

# OLA Indigenous Advisory Council

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### **Mandate:**

The purpose of the OLA Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) is to:

- Promote the importance and relevance of Indigenous matters within the Library sector.
- Develop an OLA advocacy strategy to strengthen First Nations Public Libraries (FNPLs) in Ontario. This includes raising awareness about the opportunities and challenges of accessing library services for Indigenous populations.
- Ensure communities are aware of funding opportunities and other supports to sustain and/or establish libraries on reserve.
- Act in an advisory manner to the OLA Board, Councils and Committees.

The Council will work in a collaborative, reciprocal and strategic manner with key partners<sup>1</sup> across Ontario and Canada to encourage and strengthen libraries that provide services to Indigenous Peoples.

### **Responsibilities/Objectives:**

The Council will:

- Identify resources required to develop and support an advocacy strategy with specific reference to Indigenous Peoples' access to library services.
- Provide perspective and advice on culturally sensitive and respectful approaches and strategies to support this initiative.
- Develop strategies, recommendations and directions for consideration by the OLA Board.

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<sup>1</sup> Partners of the IAC include but are not limited to OLA Divisions and Committees, [Federation of Ontario Public Libraries \(FOPL\)](#), [Ontario Library Service \(OLS\)](#), [National Indigenous Knowledge & Language Alliance \(NIKLA/ANCLA\)](#), [Canadian Federation of Library Associations \(CFLA-FCAB\) Indigenous Matters Committee \(IMC\)](#), and the [International Federation of Library Associations \(IFLA\) Indigenous Matters Standing Committee](#).

- Ensure that all OLA spaces are safe and comfortable for Indigenous people participating.
- Create and develop relationships with other organizations to avoid duplication of effort, and to strengthen an overall strategy.
- Increase awareness to and for Indigenous library users and library service providers.
- Consider supporting or advancing candidates for Division and/or Board positions during OLA elections.
- Liaise and support the Indigenous Stream Planner for Super Conference.
- Maintain and administer the Spirit of Reconciliation Award and other funding supports.

**Deliverables:**

- Create an advocacy strategy to strengthen First Nation Public Libraries in Ontario, with a specific focus on advocating for funding, sponsorships and donations.
- Maintain a centralized, online repository of resources and research about First Nation Public Libraries and issues of interest to Indigenous people.
- Promote networking and professional development opportunities for the First Nation Public Library community.
- Regular reports to the OLA Board.

**Composition:**

The intent of this Council is to represent Indigenous Voices. Thus, no less than 50% of the council membership shall be Indigenous. Membership must also represent people from libraries that serve First Nation Communities with the remainder representing specific perspectives and skills sets as follows:

- Representative from the school library/education sector (k-12 or post-secondary)
- Representative from the OLA Board (OLA President or Designate)
- Representative with any or all of the following skill sets: advocacy, communications, research expertise.
- OLA Executive Director (ex-officio)

The Council shall appoint the Chair every two years, and to be approved by the OLA Board.

First Nation Public Library workers have a standing invitation to attend IAC meetings.

**Resources and budget:**

- Ongoing support from the OLA Executive Director and the OLA Advocacy and Research Officer

- OLA office staff support for virtual meeting arrangements as needed; maintaining a public First Nation Public Libraries web page on the OLA website; posting/archiving of materials on OLA website
- Meeting space as needed (1-2 times per year)
- Funds for expenses related to travel and food for in-person meetings
- Funds for special projects (e.g., OLA Library Day at Queen’s Park, special conferences).

The Indigenous Advisory Council must submit a budget for consideration and based on a work-plan by end of July annually to OLA staff.

**Timelines**

- Group members can expect a virtual meeting quarterly at minimum or as needed , with an annual full day meeting . OLA covers meeting expenses incurred
- The OLA Indigenous Advisory Council may report to the OLA Board at least once per year and group members may be required to join a divisional council meeting if requested (teleconference).

**Type of Committee:**

- Standing Committee** (responsible for a specific program or function)
- Task Force** (time-limited tasks on a specific topic)
- Action Groups** (development of a limited program or activity)

**Term of Appointment:**

The term for OLA Indigenous Advisory Council members generally runs for a period of 2 years, with the option to extend up to an additional 2 years at the discretion of the OLA Board. Member terms overlap to ensure knowledge transfer and consistency. Council members are recruited/appointed from the OLA membership at large, or by special invitation as required. Membership with the IAC begins and ends at the annual Indigenous Luncheon at Super Conference.

A Chair will be appointed every two years from within the committee. The Chair is responsible for coordinating the agenda, facilitating meetings, ensuring that any portfolios are assigned, liaising with the OLA Executive Director and reporting to the OLA Board.

