



Reconciliation Working Group Proposal

Prepared by Julia Campbell-Such, Lauren Osmond, Gyllian Porteous,
Sophia Zweifel, and Charlotte Parent on behalf of the CAC Ad-Hoc Advocacy Committee
Approved by the CAC Board on August 14, 2019

Mandate

To develop a formal position for the CAC on care and repatriation of materials of Indigenous origin, and to reflect this position in CAC working documents.

Challenge

As new policies and legislation are developed at a national level to comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, we believe that it is CAC's duty as a national organization to keep pace with these efforts. Canadian conservators often have a uniquely intimate relationship with Indigenous cultural material in both private and public collections; this privileged position will profoundly impact the way that reconciliation takes place on the ground in Canada. However, CAC currently has no formal position on reconciliation, and no formal guidelines or specific standards for its membership on best practices for the care and repatriation of Indigenous cultural heritage. The CAC Ad-hoc Advocacy Committee (AC) is recommending the formation of a Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) to address how CAC as an organization should be contributing to and promoting reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples of the territories in which we work.

Context

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2007 (See Appendix 1). Articles 11 and 12 of the Declaration, which assert the rights of Indigenous peoples to practice, maintain and revitalize their cultural, spiritual and religious traditions, have important implications for cultural heritage professionals; they assert that Indigenous communities have inalienable rights to access, protect and develop manifestations of their culture, including but not limited to archaeological and historic sites, artefacts, ceremonial objects and human remains. The declaration calls on state actors to provide redress and restitution to Indigenous actors whose property they hold illegitimately, and to enable access to or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains that are in their possession (United Nations 2007). Canada adopted UNDRIP in 2010 but did not commit to its implementation until 2016 in response to the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action. The TRC Calls to Action specifically address Canadian museums and archives. TRC Call to Action #67 called on the Federal Government to fund "the Canadian Museums Association [(CMA)] to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to



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determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015). In alignment with the TRC, MP Bill Casey put forward Bill C-391, *An Act Respecting a National Strategy for the Repatriation of Indigenous Human Remains and Cultural Property*, in 2018. The bill made it to a second reading in the Senate. In April 2019, the CMA announced that it has received over \$1M in Federal funding for a Reconciliation Project, including a Working Group which will establish best practice guidelines in museums over the next two years. Conservation training programs at both Queen’s University and Fleming College are undertaking diversity initiatives that include the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into Conservation education. Federal, provincial, collective, and personal policies and practices are responding, changing, and adapting to contribute to the important process of reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people.

How can the Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property meaningfully and concretely contribute to reconciliation? In June 2019, a summary report of the CAC-CAPC Canadian Collections Care survey was completed (publication pending). This report included a small section on Indigenous cultural centers and Indigenous material culture within museum collections and highlighted a significant gap in conservation knowledge. The report suggests many Canadian conservators are not sure how to approach relationship building with Indigenous communities, how to ensure access for Indigenous communities to their collections, or how to handle a situation in which objects in their collection may be considered for repatriation. The CAC as an organization should be able to support its membership in the reconciliation process, and to support a new, more diverse generation of emerging conservators. The AC therefore recommended the creation of a Reconciliation Working Group to develop tools to help our membership work with confidence, care, and respect towards the preservation of a diverse cultural heritage.

Overview

The overarching proposed objectives of the RWG are two-fold:

- (1) to expand our conservation professional standards to respect Indigenous perspectives in cultural preservation.
- (2) to establish a framework for a collaborative practice towards the care and preservation of Indigenous materials, including practical guidelines for providing access to collections and facilitating repatriations.

Since receiving approval by the CAC board to move forward with this project, the AC has begun by discussing the direction of the RWG with established experts within the conservation community and sourcing funding to allow for a more personal consultation process. Pertinent information (current museum-based policies, documents from previous codes of ethics revision, etc.) will be gathered and consolidated for the RWG to consult during their tenure. The CMA Working Group on reconciliation has also been consulted to ensure there is no redundancy and to propose cooperation between the two groups.



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A preliminary survey has been developed by the AC to be sent to a wide variety of First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultural centers and community organizations. This structured survey solicits basic information about the heritage conservation needs of targeted organizations and asks if members of the community would be interested in participating in the CAC RWG and/or be consulted throughout the project.

To ensure that the formation of the RWG is transparent and democratic, CAC membership has been notified of the formation of the RWG and invited to give suggestions and feedback through a membership survey. Membership will be updated regularly on the progress of the Working Group and will have full access to all documents used and produced by the group.

The RWG will consist of fourteen to twenty-one (volunteer) Indigenous and non-Indigenous conservators and stewards of Indigenous cultural heritage. The RWG will be active for two years, beginning May 2020 with a two-day workshop before the CAC conference. The AC will organize and seek funding for this kick-off workshop. On behalf of the CAC and with the organization's support, the AC committee will also apply for funding to cover RWG consultation costs.

Over the following two years, the RWG will be responsible for developing a formal position for the CAC on issues of repatriation and the care of materials of Indigenous origin. The RWG will be encouraged and supported to consult widely with Indigenous communities, cultural centers, and institutions who are negotiating the challenges of reconciliation.

Outcomes will be delivered by the RWG in the form of a formal report for the CAC board recommending changes that should be made within the organization to better serve Indigenous peoples, Indigenous members of the conservation community, and the care of Indigenous materials. The AC will then implement the recommendations of the RWG into working documents and best practice tools to be approved by the RWG and CAC Board.

After the RWG is complete, through an annual survey the AC will track the use and efficacy of the guidelines and tools provided to the membership. Relationships developed during the working time of the RWG with Indigenous communities and professionals from other fields will be maintained, and will continue to enrich our organization; ideally, a permanent CAC Indigenous liaison committee would be formed out of the RWG.

Suggested Objectives and Goals

Expand conservation professional standards to respect Indigenous perspectives in cultural preservation.

- Review current language within CAC working documents and expand the accompanying glossary
- Recommend updates for CAC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice



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- Consider removing “cultural property” from the organization’s title
- Recommend ways to broaden membership understanding of First Nations, Inuit and Métis approaches to collecting and caring for material cultural heritage

Establish a framework for a collaborative practice towards the care and preservation of Indigenous materials.

- Implement organizational protocols and procedures for the CAC
 - Establish procedure for contacting Indigenous communities prior to annual conference and meetings
 - Implement new subsidized Indigenous Institutions membership tier
- Formalize conservator’s role and responsibilities for consultations and collaborations with source communities
 - Integrate into CAC guidelines for practice
- Formalize conservator’s role in the repatriation process
 - Integrate into CAC guidelines for practice
- Establish toolkits for membership, including, for example:
 - “How to create meaningful collaboration”
 - “How to make collections accessible”
 - “Considerations when handling Indigenous cultural heritage”
 - “Considerations when preparing material for community loan”
 - “How to engage in the repatriation process”
 - List of resources by topic (e.g. Reciprocal Research Network; repatriation policies)
- Recommend ways CAC could support Indigenous students seeking formal conservation education

Working Group Structure

Membership

14-20 Indigenous and non-Indigenous conservators and stewards of Indigenous cultural heritage.

- 2-3 Co-Chairs: from CAC membership
Role: establish overarching structure, create agendas, chair meetings, ensure project milestones are reached
- 2-3 Secretaries: from CAC AC
Role: consolidate information from meetings; produce CAC documents from working group recommendations
- 7-10 Members: from CAC membership and Indigenous community organizations.
Role: consult with Indigenous communities, cultural centers, and other organizations; discuss results of consultations; develop recommendations



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- 3-5 Members: experts from affiliate professions (administrators, curators, academics, artists)
Role: consult with Indigenous communities, cultural centers, and other organizations; discuss results of consultations; develop recommendations

Recruiting

The AC will administer the recruiting of RWG members. The AC will strive for diversity in terms of age, gender, and specialization, and will recognize the many different communities within First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations. The AC will also strive for representation from a diversity of geographic regions.

- Brief preliminary surveys of both the CAC membership and Indigenous community groups and organizations, including cultural centers, solicit interest and suggestions for who should participate.
- Results of surveys form basis for more formal invitations to specific individuals.
- If faced with overwhelming interest in the RWG from the CAC membership, a simple self-nomination procedure will be implemented. Nominees will be asked to submit a short paragraph outlining their interest in the committee and the time that they can contribute.

Consultations

Questions/interview guides for consultations with Indigenous communities, cultural centers, and other organizations are developed by the RWG during the first meeting. The RWG ensures that these guides, and all activities undertaken during the consultation process, conform to the OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access, Possession) principles of collaborative research with Indigenous communities developed by the First Nations Information Governance Center (<https://fnigc.ca/ocapr.html>).

- RWG divides consultation duties among members to cover as much ground as possible.
 - The AC suggests breaking into Western (Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and Alberta), Interior (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nunavut), and Eastern (Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia) groups.
- RWG members report back to group on results of consultations.
- RWG members maintain contact with the organizations, groups, and individuals they have consulted, and report back to them regularly on the progress of the RWG.

Meetings

- The RWG will be responsible for establishing a structure that works for the collective.
- RWG Secretaries will be responsible for coordinating meetings at request of Co-Chairs.
- The AC recommends the integration of an online project management tool.

Note on Volunteerism and Compensation



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Given the financial reality within the CAC organization and the type of grants that this project qualifies for, we are asking that all members of the RWG volunteer their time to this project. All travel, accommodation, and per diem accrued during consultation activities will be covered by project funding. Additionally, a qualitative researcher will be hired to process data collected to alleviate RWG workload. To acknowledge the substantial contribution RWG members will be making to the CAC organization, we are requesting CAC annual membership fees be waived for RWG members.

Summary of Kick-Off CAC 2020 Workshop

This workshop will serve as an introduction to the RWG and will also be the group's first meeting. The event will provide an opportunity for the working group members to get to know each other and the work they are being asked to complete. This two-day workshop will take place on May 5th and 6th, 2020 before the annual CAC conference, which will be held in Hamilton, Ontario on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabeg. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and directly adjacent to Haldiman Treaty territory. In developing this workshop, we plan to engage with First Nations and cultural centers in the region. Day one of the workshop will be open to the CAC membership free of charge, and day two will be open to RWG members only.

Day One (open)

- Members from the AC introduce the goals of the working group. RWG members introduce themselves.
- KAIROS blanket exercise gives RWG members an understanding of the history of colonialism in Canada from an Indigenous perspective.
- Invited speakers discuss Indigenous concepts of cultural heritage conservation, the effects of colonialism and cultural genocide on Indigenous cultures and communities, and the progress of reconciliation projects specific to museums in Canada.

Day Two (RWG members only)

- Round table discussions on the current state of conservation of Indigenous material in Canada, and goals of the RWG.
- RWG work begins:
 - Secretaries present results of the preliminary membership survey and Indigenous cultural center and community organizations survey;
 - Co-chairs provide an overview of principles learned from OCAP training they received prior to the meeting;
 - Members begin to develop protocols, questions and guidelines for consultation;
 - Members are divided into consultation teams and assigned consultation work to do before the next meeting.



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Proposed Timeline

Interim Milestones	Deadline
Gain approval by the board	14 August 2019
Discuss direction of RWG with community and consultants	September 2019
CMA working group consulted	September 2019
Go-fund-me campaign targeted to CAC network	September 2019 - April 2020
CAC Membership notified of establishment of RWG	September 2019
Preliminary Indigenous Cultural Center consultation surveys developed soliciting the advice of RWG consultants	September 2019
Preliminary Indigenous Cultural Center consultation surveys sent out and results gathered and summarized	Sept. 2019 - January 2020
Apply for federal and provincial funding	Sept. - December 2019
RWG Membership invited and finalized	Nov. 2019 - March 2020
RWG Meeting 1: Two-Day Kick-Off Workshop	5-6 May 2020
RWG Consultations and Meetings	May 2020 - May 2022
Final Report from RWG presented to CAC	July 2022
AC integrates recommendation into working documents and guidelines	August - December 2022
RWG/Indigenous Liaison Committee and CAC Board approve working documents and guidelines	January - March 2022
Working documents and guidelines released to membership	April 2022
Follow-up survey for membership on use and efficacy of working documents and guidelines	April-May 2023



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Projected Working Group Budget

Expenses April 2020-2022	Cost	Quantity	Total
KICK-OFF WORKSHOP EVENT			
Return Travel to Hamilton for RWG members			
From Ontario and Quebec	\$200	8	\$1,600
From Eastern Canada	\$350	3	\$1,050
From Western Canada	\$800	6	\$4,800
From the Territories	\$2,000	3	\$6,000
Accommodation	\$350/2 nights	20	\$7,000
Coffee and refreshment break (day one)	\$4/person	70	\$280
Coffee and refreshment break (day two)	\$4 /person	20	\$80
Box Lunch (day two)	\$20/person	20	\$400
Box lunch (day one)	\$20/person	70	\$1,400
Honoraria for speakers	\$150/person	3	\$450
Honoraria and/or gifts of appreciation	\$50	5	\$250*
Rental Space	\$215/day	2	\$430
Materials (stationary, flip chart, projector, microphone and sound system rental etc.)			\$125
Bus transportation from Hamilton to workshop location (day one)	\$500/day	1	\$500
Transport from Hamilton to workshop location (day two)	\$200/day	1	\$200
CONSULTATION			
Fundamentals of OCAP® online course	\$290	3	\$870
Justification: 3 RWG co-chairs will complete training to ensure the project follows ethical protocol.			
Honoraria and/or gifts of appreciation	\$50 each	100	\$5,000
Justification: Honoraria and gifts of gratitude may fluctuate depending on the service/knowledge provided and will adapt to cultural practices.			
Travel for Consultation			



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Western Group (Yukon, Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and Alberta).			\$20,000
Interior Group (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nunavut)			\$10,000
Eastern Group (Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia)			\$10,000
<i>Justification: Each group will be given a pot of money for consultation travel and cultural exchange events. Eligible expenses include transport, accommodation, daily per diem, or hosting an event to bring people together.</i>			
SurveyMonkey Team Advantage Plan	\$384/year	2	\$768**
<i>Justification: Required platform for the management of membership surveys and preliminary Indigenous consultation surveys. It is also a useful tool to engage membership feedback during the RWG process.</i>			
Translation Services (Rev.com)	\$0.10/word		\$3,000
<i>Justification: The total amount would equal, approximately, six 5000-word documents. This will cover translation for surveys, interim RWG documents, and the final report.</i>			
GoToMeeting Pro (or other equivalent service)	\$33/month	24	\$794
<i>Justification: used for RWG meetings and for consultation that cannot be done in person. The online software allows for up to 25 webcam conference calls, dial-in conference call line, screen share, and audio recording. Will be decided in consultation with Communications Committee.</i>			
Qualitative researcher	\$20/hour	240	\$4,800
<i>Justification: 5 hours/week for one year. Code and interpret results of consultation. Would target graduate students supervised by an affiliate to RWG university members or consultants.</i>			
TOTAL			\$79,797
Total committed by CAC-ACCR *only \$120 of line item **in-Kind expense			\$8,618
Sources of funding to be pursued			
Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program			
Ontario Trillium Foundation Investment Stream: Seed/Grow Grants			
The First Spark Initiative – Strategic Initiatives Fund			
The McLean Foundation			
Anti-Racism Action Program			



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Alignment of the RWG with CAC Objectives

The establishment of a Reconciliation Working Group fulfills the following CAC objectives:

Promotes the Code of Ethics and Guidance for Practice of the Corporation.

- The Code of Ethics and Guidance for Practice was last updated in 2000. As outlined above, since 2000 there have been major efforts towards reconciliation with Indigenous populations both nationally and internationally. Our Codes of Ethics and Guidance for Practice could be updated to better reflect changes in ethos and practice.

Obtain the cooperation of related disciplines in the improvement, coordination and dissemination of conservation knowledge, methods and working standards.

- Membership in the RWG will include 3-5 members from disciplines related to Conservation, such as curators, academics, artists and craftspeople. Their membership in this group will connect these professionals more closely to the goals and ethics of our discipline. They will return to their regular working lives having had a positive, fruitful experience with conservators. They will bring back to their fields a clear understanding of the value of our profession and the larger contributions conservators can make, as well as a sense that our professional organization is actively engaged in important, current, social and cultural work.

Promote partnership with other professionals in the conservation field as well as serve as an advocate for conservation to federal, provincial, and local government agencies and other organizations.

- The RWG will actively seek out and participate in funding opportunities from all levels of government to help it carry out its work. Participation in these funding sources will provide the CAC opportunities to develop relationships with funding bodies, to demonstrate a history of funding, and to situate themselves as an important advocate in the cultural heritage arena.
- The RWG will develop guidance for conservation professionals wishing to collaborate with stewards of Indigenous cultural heritage, thus promoting partnerships with other professionals in the conservation field.

Promote the awareness of conservation among related professionals and the general public.

- RWG consultations with Indigenous and other organizations will not only promote awareness of conservation among these groups, but, if done respectfully, will promote positive relationships between these organizations and the CAC. Ideally, these relationships could be fostered beyond the work of the RWG.
- The RWG will reach out to the CMA and related professionals will be asked to participate in the working group.



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- The RWG will report back to communities and will create press releases related to the work that it is doing. A revised Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice that promotes reconciliation with Indigenous peoples can be publicized and improve the visibility and reputation of the CAC.

Deliverables for CAC membership

- More equitable collaborations between conservators and source communities based on relationships developed between the CAC and Indigenous communities across the country during the RWG.
- New guidelines on the proper care and maintenance of Indigenous cultural material, giving CAC membership confidence in treating these objects.
- Organizational support for conservators to effectively advocate for treatment decisions and financial resources within their respective institutions.
- Enriched conservation knowledge and content within Canadian collections.
- Increased diversity in the field of conservation and museum practice.
- Increased collaboration with other museum professionals.
- Increased visibility for Conservators, and an improved public image.

Contact Information

Please reach out to Lauren Osmond, Charlotte Parent, and Julia Campbell-Such (RWG Co-Secretaries) via email (rwg.cac.accr@gmail.com) for any further information.



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Appendix 1: Context

Bill C-391 (private members bill which reached the Senate): An Act respecting a national strategy for the repatriation of Indigenous human remains and cultural property, 2018-19

"The strategy [if passed] must include measures that seek to:

- implement a mechanism by which any First Nation, Inuit or Métis community or organization may acquire or reacquire Indigenous human remains or cultural property;
- encourage owners, custodians or trustees of Indigenous human remains or cultural property to return such material to Indigenous peoples and support them in the process;
- support the recognition that preservation of Indigenous human remains and cultural property and of access to that material for educational and ceremonial purposes are principles of equal importance;
- encourage consideration of traditional ways of knowing rather than relying on strict documentary evidence in relation to the repatriation of Indigenous human remains and cultural property; and
- resolve any conflicting claims to Indigenous human remains or cultural property, whether within or between Indigenous communities or organizations, in a manner that is respectful of Indigenous traditional processes and forms of ownership and that allows claimants to be self-represented."

Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action, 2015

- Action #67: "We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Museums Association to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of museum policies and best practices to determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to make recommendations."
- Canadian Museums Association (CMA) has recently announced its Reconciliation Working Group to establish best practice guidelines in museums over the next two years.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), 2007

"Article 11

- Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.
- States shall provide redress through effective mechanisms, which may include restitution, developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples, with respect to their cultural,



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intellectual, religious and spiritual property taken without their free, prior and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs.

Article 12

- Indigenous peoples have the right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect, and have access in privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.
- States shall seek to enable the access and/or repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains in their possession through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with indigenous peoples concerned."

CAC-CAPC Canadian Collections Care Survey: Summary of Results, 2019

- only 38% of 206 museums have plans or policies in place for repatriation
- only 14% of 388 museums loan to originating cultural groups
- "58% of non-Indigenous institutions surveyed indicated that at least 1% of their collections consisted of material originating from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, representing an estimated 6,728,883 items across 207 institutions" (2019, 5)
- the survey highlighted that there is a widespread uncertainty for conservators of how to approach building relationships with Indigenous communities, and how to proceed on issues of repatriation