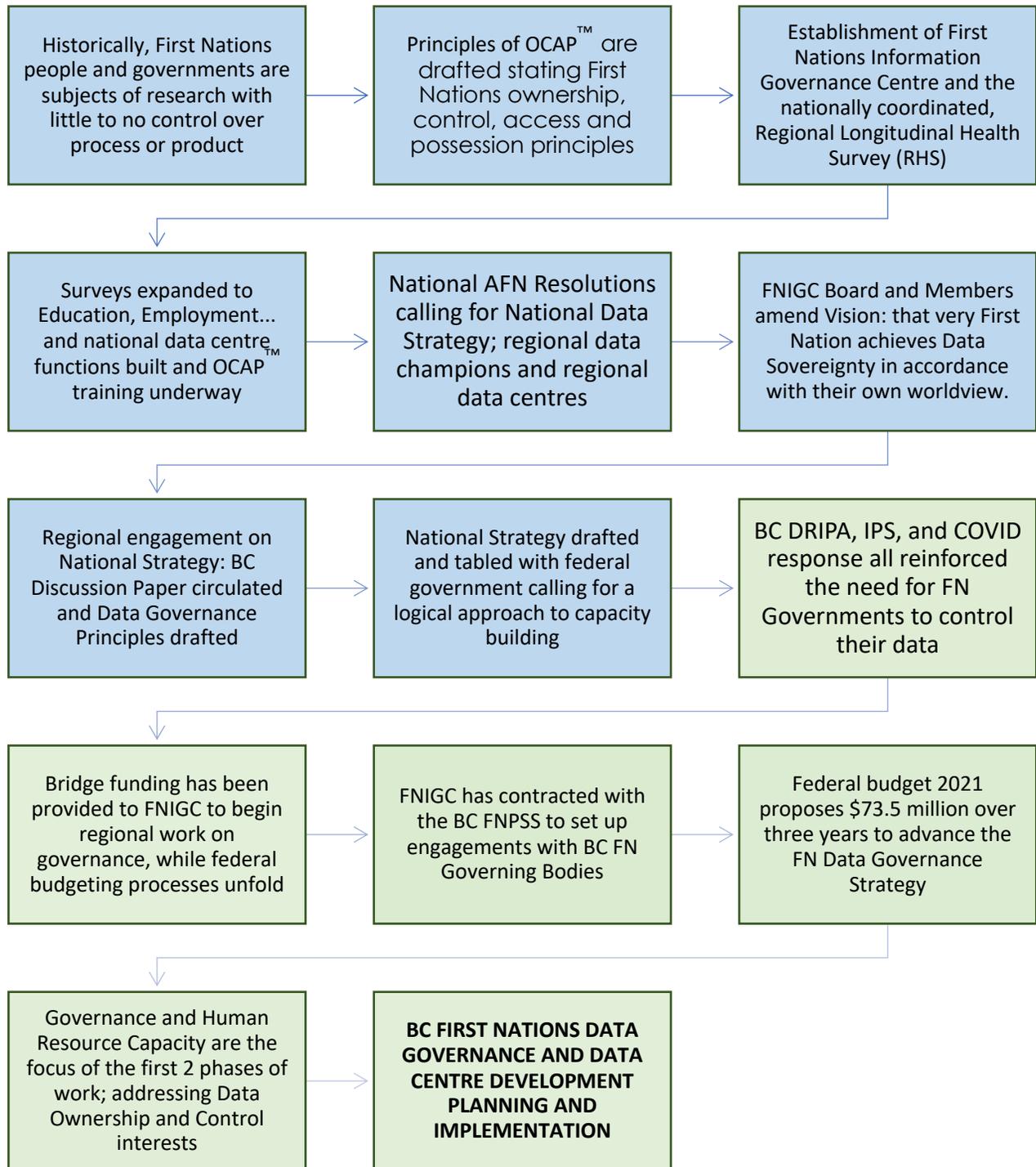


FNIGC: First Nations Governments Collectively Asserting Data Sovereignty
YOU ARE INVITED TO A DISCUSSION ON ASSERTING DATA SOVEREIGNTY



The federal government through Budget 2021, proposes to invest \$73.5 million over three years, starting in 2021-22, to continue work towards the development and implementation of a First Nations Data Governance Strategy. BC Leadership have been lobbying for this data strategy for years and with input from leadership across the country, the First Nations Information Governance Centre drafted this strategy and they are now ready to start their engagement on its implementation!

The ***United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*** acknowledges Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination, and to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, ***as well as their right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over these.*** With any sovereign authority also comes the right and responsibility to exercise jurisdiction in relation to data and information governance – to protect and govern all aspects of their citizens and Nation's information and data. Taking ownership over intellectual property is an act of sovereignty.

In September 2020 the ***Office of the BC Office of the BC Human Rights Commissioner*** released the report, ***Disaggregated demographic data collection in British Columbia: The grandmother perspective. This report recommends the development of a data governance model with Indigenous governments in support of self-determination and sovereignty.*** And, in November 2020 and February 2021, the final reports of the ***"In Plain Sight"*** reports were released. These reports note that current Indigenous data governance processes need to evolve to align with the latest principles in Indigenous data governance.

BC First Nations Governments (Indigenous Governing Bodies) are at various stages of asserting data sovereignty, building data governance capacity and assuming responsibility for data, records and information management. In 2016 and again in 2018, they called for the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) to establish a national ***First Nations Data Governance Strategy***, to include the development of ***Regional Information Governance Centres with statistical capacity*** to provide their governments with timely access to quality data. This work is underway and you are being invited to begin developing the structure of, and standards for this institution. ***The First Nations Information Governance Centre wants to know what your data priorities are.***

In the early stages of Strategy implementation, a BC First Nations Data Governance Champion Team will be formed to enable BC First Nations governments to implement the national First Nations Data Governance strategy. This strategy will support First Nations governments with retaining ownership and control of their data. BC First Nations asked for this work to be done and now we'd like to hear how it can be tailored to better meet your data needs and data priorities.

WHAT are these Engagement Sessions about? The sessions will include background on work to date and provide you with an opportunity to strengthen BCFN Data Governance Principles initially articulated in 2019 (see below) and help shape a future political resolution that will provide a clear, collective mandate to the BC Data Champions Team. The FNIGC will also discuss functions of a BCFN data centre; they want to learn more about your data governance needs and priorities. This will help the BC Data Governance Champion Team to focus on the things that matter most in BC in the early phases of implementation.

WHO is invited: Community leadership (e.g. chiefs, councillors, leaders) within each First Nation and language group in BC and their senior administrator or data lead

WHEN are the sessions: Visit www.fnps.ca for details.

WHERE will this take place: We will be meeting online over Zoom and by phone, as necessary. Please let us know you'll be joining us by registering in advance. Once you register, you will receive a Zoom link, along with dial-in telephone numbers. If you are new to Zoom, please check out this tutorial at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bildwvO8x-A>.

HOW to learn more: For a link to a video on Indigenous Data Sovereignty, a formal letter of invitation from the FNIGC and all of the background materials on the data governance strategy and this engagement process, visit www.fnps.ca.

If you would like to participate in this discussion, but cannot attend on this date, please let us know at fnogs@fnps.ca. Following this first round of engagement, if necessary additional engagement sessions will be scheduled.

A series of short webinars on Data Sovereignty, Data Governance and Information Management will also be held over the coming months and we will invite you to these sessions as they are planned.

If you are unable to participate in the engagements, please let us know and we will provide you with another means of providing input.

Join the conversation!

Data Sovereignty is about taking control of our identities as distinct societies, with unique languages and cultures; taking ownership of our intellectual property!

Indigenous nations closing the gap between who they are and who they want to be, by setting priorities and measuring what matters.

BC FIRST NATIONS COMMON DATA GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES ASSERTING OWNERSHIP AND TAKING CONTROL

The First Nations Information Governance Centre envisions that every First Nation will achieve data sovereignty in alignment with its distinct world view. (Ratified by FNIGC's Board of Directors on June 6, 2018)

The following principles reflect the starting point in BC First Nations' collective assertion of Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

- OCAP™ principles will apply to all Indigenous data; the principles will be further defined by each Nation as they assume data governance.
- Data governance is an act of sovereignty; each Indigenous Nation has a right to govern the data that relates to their identity as a distinct society; their historic and contemporary identity.
- BC is home to a great diversity of Indigenous languages with 34 unique Indigenous languages currently being spoken; these languages consist of approximately 90 dialects. Language is central to identity; Indigenous Nations assert ownership over their intellectual property. Each Nation's respective language and the songs, stories, dances, images and any and all concepts relating to their particular cultural identity, is the property of that Nation.
- Each Indigenous language group is recognized as having the authority to protect and control the use and treatment of their respective intellectual property, according to their own laws and policies.
- Data governance, research and information management are functions of governance; institutions will govern data according to standards set by the Nation, or Nations collectively; these standards will meet or exceed generally acceptable standards for the protection of culturally sensitive data, protection of privacy and preservation of human dignity.
- The First Nations Health Authority will apply the Seven Directives to data governance activities, ensuring that data governance, surveillance and information management agreements, policies and procedures align with the Vision, Values, Principles and other governance standards set by BC First Nations.
- Indigenous Data Governance principles will apply to Indigenous data in the possession of federal and provincial governments and public institutions such as universities and colleges and their faculty, and will extend to research activities undertaken by these institutions or affiliated individuals.
- Indigenous Data Governance principles will apply to First Nations organizations and individuals as well as non-governmental organizations providing services to Indigenous people.
- Data with a focus on First Nations people, generated through surveys and surveillance activities, will be governed by BC First Nations collectively.
- Data sharing agreements will acknowledge data ownership.

- National surveys will be designed in such a way as to first and foremost, answer the questions that are relevant to the regions at the time of design, with a limited number of national questions common to all regions being included once regional priorities are met.
- First Nations community, cultural and content experts will be included in the design of national surveys.
- National surveys will be phased out over time and replaced with Community-driven, Nation-based surveys and census instruments, enabling longitudinal data analysis.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize that each First Nation community is a government unto itself and that each community is also a part of a broader Indigenous Nation collective expressing ownership over identity and asserting inherent rights. A national Strategy must recognize the sovereignty of each Nation. Development and implementation of a national Strategy must be driven by the Leadership in each region.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy will provide recommendations on how to transform reporting and accountability from the inside-out, Community-driven and Nation-based, not from the top-down as is currently the case.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must assert that the federal and provincial governments must relate to First Nations governments not as stakeholders, indigenous peoples, interest groups... but on a Nation to Nation and government to government basis. Further, the parameters for opening indigenous data by any level of government or Crown Corporation will be defined by the Nations, collectively, in absence of assertions of control being made by individual Nations.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize that Nations must have access to data from many sources and they must also control the access of others to their data, including data that is being held by external bodies and other governments; data is a critical resource of governance.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize the need to measure the performance of federal and provincial governments in meeting their commitments to First Nations governments.
- A national strategy must help sort out which level of government is responsible for reporting on what, to whom, when and in what form.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize the need to measure the commitments made by First Nations governments to their citizens, as well.
- Fundamentally, a national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize the need to transform the way that individual health and wellness is measured at a population level.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must recognize the need to hold accountable, organizations that are funded to support First Nations governments politically or technically.

- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must include a request for sustainable, sufficient and predictable funding to support all aspects of data governance and information management and technology to meet the needs, as defined by each region.
- A national First Nations Data Governance Strategy must include a regional accountability framework to manage mandates and facilitate reporting to Leaders.