a break.

Support student experience

Students noted specific parts of their experience that could be better supported, illustrated by one participant's experience: "*when you have a new student coming in that's been out of school for a while… it took me a long time by myself how to navigate everything*" – Anonymous participant.

- **Support mature students.** Some mature students found the transition from work life back to school challenging and would have appreciated directed supports for mature students.
- **Support out-of-city students.** Students who came from out of the city found the start of a program overwhelming. Directed support for out-of-city students would help.
- **Support students coming from rural areas/the north/reserves.** Students who come from rural areas, the north, or reserves experience culture shock coming to the University of Manitoba. Specific supports for these students would be beneficial.

Recommendation 4: Non-Indigenous people are responsible for supporting Indigenous people

Indigenous people are not the only group responsible for making these changes, however. Several participants called for non-Indigenous people to be involved in Indigenous initiatives and to support Indigenous people on campus in their work. As exemplified by one participant, *"It all kind of is falling back onto us, like for example, that day [a community event], it was us putting on the event for us, you know, like it would be nice if there could be someone else doing it for us to have come and feel supported rather than us planning an event, and running it"* – a 23-year-old Métis female, staff.

- **Authentically value Indigenous engagement.** Many participants shared examples of how the university or certain units seemed not to value Indigenous engagement. For example, Indigenous faculty members were passed over for lab spaces despite being highly productive, some units included no information in the Indigenous section of the strategic plan, or the university refused to approve Indigenous positions deemed necessary by a unit. Strong leadership could help to increase the valuing of Indigenous engagement (see "strengthen leadership" point below).
- **The institution must do the work.** Importantly, the institution must be the one to do this work. This means that all the Indigenous engagement work in a unit should *not* be done by one or two Indigenous staff members, as was the case for some participants. Though Indigenous people must provide meaningful direction to Indigenous initiatives, non-Indigenous people must be involved and do this work and learn as well. Relatedly, the institution must help to maintain the momentum of existing projects, to make sure they do not fizzle out when a person leaves a position or sit on a shelf once a working group completes their report. Lastly, doing this work requires institutional investment of resources like money and personnel.
- **Non-Indigenous people should help plan events/initiatives.** Having Indigenous people plan and organize events means that those organizers often don't get to engage with community on the event day or during the initiative, because they are in a staff role. Having non-Indigenous people assist with this planning would help. This is especially important during crisis times within the community.
- **Strengthen leadership.** Participants called for strong leadership to ensure changes would happen. For example, a leader who would refuse to approve a unit's budget

unless it included content for Indigenous engagement or a leader who mandated reconciliation action plans in each unit.

- **The institution should help for reasons other than accolades.** Some participants noted that sometimes they felt like the University supported Indigenous people for accolades, rather than simply to support Indigenous people. Communication of Indigenous supports is undoubtedly important, and this point should not be interpreted as a call to stop communicating supports. Rather, further engagement with Indigenous people on how to navigate this context would help.

Recommendation 5: Embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing

Participants noted several ways that the University of Manitoba could embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing.

- **Support Indigenous research within faculties.** Faculty sometimes have trouble conducting their research due to a culture within a faculty or low administrative support for Indigenous research. Such supports should be tangible and actionable so that Indigenous faculty can conduct their research in a supportive environment.
- **Do Indigenous research in a good way.** Participants expressed concerns about Indigenous research being done inappropriately, often by non-Indigenous researchers, but sometimes by Indigenous researchers as well. Elder-hopping (i.e., a researcher asking an Elder to be on a project, but then excluding them because the researcher doesn't like the Elder's approach, and then asking a different Elder) or the Research Ethics Board dismissing Indigenous members' concerns are two examples. Solutions to these issues are manifold:
  - Create a clear framework for conducting Indigenous research.
  - Create further research supports for those conducting Indigenous research.
  - Consider creating an Indigenous Research Ethics Board that can meaningfully engage with and provide guidance about Indigenous cultural practices as a part of research.
  - Further promote Indigenous research, knowledges, and methodologies in classrooms and ongoing research.
- **Embed Indigenous approaches to mediation.** For example, mediation for incidents of racism could take a restorative justice framework.
- **Embed Indigenous approaches to acknowledgment.** Many awards are self-nominated awards, which don't necessarily align with an Indigenous approach or worldview. Including more other-nominated awards could help.
- **Support Indigenous identity experiences.** Many participants discussed the pressure of constantly having to put their Indigenous identity front and center, and always be the Indigenous voice in a room. Relatedly, staff participants discussed how they often did their job outside of work hours, because their identities were so intrinsically connected with their jobs. Further, staff participants noted that Indigenous-related days off (e.g., the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) are not days off for Indigenous people, as

they were often asked to speak on panels on those days, attend events, or otherwise be acting in their typical role. Further engagement with Indigenous people on how the University could better support Indigenous identity experiences would be helpful.

- **Give land back to Treaty 1 Nations.** One participant suggested the University of Manitoba give some land back to Treaty 1 Nations.
- **Value non-academic experience**. One participant discussed the importance of valuing non-academic experience in, for example, Indigenous Elders or Knowledge Holders.

Overall, I identified five overarching recommendations within the data. Participants noted the importance of systemic institutional changes, including non-Indigenous people's roles, to ensure that the University could support Indigenous people's access to culture and community, as well as provide support within common lived experiences. These changes should embed Indigenous knowledges and approaches. These five interconnected recommendations are important pieces of how the University of Manitoba can better support Indigenous people on campus.

Conclusion

Many of the suggested changes outlined in this report require large-scale systemic and cultural shifts in the way the University of Manitoba operates. Such changes will require strong leadership, resources, and commitment to change. The University of Manitoba needs to be ready to be held accountable for these changes. In many ways, the suggested changes simply echo the calls of Indigenous students, staff, and faculty over the last several decades. In the words of one participant, "How many times do we have to say it before it happens?" The time for action is now, and many participants were pleased with the work happening in the Office of the Vice-President (Indigenous).

Though these changes would undoubtedly support Indigenous people, it is also easy to see how many of these changes would support others as well. For example, addressing racism on campus would help racialized participants broadly. Further, providing access to basic resources, accommodating families, providing mental health services, and many other suggestions, would help anyone on campus, regardless of their identities or roles.

Making these changes would also signal that the University of Manitoba values Indigenous people and cultures. Subtle messaging, such as excluding Indigenous content from a strategic plan or refusing to hire necessary Indigenous staff, imply that Indigenous people don't matter. These changes would help the University of Manitoba better support Indigenous people and thus signal, loudly and clearly, that Indigenous people and cultures matter.

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Appendix A: Focus Group Guides

Faculty Focus Group Guide

Good [morning/afternoon] everyone! Thank you so much for joining us today for this focus group. We're going to start by telling you a bit about ourselves and the reason we're all here today. My name is Iloradanon Efimoff. I am Haida, which is a First Nation from the northwest coast of British Columbia, and European settler. I'm a student in the department of psychology. I'm also working with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous to develop a network of supports at the University of Manitoba for Indigenous faculty members. I've been travelling further and further east from my home in the pursuit of education and do this work because I want to make the educational process easier for future generations. My name is Courtney Clark. I'm a queer Metis woman with matriarchal roots in the Red River Settlement. Some of my relatives were exiled to Duck Lake following the Red River Resistance and I am exploring what impact this forced migration had on my ancestors. I also acknowledge mine and my father's Scottish and Welsh settler roots. I am a student in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and also work with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous. As a first-generation high school and university graduate, I am inspired to make institutional changes to improve the experiences of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff at the University of Manitoba. Today, we're hoping we can have a discussion about what types of supports you think are important for Indigenous Faculty members at the University of Manitoba.

Let's do some introductions. Please share your name, nation, and academic program. I'll call on people in the order they show up on my screen. [Iloradanon facilitates introductions].

Now that we all know a bit about each other, we'd like to talk about how we like to do research. We know everyone here likely already knows this, but we need to make sure we're on the same page. First, we think it's important for us to be respectful, even if we disagree with another person's thoughts. Part of being respectful includes trying not to interrupt people and leaving space for people who have not had a chance to share. Second, please feel free to communicate directly with each other. You do not have to always respond to me or Courtney. And lastly, today we're going to be talking about the supports you think are important for Indigenous faculty, but some difficult topics might come up. Courtney and I will do our best to support you and if you feel the need, you can get in touch with the counselling services we will provide at the end of the session.

Next, we'd like to say a few things about the focus group today. Again, we know everyone here likely already knows the process, but we still need to review the process with you. A focus group is kind of like a group discussion about a topic. We will be recording the session today once we get to the questions. Everyone here has signed a consent form to participate, but please remember that it's very important that everything said in our focus group today stays confidential. You can talk to others in general about the focus group, but do not tell others who was in this focus group or share any identifying information of others in the group like age, nation, and program. We also want to note that if you want to withdraw from the study at any

time, you can do so with no negative consequences. You will still receive your [gift card/gift]. You can simply exit the zoom call. Lastly, we've included in the chat window a list of supports you can access if needed.

[Put the following in chat:
- Indigenous student supports: Student Counselling Centre at 474 University Centre (204-474-8592); Indigenous-specific supports through the Indigenous Student Center and Ogomiizwin
- Staff/faculty supports: Counselling through the Employee and Family Assistance Program at 1-800-387-4765 or workhealthlife.com or Indigenous-specific supports like the Hope for Wellness Help Line (1-855-242-3310 or online chat hopeforwellness.ca).]

Let's spend the last hour and a half having a conversation about what supports you think are important for Indigenous faculty members at the University of Manitoba. We are going to start the recording now, and Courtney and I will be taking notes.

We have a total of four questions. Here's the first question.

1. There are currently some supports for Indigenous faculty at the University of Manitoba, including access to ceremony, cultural support, and Elder guidance through places like Ongomiizwin (explain), groups like Mamawipawin (that's the women's governance circle organized by Dr. Kiera Ladner), the Indigenous Students' Centre, the Native Studies Department, or funding like the Indigenous Initiatives Fund. These supports are not exclusive to Indigenous faculty. **Thinking about these, or other faculty supports you can think of at the University of Manitoba, how might we improve these existing supports?** Please feel free to take a moment to think about the question.

    a. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you so much for sharing. Let's move onto the second question.

2. Thinking again about the supports for Indigenous Faculty the University of Manitoba offers, including access to ceremony, cultural support, and Elder guidance through places like Ongomiizwin, groups like Mamawipawin, the Indigenous Students' Centre, the Native Studies Department, or funding like the Indigenous Initiatives Fund, **what do you think is missing? What other supports do you think are important?**

    a. Prompt: Why do you want these supports?
    b. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you again for sharing. Let's move onto the third question.

3. Other institutions in Canada and internationally have some unique initiatives, like a staff and faculty network, a student union for Indigenous studies that is open to faculty, and a

Faculty and Student lounge. **If you could have these or any other supports, what would they be?**

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts. The last question is a bit more positive so we can hopefully end on a high note.

4. In your opinion, **what are the most meaningful supports for Indigenous faculty that are currently available at the University of Manitoba?**

Those are all the questions we have for you today. I want to say ja haw'aa, or thank you very much, for your time and thoughtful input. [Gift giving process]. I will email you a debriefing form with some more information about the study. As next steps for this study, we are going to synthesize the data and then host a data consultation session. If you indicated you wanted to be contacted about the data consultation session, we will email you when we're ready to host the session. If anyone has any questions, feel free to stay on the line. We're done the focus group now. Thank you.

Staff Focus Group Guide

Good [morning/afternoon] everyone! Thank you so much for joining us today for this focus group. We're going to start by telling you a bit about ourselves and the reason we're all here today. My name is Iloradanon Efimoff. I am Haida, which is a First Nation from the northwest coast of British Columbia, and European settler. I'm a student in the department of psychology. I'm also working with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous to develop a network of supports at the University of Manitoba for Indigenous staff members. I've been travelling further and further east from my home in the pursuit of education and do this work because I want to make the educational process easier for future generations. My name is Courtney Clark. I'm a queer Metis woman with matriarchal roots in the Red River Settlement. Some of my relatives were exiled to Duck Lake following the Red River Resistance and I am exploring what impact this forced migration had on my ancestors. I also acknowledge mine and my father's Scottish and Welsh settler roots. I am a student in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and also work with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous. As a first-generation high school and university graduate, I am inspired to make institutional changes to improve the experiences of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff at the University of Manitoba. Today, we're hoping we can have a discussion about what types of supports you think are important for Indigenous staff members at the University of Manitoba.

Let's do some introductions. Please share your name, nation, and position at the University of Manitoba. I'll call on people in the order they show up on my screen. [Iloradanon facilitates introductions].

Now that we all know a bit about each other, we'd like to talk about how we like to do research. We know everyone here likely already knows this, but we need to make sure we're on the same page. First, we think it's important for us to be respectful, even if we disagree with another person's thoughts. Part of being respectful includes trying not to interrupt people and leaving space for people who have not had a chance to share. Second, please feel free to communicate directly with each other. You do not have to always respond to me or Courtney. And lastly, today we're going to be talking about the supports you think are important for Indigenous staff, but some difficult topics might come up. Courtney and I will do our best to support you and if you feel the need, you can get in touch with the counselling services we will provide at the end of the session.

Next, we'd like to say a few things about the focus group today. Again, we know everyone here likely already knows the process, but we still need to review the process with you. A focus group is kind of like a group discussion about a topic. We will be recording the session today once we get to the questions. Everyone here has signed a consent form to participate, but please remember that it's very important that everything said in our focus group today stays confidential. You can talk to others in general about the focus group, but do not tell others who was in this focus group or share any identifying information of others in the group like age, nation, and position at the University of Manitoba.

We also want to note that if you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so with no negative consequences. You will still receive your [gift card/gift]. You can simply exit the zoom call. Lastly, we've included in the chat window a list of supports you can access if needed.

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Let's spend the last hour and a half having a conversation about what supports you think are important for Indigenous staff members at the University of Manitoba. We are going to start the recording now, and Courtney and I will be taking notes.

We have a total of four questions. Here's the first question.

1. The University of Manitoba offers some supports for Indigenous staff, like the Indigenous Engagement Circle in the Faculty of Kinesiology, the Staff category of the Indigenous Awards of Excellence, the Indigenous Students' Centre, and the Indigenous Initiatives Fund. Some of these supports are not exclusive to Indigenous staff. **Thinking about these, or other staff supports you can think of at the University of Manitoba, how might we improve existing supports?** Please feel free to take a moment to think about the question.

    a. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you so much for sharing. Let's move onto the second question.

2. Thinking again about the supports for Indigenous staff the University of Manitoba offers, like the Indigenous Engagement Circle in the Faculty of Kinesiology, the Staff category of the Indigenous Awards of Excellence, and the Indigenous Initiatives Fund, **what do you think is missing? What other supports do you think are important?**

    a. Prompt: Why do you want these supports?
    b. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you again for sharing. Let's move onto the third question.

3. Other institutions in Canada and internationally have some unique initiatives to support Indigenous staff, like recruitment policies for Indigenous staff, incorporating Indigenous

ways of knowing and doing into promotion and competency policies, and a network for Indigenous staff. **If you could have these or any other supports, what would they be?**

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts. The last question is a bit more positive so we can hopefully end on a high note.

4. In your opinion, **what are the most meaningful supports for Indigenous staff that are currently available at the University of Manitoba?**

Those are all the questions we have for you today. I want to say ja haw'aa, or thank you very much, for your time and thoughtful input. [Gift giving process]. I will email you a debriefing form with some more information about the study. As next steps for this study, we are going to synthesize the data and then host a data consultation session. If you indicated you wanted to be contacted about the data consultation session on the consent form, we will email you when we're ready to host the session. If anyone has any questions, feel free to stay on the line. We're done the focus group now. Thank you.

Student Focus Group Guide

Good [morning/afternoon] everyone! Thank you so much for joining us today for this focus group. We're going to start by telling you a bit about ourselves and the reason we're all here today. My name is Iloradanon Efimoff. I am Haida, which is a First Nation from the northwest coast of British Columbia, and European settler. I'm a student in the department of psychology. I'm also working with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous to develop a network of supports at the University of Manitoba for Indigenous students. I've been travelling further and further east from my home in the pursuit of education and do this work because I want to make the educational process easier for future generations. My name is Courtney Clark. I'm a queer Metis woman with matriarchal roots in the Red River Settlement. Some of my relatives were exiled to Duck Lake following the Red River Resistance and I am exploring what impact this forced migration had on my ancestors. I also acknowledge mine and my father's Scottish and Welsh settler roots. I am a student in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and also work with the Office of the Vice-President Indigenous. As a first-generation high school and university graduate, I am inspired to make institutional changes to improve the experiences of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff at the University of Manitoba. Today, we're hoping we can have a discussion about what types of supports you think are important for Indigenous students at the University of Manitoba.

Let's do some introductions. Please share your name, nation, and academic program at the University of Manitoba. I'll call on people in the order they show up on my screen. [Iloradanon facilitates introductions].

Now, that we all know a bit about each other, we'd like to talk about how we will communicate with each other today. First, we think it's important for us to be respectful, even if we disagree with another person's thoughts. Part of being respectful includes trying not to interrupt people and leaving space for people who have not had a chance to share. Second, please feel free to communicate directly with each other. You do not have to always respond to me or Courtney. And lastly, today we're going to be talking about the supports you think are important for Indigenous students, but some difficult topics might come up. Courtney and I will do our best to support you and if you feel the need, you can get in touch with the counselling services we will provide at the end of the session.

Next, we'd like to say a few things about the focus group today. A focus group is kind of like a group discussion about a topic. We will be recording the session today once we get to the questions. Everyone here has signed a consent form to participate, but please remember that it's very important that everything said in our focus group today stays confidential. You can talk to others in general about the focus group, but do not tell others who was in this focus group or share any identifying information of others in the group like age, nation, and program.

We also want to note that if you want to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so with no negative consequences. You will still receive your [gift card/gift]. You can simply exit

the zoom call. Lastly, we've included in the chat window a list of supports you can access if needed.

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[Elder opening].

Let's spend the last hour and a half having a conversation about what supports you think are important for Indigenous students at the University of Manitoba. We are going to start the recording now, and Courtney and I will be taking notes.

We have a total of four questions. Here's the first question.

1. There are currently a number of supports for Indigenous students at the University of Manitoba, including academic supports, Indigenous student groups, funding, and cultural events and activities. **Thinking about these, or other student supports at the University of Manitoba you can think of, how might we improve these existing supports?** Please feel free to take a moment to think about the question.

    a. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you so much for sharing. Let's move onto the second question.

2. Thinking again about the supports for Indigenous students the University of Manitoba offers, including academic supports, Indigenous student groups, funding, and cultural events and activities, **what do you think is missing? What other supports do you think are important?**

    a. Prompt: Why do you want these supports?
    b. Prompt (as appropriate): mentorship, leadership, research supports

Thank you again for sharing. Let's move onto the third question.

3. Other institutions in Canada and internationally have some unique initiatives, policies that undergraduate students must take an Indigenous related course, Indigenous student unions, guaranteed funding for all Indigenous students, Indigenous housing, or

opportunities to complete first year requirements near their home community. **If you could have these or any other supports, what would they be?**

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts. The last question is a bit more positive so we can hopefully end on a high note.

4. In your opinion, **what are the most meaningful supports for Indigenous students that are currently available at the University of Manitoba?**

Those are all the questions we have for you today. I want to say ja haw'aa, or thank you very much, for your time and thoughtful input. [Gift giving process]. I will email you a debriefing form with some more information about the study. As next steps for this study, we are going to synthesize the data and then host a data consultation session. If you indicated you wanted to be contacted about the data consultation session on the consent form, we will email you when we're ready to host the session. If anyone has any questions, feel free to stay on the line. We're done the focus group now. Thank you.

Appendix B: Suggested Supports

Recommendation 1: Systemic Institutional Changes

Administrative responsibility and accountability
- Create administrative positions for Indigenous engagement in faculties.
- Include an Indigenous person on tenure and promotion committees for Indigenous faculty.
- Negotiate with unions.
- Prioritize Indigenous faculty teaching in their area of expertise.
- Train managers and leads to be supportive of Indigenous employees.
- Create and enforce accountability structures.
    - Create Reconciliation Action Plans in each faculty.
    - Improve communication and relations between faculties and administration.

Update job descriptions for Indigenous positions
- Include time for engaging with Indigenous community.
    - Include mentorship in the job description and compensate for it.
    - Include space for Indigenous people to give back to community in job descriptions.
- Create and enforce guidelines for amount of time spent on committee work.
- Provide structure around "other duties as required."
- Create support for emotional labor.
- More time for helping Indigenous students.

Increase Indigenous content
- Offer more Indigenous-related courses.
- Include content about the past and present.
- Mandatory Indigenous content for all students.

Hire more Indigenous employees
- Administrative leads in faculties.
- Consultant in Human Resources.
- Case management.
- Mental Health Counselors.
- Accessibility Services.
- Financial Aid Officers.
- Financial Services.
- Faculty and instructors.
- Staff.
- Resource Manager.
- Undergraduate research advisor.

- Mentorship Coordinator.

Support more Indigenous student success programs
- Create supports after the first year or bridging supports.
- Create program-specific orientations.

Update institutional practices
- Build capacity.
- Support the creation of an interdisciplinary teaching and research hub.
- Provide monetary support.
- Changes to policies, processes, and documents.
  - Create government engagement process.
  - Update hiring processes.
    - Process for awareness about Indigenous hires.
    - Provide equitable compensation.
    - Embed Indigenous approaches.
    - Create an Indigenous-specific employee orientation.
    - Support Indigenous faculty to obtain lab space/equipment.
    - Create an orientation for winter faculty hires.
    - Update recruitment advertisements with Indigenous information.
    - Increase wages to increase retention.
    - Create supports for new faculty's negotiation.
    - Update tenure and promotion policies.
  - Employ or promote more Indigenous people into leadership roles.
  - Create a safe process for mediation with instructors.
  - Create a policy for supports during crises.
  - Provide time off for Indigenous days.
- Increased training opportunities.

Recommendation 2: Support access to Indigenous culture and community

Access to existing supports
- Increase awareness of existing supports.
  - Advertise community events.
  - Advertise supports throughout the year.
  - Create a resource portal for Indigenous supports.
- Remove barriers to support.
- Maintain online options.
- Create flexible scheduling of Indigenous opportunities.

Increase access to culture
- Increase access to ceremony.
- Support cultural reconnection on campus.

- Distribute Indigenous engagement opportunities across campus.
- Increase access to Elders.
- Offer more land-based learning opportunities.
- Increase access to medicine.
- Increase language access.
- Create cultural support for staff.
- Increase supports during the summer months.
- Increase access to culture on the Bannatyne campus.

Support grassroots initiatives

Increase access to and support the growth of Indigenous community
- Create and fund Indigenous support groups within faculties.
- Support Indigenous people in finding community on campus.
- Support Indigenous gatherings for change-making.
- Support Indigenous people supporting other Indigenous people.
- Create a mentorship network.
- Recruit and support more Indigenous students to build Indigenous community

Build more Indigenous spaces
- Build more circle rooms and smudge-friendly spaces.
- Create an Indigenous centre at Bannatyne.
- Build and subsidize Indigenous student housing.

Increase representation on campus
- Increase representation of diverse Indigenous groups.
- Increase physical representation on campus.

Recommendation 3: Support Indigenous people in the context of common lived experience

Address racism
- Be well advertised.
- Clearly define racism.
- Outline a clear process to address racism.
- Be transparent in all steps of the process.
- Enforce ramifications for racism.
- Never discipline the complainant for raising their concerns around racism.
- Mandate recurring anti-racism and anti-colonial training for everyone on campus.
- Mandate cultural sensitivity/competency training for everyone on campus.
- Hold those with tenure accountable.
- Address racism in systems and policies, not only individual actions.

Provide basic resources
- Provide school resources.
- Provide healthy food options in the food bank.

Accommodate families
- Offer engagement opportunities in the early evening.
- Make events and the office family-friendly and let employees know this is the case.
- Understand and accommodate family emergencies.
- Create flexibility in class schedules for child pick-up.
- Provide child respite.

Provide new mental health services on campus
- Provide addiction counseling on campus.
- Prevent and address burnout.
- Provide Indigenous-specific counseling services.
- Provide time/resources to cope with front-line trauma.

Support student experience
- Support mature students.
- Support out-of-city students.
- Support students coming from rural areas/the north/reserves.

Recommendation 4: Non-Indigenous people are responsible for supporting Indigenous people
- Authentically value Indigenous engagement.
- The institution must do the work.
- Non-Indigenous people should help plan events/initiatives.
- Strengthen leadership.
- The institution should help for reasons other than accolades.

Recommendation 5: Embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing
- Support Indigenous research within faculties.
- Do Indigenous research in a good way.
- Embed Indigenous approaches to mediation.
- Embed Indigenous approaches to acknowledgment.
- Support Indigenous identity experiences.
- Give land back to Treaty 1 Nations.
- Value non-academic experience.

Appendix C: Mentorship, Leadership, and Research Supports

In this appendix, I present all the supports specific to mentorship, leadership, and research from the above recommendations. Please refer to the main report for detailed recommendations.

Administrative responsibility and accountability
- Create administrative positions for Indigenous engagement in faculties.
- Include an Indigenous person on tenure and promotion committees for Indigenous faculty.
- Train managers and leads to be supportive of Indigenous employees.

Update job descriptions for Indigenous positions
- Include mentorship in job description and compensate for it.

Hire more Indigenous employees
> Administrative leads in faculties.
- Undergraduate research advisor.
- Mentorship Coordinator.

Update institutional practices
- Have more Indigenous people in leadership roles
- Increased training opportunities

Increase access to and support the growth of Indigenous community
- Create Indigenous support groups within faculties.
- Support Indigenous people supporting other Indigenous people.
- Create a mentorship network.

Non-Indigenous people are responsible for supporting Indigenous people
- Strengthen leadership.

Embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing
- Support Indigenous research within faculties.
- Do Indigenous research in a good way.

Appendix D: In the Participants' Words

In this appendix, I've included powerful quotes from participants, organized by recommendation.

Recommendation 1: Institutional Changes

"It almost feels like were kept so small you know? Rather than really having any type of say that gets initiated forward." – Deanna Garand

"Don't invite me to a table unless my voice is going to matter and count." – Monica Cyr

"Right so you do all of these focus groups across campus, you funnel up all of this information, you right some pretty juicy reports – it ends up on some leadership tables and then what? How are those decisions made?" – Monica Cyr

"How are leaders making their decisions. Where's the transparency there? And accountability to those that they are inviting to focus groups. I want to understand what the end results is." – Monica Cyr

"The other thing is the Faculty of Arts has an Indigenous course, Indigenous content requirement. So all students admitted to the Faculty must take that, but not all staff have to take that. But then I'm expected to share my knowledge and information and educate staff in addition to my job." – A 40-year-old First Nations woman

"… we are here to support, but we're not to do the heavy lifting for Asper." – Meaghan McNeill

"I left a Provincial job that paid very well… I came to the University and I get paid way less than what I was making, but I'm working twice as hard." – Meaghan McNeill

"in my previous role at the NCTR, how do you keep staff that are reading records from like Residential Schools for that long like? It's not built into the job description, but they're making a fair salary compared to other archivists that are reading records about like building codes" – A 34-year-old First Nations woman

"I'm not a walking Wikipedia for Indigenous issues" – Meaghan McNeill

"Yeah it's almost like we are student advisors, but we're not advising just academics and how to navigate the University [everyone nods], it's also how to navigate the world as an Indigenous person facing all the barriers and so it's again, it's a lot of work, it's meaningful work, it's something that we want to do, but it's just needing that extra support in supporting us so we can support others." – Meaghan McNeill

"I know there is a long way to go, but the fact that [the participant's managers are] very open, and willing to learn, and to make changes, and implement those changes is really great to see." – A 40-year-old First Nations woman

"I just wish that higher-ups or whatever, the administration would listen. Because it's been so many – we've repeated ourselves over, over and over and over again, and you know we're presenting the same – not the same plan, but it's a different version of the same plan, it's just [big sigh] like how many times do we have to say it before it happens kind of thing so." – Meaghan McNeill

"I think we could do better by setting up Indigenous Scholars and other historically under-represented minorities set them up to succeed." – Anonymous participant

"Take an equity, not an equality lens to the distribution of resources in departments." – Anonymous participant

"… it all comes back to capacity, like we can only do so much." – A 23-year-old Métis female

"Maybe. But the thing is… it's already happening like it or not. That's one thing that I'm really content with – massive change taking place. I'm not 100% happy with the way in which some changes are happening. I think there's too much Admin pushing it, not enough proper push." – Fred Shore

"You need to keep it going, you need to direct the change, it's got to be done by Aboriginal Peoples, or it's not going to work, it's not reconciliation." – Fred Shore

Recommendation 2: Support access to Indigenous culture and community

"And that's what University is supposed to do – is finding out who you are and how you fit in and how can you learn more about yourself going forward along with getting a good career." – Anonymous participant

"So I feel like what's missing is really that immediate ability to reach out in times of need." – Anonymous participant

"if I leave the Faculty of Arts which is where I work then all Indigenous identity goes with me because I'm the identifier in that faculty for student services right now." – A 40-year-old First Nations woman

"There have been some times in the past several weeks where I could really used guidance from Elders, and knowing that that's available is just kind of shattering to hear right now, like I'm about to go and cry and I may turn off my video just to do that." – Anonymous participant

"That's far and away the most important support I've ever had was those invested in my growth in that way" – Frank

"The minute the University starts to run this thing for the purposes of the University – it's going to bomb." – Fred Shore

"And I think you need to do that by getting together from within your administrative people, like yourself and others, and [name] and all that – all of you get together and say 'okay guys, the email thing is overkill and people aren't looking at it. How do we get the information out?'" – Fred Shore

Recommendation 3: Support Indigenous people in the context of common lived experience

"And so not only are you, you know, bringing in your own life experience, not only are you pushing forward in likely your work, you're also coming to class and having to educate students and professors and it goes on and on and on and I find for myself there's like – sometimes I just feel burnt out – and just like burnt out – and tired and tired of every facet of my life having to be that strong voice." – Chanterelle

"… this one student, the things that they had told me were incredibly triggering to me because I'm Indigenous too, I have a history too, I've come from similar places too. But then I'm expected to work right after. So I send her on her way – set her up with all of her supports and resources, but then I have an appointment with another student right after and I'm expected to be there. I have to be there, that's my job they tell me. Never mind that I'm also now going through something because of what I've had to hear from this student." – A 40-year-old First Nations woman

"The burden of… constantly remind myself that this is an institute and a structure in which I fundamentally do not belong because it is based in a different set of values." – Anonymous participant

"It is very alienating and lonely to remind yourself that you don't belong, and that you need to think about the ways in which you don't belong." – Anonymous participant

"Science isn't aware that it has it's own culture I think by in large, the culture of Big S Science or Western Science is they believe that they're being objective, but there is definitely culture there" – Anonymous participant

Recommendation 4: Non-Indigenous people are responsible for supporting Indigenous people

"Right, and it goes back to when I was applying like I checked the box that has "I'm Indigenous," but that didn't – I got no support from that? You know they got it for their metrics and their counting, but nothing was given to me for that information." – Meaghan McNeill

"… yes it's important to codify these sort of things, and stand by it and have it there in print, but there's also the leadership necessary to stand by what's in print too" – Frank

Recommendation 5: Embed Indigenous knowledges and ways of doing

"[name] talks about the seven generations, your actions have to be sort of understood for their influence in the future and stuff right so it's important for us to be pushing in this way." – Frank

"…if [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation] could have been re framed in a different way to have people like, maybe just mandatory engagement in learning about Residential Schools?" – A 23-year-old Métis female

Appendix E: Recommendations by Group

All groups

- Administrative responsibility and accountability
  - Create administrative positions for Indigenous engagement in faculties.
  - Create accountability structures.
  - Create Reconciliation Action Plans in each faculty.
  - Improve communication and relations between faculties and administration.
- Increase Indigenous content
  - Offer more Indigenous-related courses.
  - Include content about the past and present.
  - Mandatory Indigenous content for all students.
- Hire more Indigenous employees
  - Administrative leads in faculties.
  - Consultant in Human Resources.
  - Case management.
  - Mental Health Counselors.
  - Accessibility Services.
  - Financial Aid Officer.
  - Financial Services.
  - Faculty and instructors.
  - Staff.
  - Resource Manager.
  - Undergraduate research advisor.
  - Mentorship Coordinator.
- Update institutional practices
  - Monetary support.
- Changes to policies, processes, and documents.
  - Have more Indigenous people in leadership roles.
  - Policy to support during crises.
  - Time off for Indigenous days.
- Access to existing supports
  - Increase awareness of existing supports.
  - Advertise community events.
  - Create a resource portal for Indigenous supports.
  - Remove barriers to support.
  - Maintain online options.
  - Flexible scheduling of Indigenous opportunities.
- Increase access to culture
  - Increase access to ceremony.

- o Support cultural reconnection on campus.
- o Distribute Indigenous engagement opportunities across campus.
- o Increase access to Elders.
- o Offer more land-based learning opportunities.
- o Increase access to medicine.
- o Increase language access.
- o Access to culture on the Bannatyne campus.
- Support grassroots initiatives
- Increase access to and support the growth of Indigenous community
  - o Support Indigenous people in finding community on campus.
  - o Support Indigenous gatherings for change-making.
  - o Support Indigenous people supporting other Indigenous people.
  - o Create a mentorship network.
  - o Recruit more Indigenous students to build Indigenous community.
- Build more Indigenous spaces
  - o Circle rooms.
  - o Indigenous centre at Bannatyne.
- Increase representation on campus
  - o Increase diverse Indigenous groups.
  - o Increase physical representation on campus.
- Address racism
  - o Be well advertised.
  - o Clearly define racism.
  - o Outline a clear process to address racism.
  - o Be transparent in all steps of the process.
  - o Enforce ramifications for racism.
  - o Never discipline the complainant for raising their concerns around racism.
  - o Mandate recurring anti-racism and anti-colonial training for everyone on campus.
  - o Mandate cultural sensitivity/competency training for everyone on campus.
  - o Hold those with tenure accountable.
  - o Address racism in systems and policies, not only individual actions.
- Accommodate families
  - o Offer engagement opportunities in the early evening.
  - o Ensure children are welcome at events and in the office.
  - o Understand and accommodate family emergencies.
  - o Create flexible schedules for child pick-up.
  - o Provide child respite.
- Provide new mental health services on campus
  - o Provide addiction counseling on campus.
  - o Prevent and address burnout.

- o Provide Indigenous-specific counseling services.
- Value Indigenous engagement.
- The institution must do the work.
- Non-Indigenous people should help plan events/initiatives.
- Strengthen leadership.
- The institution should help for reasons other than accolades.
- Support Indigenous research within faculties.
- Do Indigenous research in a good way.
- Embed Indigenous approaches to mediation.
- Embed Indigenous approaches to acknowledgment.
- Support Indigenous identity experiences.
- Give land back to Treaty 1 Nations.
- Value non-academic experience.

Student

- Support more Indigenous student success programs
  - o Supports after the first year or bridging supports.
  - o Program-specific orientations.
- Changes to policies, processes, and documents.
  - o Create a process for mediation with instructors.
- Access to existing supports
  - o Advertise supports throughout the year.
- Increase access to and support the growth of Indigenous community
  - o Create Indigenous support groups within faculties.
- Build more Indigenous spaces
  - o Indigenous student housing.
- Provide basic resources
  - o Provide school resources.
  - o Provide healthy food options in the food bank.
- Support student experience
  - o Support mature students.
  - o Support out-of-city students.
  - o Support students coming from rural areas/the north/reserves.

Staff

- Administrative responsibility and accountability
  - o Negotiate with unions.
  - o Train managers and leads to be supportive of Indigenous employees.

- Update job descriptions for Indigenous positions
  - Include time for engaging with Indigenous community.
  - Include mentorship in the job description and compensate for it.
  - Include space for Indigenous people to give back to community in job descriptions
  - Provide guidelines for committee work.
  - Provide structure around "other duties as required."
  - Create support for emotional labor.
  - More time for helping Indigenous students.
- Update institutional practices
  - Build capacity.
- Changes to policies, processes, and documents.
  - Hiring processes.
    - Process for awareness about Indigenous hires.
    - Provide equitable compensation.
    - Embed Indigenous approaches.
    - Create an Indigenous-specific employee orientation.
    - Update recruitment advertisements.
    - Increase wages to increase retention.
  - Increased training opportunities.
- Increase access to culture
  - Create cultural support for staff.
  - Increase supports during the summer months.
- Provide new mental health services on campus
  - Provide time/resources to cope with front-line trauma.

Faculty

- Administrative responsibility and accountability
  - Include an Indigenous person on tenure and promotion committees for Indigenous faculty.
  - Negotiate with unions.
  - Allow Indigenous faculty to teach in their area of expertise.
  - Train managers and leads to be supportive of Indigenous employees.
- Update institutional practices
  - Support the creation of an interdisciplinary teaching and research hub.
- Changes to policies, processes, and documents.
  - Government engagement.
  - Hiring processes.
    - Process for awareness about Indigenous hires.
    - Provide equitable compensation.

- Embed Indigenous approaches.
- Create an Indigenous-specific employee orientation.
- Support Indigenous faculty to obtain lab space/equipment.
- Create an orientation for winter faculty hires.
- Update recruitment advertisements.
- Increase wages to increase retention.
- Support new faculty negotiation.
- Update tenure and promotion policies.
  - Increased training opportunities.