

Request for Proposals: Indigenous Data Sovereignty Strategy – Engagement & Development Project

Questions & Answers – October 10, 2025

Question 1

Can we submit our response on behalf of an Indigenous Company sponsored by us (with 51% owned by an Indigenous person) and any benefits/points in evaluation for Indigenous supplier will be applicable to us?

- **Answer 1** The RFP does not indicate Indigenous ownership as a criteria requirement. The successful proponent will have relevant and applicable experience engaging with First Nations communities and urban Indigenous populations, as well as developing an Indigenous Data Sovereignty Strategy. As per section 3.1.1, we are expecting an introduction giving a brief description of the proponent and all those who would be involved in the project from the vendor. This should include relevant lived experience, community connections, etc.

Question 2

Should the Data Governance strategy include tangible ready-to-use tools (e.g., Templates for Data Sharing Agreements, Consent Protocols, etc.)?

- **Answer 2:** Yes, the intention of the Indigenous Data Sovereignty Strategy (IDSS) is to have an actionable strategy with end-user-ready tools, such as, but not limited to, templates for data sharing agreements, consent protocols, and any other relevant tools or forms required based on proponents and communities recommendations.

Question 3

Is there an existing PHSD enterprise Data Governance Strategy? If so, is PHSD expecting the strategy to integrate with existing enterprise data governance and privacy policies, or remain a stand-alone Indigenous-specific framework?

- **Answer 3:** Public Health is currently in the process of developing an agency-wide Data Governance Strategy, along with early work related to AI governance. We also

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have policies and procedures in place, and we adhere to relevant legislation, including PHIPA and MFIPPA. This work will likely inform these processes. All data is stored within Canada.

Question 4

What role will PHSD play in supporting or co-hosting engagement sessions with Indigenous partners?

- **Answer 4:** The successful proponent will be the project lead. However, Public Health staff will be involved in building and maintaining community relationships to ensure continuity beyond the project. The lead will be responsible for planning, coordinating, budgeting, hosting, and synthesizing all engagement sessions.

Question 5

Are there specific legal or regulatory frameworks (beyond OCAP) that the strategy must explicitly reference or comply with?

- **Answer 5:** Yes, in addition to OCAP®, the strategy should incorporate other relevant legal, regulatory, and ethical frameworks including OCAS, TCPS2 Chapter 9, internal ethics protocols, Indigenous ethics bodies, and applicable provincial and federal legislation. The final strategy should demonstrate how these frameworks will be operationalized in practice.

Question 6

Should the strategy propose future governance bodies, or focus only on implementation recommendations as articulated in the RFP?

- **Answer 6:** The IDSS is intended to develop current and locally driven solutions. However, suggestions for future direction that identify gaps and opportunities are welcome.

Question 7

Is PHSD seeking to use this strategy as a precedent for other governance efforts (e.g., for other equity-deserving groups), or is it uniquely scoped to Indigenous communities?

- **Answer 7:** This strategy is uniquely scoped to Indigenous data governance. While focused on Indigenous communities, the approach and learnings may inform broader governance strategies.

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Question 8

What level of granularity and structure does PHSD expect in the Draft Data Governance Strategy?

- **Answer 8:** The IDSS will be a ready-to-implement document developed through consultation with over 13 First Nations and urban Indigenous population within the service area. The level of detail will be community-driven.

Question 9

What are some of the key systems, tools and solutions related to data capture, storage, governance and exchange for Indigenous and related data?

- **Answer 9:** Public Health will act as the custodian of Indigenous-related data during development, ensuring security and privacy. Governance models will be adapted based on community preferences aligned with OCAP® principles.

Question 10

What budget range and pricing approach should we aim for, and should our pricing include honoraria for Elders/Knowledge Keepers, translation, travel, venue/refreshments, and other participant supports like gifts/honoraria—or will PHSD cover these directly?

- **Answer 10:** The budget should include all anticipated costs to meet the deliverables, including honoraria, translation, travel, venue, refreshments, and participant supports.

Question 11

Is there a timeline for the project (start date and date of completion)?

- **Answer 11:** The projected start date is December 2025. The end date should be proposed by the proponent, with flexibility for meaningful consultation and relationship-building.

Question 12

During this project, while the work of developing a strategy is underway, who will be responsible for the ownership, custody, and management of any data?

- **Answer 12:** Public Health will serve as the interim custodian of any data collected during the project. Final decisions on data governance will be made collaboratively with Indigenous partners.

Question 13

Could PHSD describe the specific challenges, gaps, or pressures that make the development of an Indigenous Data Sovereignty Strategy a current priority?

- **Answer 13:** The Strategic Plan 2024–2029 and Indigenous Engagement Strategy drive this priority. Communities have requested health data, and the IDSS aims to reduce data gaps and uphold Indigenous rights through UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action.

Question 14

How will PHSD know the Indigenous Data Sovereignty Strategy has achieved its intended purpose?

- **Answer 14:** Success will be reflected in stronger relationships, trust, collaboration, and respectful, community-led data practices. Evaluation will be co-developed by the communities and Public Health at agreed upon time after the strategy has been implemented.

Question 15

What does PHSD believe will be the benefits for the communities it serves—both during the development process and once the strategy is available for use?

- **Answer 15:** The IDSS will help fulfill community requests for health data, strengthen relationships, support wellness, tailor programming, advocate for funding, and uphold Indigenous sovereignty and governance.

Question 16

What data security and safety parameters are already in place at PHSD for data control, and how should proponents align their approaches to these existing measures?

- **Answer 16:** Public Health follows PHIPA, MFIPPA, and internal IT/security protocols. Proponents should align with these standards and meet community expectations for data sovereignty and cultural safety.

Question 17

Has PHSD previously collected any data from Indigenous communities, or held discussions with Indigenous partners about the development of a data sovereignty strategy?

- **Answer 17:** Public Health previously collected data through government-directed processes but paused due to concerns about harm. Foundational work like the Indigenous Engagement Strategy is publicly available.

Question 18

Could PHSD clarify the protocols or permissions process expected before including direct community quotes and teachings in reporting?

- **Answer 18:** Proponents must obtain informed consent before including quotes or teachings. All qualitative data collection must follow Public Health's internal Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC) protocols and verify quotes with individuals.

Question 19

How will PHSD and its Board formally involve Indigenous governance partners in reviewing and approving the draft Strategy?

- **Answer 19:** Proponents should include consultations with Indigenous governance partners as part of their engagement plan, including validation before finalizing the draft Strategy.

Question 20

Will PHSD provide translation or interpretation services for engagement activities, or should proponents plan and budget for this directly?

- **Answer 20:** If translation or interpretation is essential to your engagement approach, include it in your budget.

Question 21

Will PHSD provide contact information of existing relationship holders such as First Nation community health staff and local Indigenous partners?

- **Answer 21:** Yes, Public Health will facilitate introductions to existing contacts to support relationship-building, guided by the proponent's engagement approach.

Question 22

What is the number and type of virtual and in-person engagement activities that can be assumed for the purpose of proposing a budget?

- **Answer 22:** Proponents should recommend the number and type of engagement activities. Public Health serves a broad region including two treaty areas, 13 First Nations, and urban Indigenous populations.

Question 23

Could PHSD confirm the documents are the versions available on the following websites: Strategic Plan and Indigenous Engagement Strategy?

- **Answer 23:** Yes, the provided links go to the correct versions of the Indigenous Engagement Strategy and Strategic Plan.

Question 24

Could PHSD share the Indigenous Engagement Strategy Implementation Plan to ensure alignment and prevent engagement fatigue?

- **Answer 24:** The Indigenous Engagement Strategy was completed in 2018. The current focus is IDSS. Avoiding engagement fatigue is essential. Proponents should describe their approach.

Question 25

Will subject matter experts familiar with previous Indigenous engagement and research be available to answer questions or provide context as needed?

- **Answer 25:** Yes, the Indigenous Public Health team will be available to provide support, context, and guidance throughout the project.

Question 26

Would there be interest in additional services, such as translation, transliteration, and/or interpretation from English to Indigenous languages, as a value-added service?

- **Answer 26:** If translation, transliteration, or interpretation is essential to your approach, include it in your budget.

Question 27

Will PHSD provide support for in-person engagement logistics, such as catering, printing materials, and hosting meeting venues on-reserve?

- **Answer 27:** Public Health can provide amenities like the Ramsey Room and AV equipment at no cost. All other engagement-related costs should be included in the budget.

Question 28

This important work requires the development of trusting relationships with Indigenous communities and partners. Can you speak to the existing relationships between PHSD and the Indigenous communities living in the area? Do you anticipate that a significant amount of time will need to be spent developing these relationships before the work can meaningfully commence?

- **Answer 28:** Public Health has relationships with some Indigenous communities at varying levels, though these often depend on individual connections rather than formal partnerships. We recognize that meaningful work requires trust and relationship-building, and we're committed to supporting this process while leveraging existing connections where possible.

Question 29

Will PHSD provide administrative support for recruitment of focus group participants, scheduling and room booking for in-person events?

- **Answer 29:** These are responsibilities of the successful proponent.