



## Statement on the Role of Aboriginal Investigators in Research Projects

### Purpose

This statement outlines the responsibilities and expectations regarding Aboriginal investigators involved in research projects where Aboriginal communities are overrepresented. It emphasises the importance of shared responsibility and collaboration among all researchers involved.

### Policy

Aboriginal investigators play a crucial role in ensuring that research projects involving Aboriginal communities are conducted ethically and respectfully. However, it has been observed that non-Aboriginal researchers often place an excessive burden on Aboriginal researchers to provide cultural guidance and insight. This practice is not only unsustainable but can also lead to significant challenges in the research process.

### Key Points

**Shared Responsibility:** All researchers, regardless of their background, have a responsibility to engage with Aboriginal communities and understand cultural contexts. The expectation should not solely fall on Aboriginal researchers to provide cultural guidance; instead, all team members must actively participate in this process.

**Cultural Competence Training:** Non-Aboriginal researchers should seek cultural competence training to better understand the historical, social, and cultural dynamics of Aboriginal communities. This training will help ensure that they approach their work with respect and awareness.

**Collaboration and Consultation:** Research projects should be designed collaboratively, involving Aboriginal researchers and community members from the outset. This ensures that Aboriginal voices are integrated into the research process and that cultural considerations are embedded in the project's framework.



**Respect for Aboriginal Knowledge:** Aboriginal researchers possess unique insights and knowledge that are vital to the success of research projects. Their expertise should be recognised and valued as equal to that of their non-Aboriginal counterparts, and they should not be seen merely as cultural informants.

**Equitable Workload:** The workload associated with cultural guidance should be equitably distributed among all researchers involved in the project. This approach promotes a more balanced and collaborative research environment, reducing the pressure on Aboriginal researchers.

### **Conclusion**

To promote ethical and effective research practices, it is essential to recognize the shared responsibility of all researchers involved in projects with Aboriginal communities. By fostering collaboration, respect, and understanding, we can all ensure that research is conducted in a way that benefits both the communities involved and the research goals. Please also refer to our Reference group policy document.