

**McMaster Indigenous Research Institute**  
**Director**  
**Terms of Reference**

**1. THE McMASTER INDIGENOUS RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

The McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI) is positioned to be a world-class facility recognized for its leadership in the field of Indigenous research. The establishment of MIRI acknowledges that Indigenous Knowledge is valid scientific knowledge, which is supported by unique and culturally diverse Indigenous research methodologies and pedagogies. MIRI is a trusted resource that undertakes and facilitates research initiatives with multiple partners to build on and enhance existing relationships between McMaster and community networks. MIRI supports interdisciplinary research across the University and serves as a gateway to partnership building with Indigenous research collaborators in the Faculties of Business, Engineering, Health Sciences, Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences, as well as for the University's other institutes and centres.

Systemic incompatibilities between Western and Indigenous knowledge and ethics have been a barrier to research within an Indigenous Knowledge framework. The Institute facilitates and promotes increased visibility of Indigenous Knowledge and methodologies, creates space for dialogue between Western research approaches and Indigenous research collaborations, and supports both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, ethics boards, and decision makers in the area of Indigenous research. The overarching priority is to foster research excellence and best practices for all Indigenous related research across the university.

**2. ROLE OF DIRECTOR**

The MIRI Director will be the chief scientific and administrative officer of the Institute as well as its principal spokesperson to academic and Indigenous communities. The incumbent will provide leadership and mentorship for faculty and students with an interest in undertaking research regarding Indigenous peoples and will work to collaborate with regional Indigenous community leaders, stakeholders and actors. It is expected that the Director will possess an in-depth understanding of the pluralities of Indigenous-centric values and world views as well as ways of knowing or epistemologies. The Director will facilitate collaboration with the McMaster Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholarly community and advocate MIRI to prominence locally, nationally and internationally. The Director's activities will be supported by a staffed Research Coordinator.

The Director will advance engaged scholarship and leadership in Indigenous research serving as a convener with excellent organizational skills, with the ability to bring a diverse coalition of actors and leaders together while adhering to principles of self-determination, such as OCAP principles (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) articulating a compelling interdisciplinary vision that is inclusive of diverse Indigenous cultures, peoplehood and polities.

### **3. QUALIFICATIONS**

The MIRI Director will have a PhD in a relevant academic discipline and a scholarly record in any area of Indigenous Studies or any discipline related to the area of Indigenous research. S/he requires a proven track record in research funding, dissemination and publication of research results. The successful candidate will also have a well-documented research relationship with their own Nation, host community or Indigenous organizations; and will be expected to have an active externally-funded and internationally-recognized research program, with particular attention to Indigenous knowledges, a comprehensive grasp of both Indigenous and western pedagogies, and ethical engagement with Indigenous communities, organizations, and institutions. This should be evidenced by publications in leading journals and/or presses in their field and/or an expansive record of equivalent recognition weighted to community-led research resulting in the creation of programs and services for Indigenous peoples, Indigenous scholars or IK platforms.

The candidate must also demonstrate the capacity for teaching excellence at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Evidence of excellence in teaching will be demonstrated through teaching accomplishments including mentorship, graduate supervision and training of undergraduates, graduate students, or community members.

The MIRI Director requires an extensive record of inter-personal leadership skills within both academia and Indigenous institutions.

### **4. TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT**

The MIRI Director will be appointed for a term of five years. Reappointments shall be guided by the terms of the ‘McMaster University Procedures for Selecting Department Chairs’.

### **5. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Director will be expected to work closely with McMaster’s Indigenous Education Council Executive, the primary body responsible for promoting and advocating for the advancement of Indigenous education at McMaster; the Academic Director of Indigenous Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences (whose purpose includes overseeing academic programming of Indigenous Knowledge); the Paul R. MacPherson Chair in Indigenous Studies (whose purpose is to further Indigenous research and partnerships); and the Institute Advisory Council (whose purpose is to provide advice to the Director with regard to scientific or scholarly priorities and direction for the Institute). The Director will report to the Vice-President, Research, through a process that adheres to McMaster University ‘Guidelines for the Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups’ and is respectful of Indigenous governance processes and protocols at McMaster.

## **6. DUTIES**

The MIRI Director will foster a healthy climate within the Institute and the general academic community for the conduct of Indigenous research scholarship and services, a climate that is inclusive and supports equitable treatment and in which procedures are open and visible.

### **Research Leadership**

The Director is responsible for providing Indigenous research leadership which will reflect various processes of engagement with the McMaster community, Indigenous regional community representatives and synthesis of various documentation authored by the Indigenous scholarly community over 25 years. The Director will be a team builder, one who is able to motivate others and add value through collaboration and collegiality. Areas of focus include but are not limited to:

- a.) Raising awareness, nationally and internationally, networking with research funding agencies, and utilizing one's standing as a leader to educate and advance Indigenous and non-Indigenous pedagogies
- b.) Convening, emphasizing and supporting community capacity building and research priorities among Indigenous scholarly communities, networks, actors and leaders
- c.) Promoting and fostering community engaged scholarship, innovation, collaboration and partnership
- d.) Enhancing existing research infrastructure at McMaster
- e.) Building sustainable Indigenous research infrastructure

### **Administrative Leadership**

The Director is responsible for providing administrative leadership, which will include the following areas:

- a.) Leading strategic planning for the Institute
- b.) Overseeing the proper discharge of administrative duties of the Institute including supervising personnel, financial management and operations