

## Preamble

At BIPOC Executive Search Inc., we commit to aligning our values and practices with the principles laid out in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). As an organization that works with many underrepresented leaders that have faced – and continue to face – systemic barriers when it comes to employment, we recognize the importance of practices and commitments that speak to Indigenous Peoples’ movements for self-determination, sovereignty, and cultural identity rights. Based on what we have heard and witnessed, we want to make known our solidarity and assume accountability for creating shared collective futures.

To reach this shared vision, it is important that we embody the *truth* in truth and reconciliation. To start, we recognize the ways in which colonial agendas have devastated Indigenous communities, impacting language, the passing on of culture, access to ceremony, and even down to the generational learning that comes from grandparent to grandchild. At the same time, we honour the amazing resiliency, healing, and growth that has also existed since time immemorial.

To demonstrate our collective engagement, a collection of team members representing all areas of our organization with diverse social locations and identities have gathered on a bi-monthly basis to examine how we can further Indigenous Peoples’ rights and sovereignty work. Over the course of several months of research, group processing, and collective writing, the working group produced a document that would form the first iteration of the firm’s revised land acknowledgement.

Officially shared in the public domain in January 2023, the firm’s land acknowledgement is comprised of five (5) components: (i) Preamble, (ii) Land Acknowledgement, (iii) Reconcili-ACTION Plan, (iv) Reconcili-ACTION Plan Resources, and (v) Footnote. This document, acting as a living guide to our commitments to reconciliation work, details the measures we are committed to taking to ensure that we approach our work through multiple worldviews, including Indigenous epistemologies and ways of being; the recognition of Indigenous ancestry, wisdom, inventions, and contributions; and the commitment to share and give back power, space, and prosperity with Indigenous Peoples. We will be reviewing and making iterations to this document during the month of January of every year so that we remain responsive and accountable to Indigenous colleagues, candidates, clients, and communities.

## BIPOC Executive Search Reconcili-ACTION Plan

Using the [6 Actions of Reconcili-ACTION](#) – *Learn, Understand, Explore, Recognize, Take Action, and Tell Others* – offered as part of [#94in94 Campaign](#), we pledge the following:

1. Continued commitment to LEARNING about the histories between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in concrete ways that reinforce a focus on truth seeking. As part of our internal team education this year, we have and will continue to commit to the following:

- *Completed*
  - [#94in94 Campaign](#) developed in collaboration between the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) (NCTR), [Reconciliation Thunder](#), and [Circles for Reconciliation](#)
    - The entire BIPOC Executive Search staff complement was encouraged by senior members of the delivery team to subscribe to the campaign and dedicate themselves on a daily basis from September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to learn about and reflect on the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report 94 Calls to Action](#).
  - [4 Seasons of Reconciliation](#) education course offered by First Nations University and RBC
    - The entire BIPOC Executive Search staff complement was tasked by the President and Managing Partner to complete this online training by October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A staff meeting was scheduled on this day for a debrief and reflection of learning.

2. UNDERSTANDING the history and legacy of residential schools means that we approach our work as changemakers in a trauma-informed way and in a way designed to highlight meaningful Indigenous representation. Call to Action #92 mentions the importance of providing education of management and staff about Aboriginal history, especially as it concerns residential schools. As part of our work with organizations and community partners, we understand that part of the work of inviting Indigenous voices to the table must include an acknowledgement of past and ongoing harm. We will achieve this in the following manner:

- *Current and ongoing*
  - BIPOC Executive Search promotes a co-learning environment in which team members are encouraged to learn from one another to deepen the understanding of learnings pertaining to Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination rights. Staff members with less fluency on the subject matter will hold themselves accountable by reaching out for support when necessary. Staff members with greater fluency will regularly check in with their colleague's learning and offer support when necessary.

- *Exploratory*
  - The BIPOC Executive Search staff complement will be offered varying books, articles, and/or videos pertaining to the history and legacy of residential schools. In the spirit of modeling the critical importance of reconciliation, everyone will be asked to choose one (1) medium and present their learnings during staff meetings at different intervals over the calendar year. Such presentations will occur once per month, at a minimum.

3. EXPLORING the intersections between treaty, constitutional, Indigenous, and human rights in Canada means a pledge to our continued education and relearning. We recognize that focusing on anti-Indigenous racism and Indigenous solidarity work will require listening and an emphasis on the right to self-determination. As part of our exploration process, we are committed to and will continue to dedicate time in the following ways:

- *Completed*
  - In spring 2022, BIPOC Executive Search developed an Indigenous Rights Working Group comprised of twelve (12) volunteer members of the staff complement. This group was tasked with developing the Social Location Disclosure, a document that invites candidates to share their social location (comprised of a number of self-definition markers including ethnicity, culture, and ancestral heritage, gender, sexual orientation, persons living with a disability, etc.). The disclosure was intentionally crafted to signal to non-Indigenous individuals the responsibility we carry in sharing the burden of having to disclose self-definition markers. This document will be shared with candidates who have not already disclosed their social location by the time they have been shortlisted for a selection process.
  - Following the completion of the Social Location Disclosure, the BIPOC Executive Search Indigenous Rights Working Group reconvened to work on the firm's land acknowledgement, which is comprised of three (3) components: i) preamble, ii) land acknowledgement, and iii) Reconcili-ACTION plan. Stored on the BIPOC Executive Search website, the land acknowledgment will be used as a guide to TRC CTA #7 and 92 and will be reviewed at the beginning and middle of the year to determine its relevancy.
- *Exploratory*
  - Upon completion of the land acknowledgement, BIPOC Executive Search will determine whether a working group needs to assemble to align the firm's practices, policies, and procedures to the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) and Indigenous treaty laws local to where a search or other business lines are being conducted (e.g., adherence to the Peace and Friendship Treaty if business were to be conducted in Nova Scotia).

4. Continued commitment to RECOGNIZING the rich contributions Indigenous peoples have made to Canada involves highlighting Indigenous organizations, community builders, artists, advocates, and other Indigenous Elders and knowledge holders. As part of our commitment to recognizing Indigenous wisdom, we will endeavour to practice the following:

- *Current and ongoing*
  - With the leadership of the Community Relations Specialist, the BIPOC Executive Search team has been assembling an evolving compilation of work containing Indigenous-led or founded agencies and organizations we endeavour to foster ongoing, long-term relationships with. BIPOC Executive Search will endeavour to connect with at least two (2) organizations by April 2023. We will outreach to these groups once every other month to determine how we can use our platform to further advance, recognize and amplify Indigenous initiatives, advocates, and organizations.
  - With the leadership of the Community Relations Specialist, the BIPOC Executive Search team has been developing a Community Engagement Calendar documenting important dates such as National Indigenous History Month, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day, and other Indigenous led events and initiatives. This calendar will be used to plan engagements and collaborations with thoughtfulness and intentionality.
  - With the leadership of the Community Relations Specialist, the BIPOC Executive Search team will be using the firm’s social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Tik Tok and Instagram) to promote Indigenous creative content, advance Indigenous led initiatives, and showcase Indigenous entrepreneurial endeavours.
  - BIPOC Executive Search offers all shortlisted candidates a \$100 honorarium as a gesture of appreciation for the time and labour they have invested in the search process. We will ensure that at least two (2) Indigenous organizations will be reflected in the list of eight (8) possible organizations for donations. Additionally, we will endeavour to develop ongoing, long-term relationships with the listed organizations by outreaching every quarter via email, phone call, video call, or in-person engagement to determine how the partnership can be further strengthened. For a list of Indigenous organizations that we have built and will continue to build relationships with, please reference the section of this document titled, *Community Engagement, Honorarium and Funding Commitments*.
  
- *Exploratory*

With the leadership of the Community Relations Specialist, the BIPOC Executive Search team continues to explore a variety of relationships with

Indigenous-led organizations, artists, and individuals. BIPOC Executive Search is committed to following the work of Indigenous-led organizations, artists and individuals *via* social media, email, phone call, video call, or in-person contact and proposing at least one (1) idea per quarter in how best to further Indigenous sovereignty rights work.

5. To keep the historical injustices and present-day wrongs at the forefront of our work means TAKING ACTION on Indigenous solidarity work through a self-reflective and community engaged process. As part of our commitment to action taking, we will practice the following:

- *Current and ongoing*
  - The BIPOC Executive Search staff recognize that September 30<sup>th</sup> is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day. We will commit to participating in events organized and presented by members of the Indigenous community to reflect and show solidarity for survivors and their families.
  - The BIPOC Executive Search staff will endeavour to attend either in- person or through virtual means at least one (1) Indigenous led event per quarter (e.g., Indigenous Curatorial Collective, 60's Scoop Lunch and Learn, etc.). A list of possible engagements will be provided on the Community Engagement Calendar.
  - The BIPOC Executive Search staff will hire Indigenous community members to offer professional development to the staff. This will begin in November/ December 2022 and occur at least twice every year.

6. To TEACH by modeling to our clients, networks, friends, and families our dedication to centering Indigenous voices and legacies with a focus on broad representation. As part of our external education outreach this year, we have and will continue to commit to the following:

- *Current and ongoing*
  - [#94in94 Campaign](#) developed in collaboration between the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) (NCTR), [Reconciliation Thunder](#), and [Circles for Reconciliation](#)
    - In September 2022, during staff meetings and in emails, BIPOC Executive Search staff were offered examples of how to share campaign details with clients and candidates and to invite them to subscribe to and engage with the content. Staff were encouraged to report back on any engagement efforts during scheduled Tuesday and Friday staff meetings.
  - The BIPOC Executive Search team will endeavour to promote Indigenous literature and scholarship. The intention is to quote or cite the work of at least one (1) Indigenous Elder, knowledge holder, or scholar in every educational and workshop offering.

- *Exploratory*
  - BIPOC Executive Search one-day conference on best practices in working with Indigenous and racialized communities within the workspace.
    - BIPOC Executive Search will assemble a conference working group comprised of volunteer staff members to draft a proposal for this conference and have this completed by April 2023 to present to the President and Managing Partner. This working group will meet on a weekly basis until the proposal date.
    - If this conference is deemed viable from an operational, administrative, human resources, and financial perspective, the working group will plan on holding the one-day conference one-year from the proposal approval date.

## Reconcili-ACTION Plan Resources

- *Commitments # 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 – Learning, Understanding, Exploring, Taking Action, Teach:*
  - [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report 94 Calls to Action](#)
  - [First Nations University of Canada, Indigenous Voices on Indigenous Identity 2022](#)
  - [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)
  - [Indigenous Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA Resources](#)
  
- *Commitment #4 – Recognizing (honorarium and funding commitments):*
  - [Anishnawbe Health Foundation](#)
    - Anishnawbe Health Foundation’s mission is to support an environment where the urban Indigenous community can heal spiritually, physically, emotionally and mentally by enhancing capital and program funding, as well as to foster the reclamation, preservation, research and application of traditional healing methods, including the sharing of these with all people.
  - [BC Aboriginal Child Care Society](#)
    - The BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) offers a variety of services that provide early childhood education professionals, support service professionals, and Indigenous children and families, access to early learning programs, resources, training, research, and community services that are culturally based.
  - [Clan Mother's Healing Village](#)
    - Clan Mothers is developing a land-based healing village to provide culturally innovative solutions for women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people in a community living environment, incorporating traditional Indigenous healing and spiritual mentorship, while encouraging individual growth through programming, training and social enterprise.
  - [First Nations Child and Family Caring Society](#)
    - The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (Caring Society) works to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations youth and their families through education initiatives, public policy campaigns and providing quality resources to support communities. Using a reconciliation framework that addresses contemporary hardships for Indigenous families in ways that uplift all Canadians, the Caring Society champions culturally based equity for First Nations children and their families so that they can grow up safely at home, be healthy, achieve their dreams, celebrate their languages and culture and be proud of who they are.
  - [Indspire](#)
    - Indspire is a national Indigenous registered charity that invests in the

education of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people for the long-term benefit of them, their families and communities, and Canada.

- [Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#)
  - Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami serve as a national voice protecting and advancing the rights and interests of Inuit in Canada. Their vision is Canadian Inuit prospering through unity and self-determination.
- [Legacy of Hope Foundation](#)
  - Legacy of Hope Foundation is a national Indigenous charitable organization with the mandate to educate and create awareness and understanding about the Residential School System, including intergenerational impacts such as the removal of generations of Indigenous children from their families, including the Sixties Scoop, the post-traumatic stress disorders that many First Nations, Inuit, and Metis continue to experience, all while trying to address racism, foster empathy and inspire action.
- [Miziwe Biik](#)
  - Miziwe Biik works with Indigenous community members in the Greater Toronto Area to support them in navigating employment and training services.
- [True North Aid](#)
  - True North Aid is dedicated to serving and supporting northern Indigenous communities in Canada through practical humanitarian support. Their mandate is to provide practical humanitarian assistance through initiatives established on eight foundational stones of support. These include self-determination, reconciliation, water, food, health, housing, hope, and education. Their priority is to help ensure the dignity and health of Indigenous people through our action.
- [Water First](#)
  - Water First is one of the top charitable organizations in Canada addressing water challenges in Indigenous communities through education, training and meaningful collaboration. Water First is guided by the Indigenous youth and young adults who participate in their programs, their Indigenous staff and board members, local Indigenous community partners, and by members of their Indigenous Advisory Council. Their collaborations are built on respect and meaningful partnerships, with Indigenous youth and community partners at the heart of their work.



## Footnote

The protocol for using this land acknowledgment is as follows:

- (i) This land acknowledgement in its entirety from preamble to footnote will be housed on the BIPOC Executive Search Inc. website.
- (ii) The section “General Land Acknowledgement” will be shared at the beginning of all virtual and in-person events that we host, which could include workshops, moderating or paneling events, social media LIVE events, etc.
- (iii) The section “General Land Acknowledgement” will appear in all hardcopy or online documents we share with the community.
- (iv) This document is applicable to all the locations our team members reside and work in.
- (v) This document is subject to review and change as our firm continues to learn what it takes to uplift Indigenous ways of knowing and being.