

# Policy on Yukon First Nation Cultural Centres and Museums

April 2024



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# Policy on Yukon First Nation Cultural Centres and Museums

## INTRODUCTION

In the Yukon, First Nation cultural centres and museums protect, preserve, and interpret our tangible and intangible culture, living heritage, traditions and history. A network of cultural institutions fulfils this role. Fostering and supporting a culture of collaboration and innovation is therefore central to our success.

This policy is intended to guide Yukon government's provision of funding and support services to the sector. It also clarifies the government-to-government relationship with Yukon First Nations and the cultural centres they operate, distinct from its relationship to not-for-profit and municipal museums. Beyond funding and support, the policy is intended to provide a shared vision and direction.

Yukon government is steadfast in its fulfilment of its obligations under the Yukon First Nation Final Agreements and its enduring commitment to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Its approach to reconciliation reflects many of the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including its resolute and unequivocal commitment to the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in cultural spaces.

By honouring and celebrating places, events and cultures, we encourage learning, healing and reconciliation, teaching, appreciation, and understanding. Through sharing, we bring current and future generations and communities together.

Yukon government has a deep appreciation for the value of Yukon's diverse cultural heritage and is committed to a policy that reflects the realities and vision of the people who are dedicated to its protection, preservation and interpretation.

The Yukon government endorses and supports diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusivity in First Nation cultural centre and museum operations and programs. We will continue to build on the culture of collaboration and innovation in order to share the Yukon's stories from as many perspectives as possible.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy on First Nation Cultural Centres and Museums is to:

- Provide a framework to support, financially and through advisory services, the long-term sustainability and innovation for First Nation cultural centres and museums in the Yukon.
- Facilitate the stewardship of moveable heritage resources, including cultural belongings, held in public trust by First Nation cultural centres and museums for current and future generations, including Yukoners and visitors to the Yukon.
- Promote and share Yukon's diverse cultures and moveable heritage resources.
- Enhance the capability of First Nation cultural centres and museums to present visitors with an appreciation of the Yukon's diverse culture through exhibits and programs.

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- Enable First Nation cultural centres and museums to serve as foundations for memory, story and continuity of a community's culture and heritage, places of healing and cultural strengthening and resurgence.

### VISION

Yukon First Nation cultural centres and museums collectively narrate rich and diverse stories through tangible and intangible cultural heritage contributing to healthy and vibrant communities. In the spirit of truth and reconciliation, these places uphold and share the various experiences of Yukon people and promote community understanding of history and culture.

### POLICY

#### **Policy Statement**

The Yukon government will invest in strong, independent Yukon First Nation cultural centres and museums and provide support services, that respect self-determination, to share Yukon's stories within a unique northern context of reconciliation for Yukoners and visitors.

#### **Eligibility**

The following are eligible to apply for funding and receive support services:

1. Yukon First Nation governments or organizations with a mandate to preserve and support Indigenous culture and heritage.
2. Incorporated not-for-profit Yukon museums.
3. Municipal museums.

Incorporated not-for-profit Yukon museums and municipal museums must:

- a. Be in good standing as a not-for-profit organization under the Societies Act (if applicable).
- b. Provide services to the public year-round.
- c. Employ the equivalent of one full-time or part-time paid staff.
- d. Have a current three to five-year strategic plan or business plan.
- e. Have policies for key museum functions including collections management (for collecting museums) and exhibitions and programming.

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## **Investment**

1. The Yukon government shall provide operational funding assistance and access to project funding for one cultural centre per Yukon First Nation respecting obligations in the Umbrella Final agreement and Yukon First Nations final agreements.
2. Incorporated not-for-profit and municipal museums that meet the definition in this policy and requirements above are eligible to apply for operational and project funding.
3. Funding decisions will be made in a timely manner to enable First Nation cultural centres and museums to operate without disruption and to recruit and retain personnel.
4. The Yukon government shall collaboratively conduct a review of funding programs and needs of the sector at least every five years.
5. The Yukon government shall make efforts to align capital investments with federal government programs and encourage First Nation cultural centres and museums to access federal funding as well as territorial funding.
6. The Yukon government shall provide access to project funding to be used for a range of projects relevant to First Nation cultural centre and museum purposes and mandates.
7. The Yukon government shall provide a funding stream for repatriation that can be accessed by Yukon First Nations to facilitate repatriation.

## **Capacity Building and Support Services:**

1. The Yukon government shall collaboratively conduct a needs assessment at least every five years to determine what forms of training and supports are required by First Nation cultural centres and museums.
2. Based on the results of the assessment, Yukon government will integrate the findings to update program delivery.
3. Yukon government will review, and update as required the Standards for Yukon Museums and First Nation Cultural Centres and provide support services, including advice, reference materials, and hands-on support, to assist in meeting them:
  - a. Governance
  - b. Community relationships
  - c. Security and facilities

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- d. Collections stewardship
- e. Exhibitions and programming

## Recommendations for Strategy and Actions

In *Creative Potential: Advancing the Yukon's Creative and Cultural Industries*, Action 2.2.2: states: “Develop a Yukon Cultural Centres and Museums Policy to establish the vision and direction for the Yukon’s museums recognizing the distinct role that First Nation cultural centres play in sharing culture.” This policy provides a foundation for cultural centres and museums to develop specific strategies should they wish to.

## Amendment, Modification or Variation

To ensure this policy remains up-to-date, the Yukon government commits to reviewing this policy every five years.

## APPENDIX A

### Definitions

#### **Business Plan:**

A written document that describes your organization’s current status and plans for two to five years. It identifies future opportunities and includes the financial, operational and marketing strategies to achieve your goals.

#### **Cultural Belongings:**

Cultural belongings include ancestral remains and objects of cultural significance as well as associated information: research, photographs, works of art, maps, archival documents, songs, plants, seeds, language recordings, digital material, and any other information related to the traditional knowledge, cultures, histories, and intellectual property of Indigenous Peoples (CMA 2022)

#### **First Nation Cultural Centre:**

In this policy, a First Nation cultural centre means a Yukon First Nation cultural centre that offers a safe space for community members first, and real and virtual visitors second to learn about, experience, strengthen and share tangible and intangible cultural heritage including cultural belongings, Indigenous languages and culture, to support healing and cultural resurgence, and to explore Indigenous perspectives on history and culture.

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### **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH):**

The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. (UNESCO)

### **Moveable Heritage Resource:**

Means moveable non-documentary works or assemblies of works of people or of nature that are of scientific or cultural value for their archaeological, palaeontological, ethnological, prehistoric, historic or aesthetic features, including moveable structures and objects.

### **Museum:**

Museums are a not-for-profit, physical institution incorporated under the Yukon Societies Act, or governed by a municipal or First Nation government, that collects, conserves, researches, exhibits, and interprets tangible and intangible Yukon heritage. Museums are open to the public, accessible and inclusive, and fulfil a valuable role in society for the benefit of local communities, Yukoners, and diverse physical and virtual visitors.

### **Services to the public year-round:**

On-line and/or on-site services are available to the public 12 months a year or upon request. Schedules and contact number for reservations are all up front and clearly displayed (website, building, brochure and advertising).

### **Strategic Plan:**

Clearly written document that describes an organization's mandate, its short, mid, and long-term goals or objectives, and priority actions to take. A strategic plan includes a timeframe for its execution, and identifies who, within the organization, or what outside agent will take responsibility for the completeness of the actions necessary to realize goals and objectives.