

If we take care of the land, it will take care of us

PRESENTATION OF THE FIRST NATIONS-FEDERAL PILOT JOINT WORKING GROUP ON GUARDIANS

First Nations' National Guardians Gathering 2019

MARCH 12-13, 2019
VANCOUVER, BC

INDIGENOUS
LEADERSHIP
INITIATIVE



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

Canada 



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The Story So Far...

Indigenous Nations across Canada have been stewards and Guardians of their respective territories since time immemorial. It is a sacred responsibility to care for the lands, waters and the species that inhabit them. Indigenous Nations reclaiming their authority and jurisdiction over these lands and waters presents an opportunity to formalize and express this responsibility through initiatives like Guardians. This concept is not new – many Nations have been building their own systems of guardianship, some for decades. Some modern Guardian programs that were formalized early on include the Haida Watchmen, Mi'kmaq fisheries Guardians and the Innu Nation Environmental Guardian program.

Guardians are the “moccasins and mukluks on the ground” in Indigenous territories. They play a vital role in collecting and promoting intergenerational sharing of traditional Indigenous knowledge and incorporating it into decision-making at all levels of territorial governance. They help build capacity to engage with other land users, development proponents, and governments, thus strengthening decision-making. Guardians' specific priorities must be, and are determined at, the individual community level and can include monitoring ecological health, maintaining cultural sites, protecting sensitive areas and species, interpreting culture and heritage aspects for visitors, and contributing to land and marine planning and management.

After holding the first national workshop with Guardians from across Canada in Squamish, BC, with partners, in February 2014, three key priorities were identified:

- 1) Developing a better understanding and inventory of on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs across Canada;
- 2) Increasing opportunities for indigenous stewardship practitioners in Canada to network and share experiences, program information, training resources, strategies and methodologies; and,
- 3) Developing a business case to support stewardship programs to better reach financial self-sufficiency and develop new and enduring partnerships.

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) recognized that the time was right to extend the reach and impact of Indigenous Guardians right across Canada, and over the past four years has been at the forefront of advocating sustained support and national recognition of their importance.

A supportive resolution was passed by the Assembly of First Nations at the Special Chiefs Assembly in Gatineau in December 2015. The AFN National Chief, Perry Bellegarde, asked the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) to explore how to advance the concept of a national approach to Guardians, which led to the development of the process whereby ILI explored how the Government of Canada could become a partner at the national level. These efforts included hosting a Gathering in October 2016 of almost 200 Indigenous Guardians and leaders in Ottawa, ON, where the following vision for a National Indigenous Guardians Network was expressed:

Aspiring to catalyze, promote, support, connect and expand Indigenous Guardians initiatives across Canada, this vision empowers Indigenous Nations, governments, and our communities to honour and fulfil our cultural responsibilities to our homelands and to enable a true Nation-to-Nation partnership with the Government of Canada and provincial and territorial governments on responsible territorial land and marine stewardship.

Persuaded by the power of this vision, the Government of Canada's Budget 2017 committed \$25 million over five years, starting in 2017–18, to support a pilot Indigenous Guardians Initiative to promote Indigenous leadership in responsible environmental stewardship, sustainable development, and the management of natural resources in Indigenous territories. The ILI was asked by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada to play a leadership role in developing the pilot initiative. The ILI is committed to ensuring that the design of the Network and the associated pilot is developed and implemented in the spirit of a Nation-to-Nation relationship between the Indigenous Nations in Canada and the Government of Canada.

The initial vision for the formation of the Network and the associated funding was to ensure a robust participation process with Indigenous Nations; to strengthen that broad participation; and to sustain the original momentum for a model of genuine partnership with the federal government in the formation of the Network itself. Notably, the ILI ensured input from established Guardians across Canada by hosting a completely funded National Indigenous Guardians Network Workshop, May 23-24, 2018 in Ottawa.

The participants at the May 2018 workshop articulated a common view that the Network will formalize an existing and growing grassroots movement within Indigenous communities across Canada taking up responsibility for lands and marine stewardship for the benefit of all Canadians. Further, it will enable a Nation-based model of self-determination and reconciliation premised on a shared understanding of jurisdiction (responsibility), decision-making (authority) and respect (reverence) for Mother Earth.

Participants acknowledged that Indigenous Peoples have had, and continue to play, a significant role in creating, protecting and monitoring high conservation values and landscapes throughout Canada. Concurrently, governments were reminded by two seminal reports *We Rise Together* and *Canada's Conservation Vision* from the Pathway to Canada Target 1 project, of the reality that Indigenous Peoples play a critical role in meeting national and international commitments to biodiversity conservation and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In September 2018, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the ILI created the First Nations-Federal Pilot Joint Working Group for Guardians (JWG) to breathe life into the partnership contemplated in the Budget 2017 announcement.

The Indigenous caucus of the JWG is made up of an experienced group of Indigenous Knowledge Keepers from across the country who volunteered at the May 2018 workshop to help advance the work of building a National Indigenous Guardians Network. There are eight Indigenous members of the JWG, four federal members, and a number of ex-officio members from each of the partners to help guide the work.

This should be noted: a year ago ECCC applied the "distinctions-based" approach to the Guardians pilot (a result of one of the "Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples") which resulted in the \$25 million being divided among First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

Over the past five months, the JWG has had three, three-day long face-to-face meetings (two in Ottawa and one in Halifax), in addition to many conference calls and emails. Their work, guided by agreed-upon terms of reference (ToR), included determining:

- a training and education framework
- criteria and eligibility for future funding allotments to Guardians initiatives
- a proposed interim structure for the Network
- possible approaches to evaluation and developing the business case, and
- a continuing role for a new JWG

This will ensure the long-term future of a robust Indigenous-led National Indigenous Guardians Network, in addition to resources to support the expansion of Guardians initiatives in every Indigenous community and region that indicates an interest in developing one.

The First Nations' National Guardians Gathering in March 2019 in Vancouver is the culmination of this stage of the work – the partnership of ILI with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to develop the Network and present the JWG's efforts to a Gathering of Chiefs, leaders and, of course, Guardians for consideration. The budget is being stretched to provide travel and accommodation for as many participants from First Nations as possible to attend. The JWG is very pleased to be holding the Gathering in Vancouver. It is a way to honour the incredible trailblazing work of existing Guardians in what is now known as British Columbia.

Given the collective experience over the past several months, it continues to be the shared view of members of the JWG that Guardian initiatives will create new employment futures for many talented Indigenous youth and formalize meaningful positive roles for active community members rooted in their cultures and fulfilling their cultural responsibilities. As such, this work makes a clear and tangible contribution to all elements of the Government of Canada's strategic agenda and will produce concrete and wide-ranging positive results on the ground for all Canadians.



Members of the First Nations-Federal Pilot Joint Working Group on Guardians

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Terms of Reference

INDIGENOUS COMMITMENT

"The love of the land, water and people are at the heart of our responsibility to establish Indigenous Guardian initiatives. As Indigenous place-based people we understand this reciprocal relationship is what sustains us, therefore we must guard the resources to maintain the sacred balance of life."

Pilot Joint Working Group (JWG)

ECCC COMMITMENT

To partner on the Indigenous Guardians Pilot Initiative in a manner that recognizes its Indigenous leadership and reflects the unique rights, responsibilities, and perspectives of First Nations, through a respectful and effective engagement process that applies to the extent possible the *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*.

PURPOSE

Through the efforts of the Indigenous Leadership Initiative an initial pilot investment of \$25 million was committed in the federal 2017 budget for Indigenous Guardians of which \$9.5 million was dedicated to First Nations. In 2018-19, \$1.9 million of the \$9.5 million was distributed by the Government of Canada to make early investments to a number of First Nations guardians projects. At the time of writing (December 5, 2018), retention of \$2.8 million remains with the Government of Canada for administration.

At the time of writing (December 5, 2018), \$7.6 million are available to fund First Nations guardians' initiatives (between 2019-2022).

The case to advance the long-term National Indigenous Guardians Network will be informed by the measurements and results of the First Nations portion of the Pilot investment.

1. The JWG will work to help realize a vision of a National Indigenous Guardians Network which includes:
 - catalyzing, promoting, supporting, connecting and expanding Indigenous Guardian initiatives across Canada as a means of empowering Indigenous Nations, governments, and communities to honour and fulfil cultural and spiritual responsibilities to homelands.

- reinforcing and strengthening the connection between Indigenous Youth, Elders and Knowledge Keepers.
 - enabling a true Nation-to-Nation partnership with the Government of Canada on responsible lands, water and ice stewardship.
2. The JWG will organize a National Indigenous Guardians Gathering and develop for consideration, at that event, a path forward in order to launch the Network so it can be operative by March 2019; and will make decisions on process, criteria, evaluation and the ongoing distribution of funds to support Indigenous Guardians programs for the life of the Pilot Program.
 3. To continue developing a proposal and budget to enhance the economic, cultural, spiritual, and environmental case; to advance a long-term honorable partnership to financially support Indigenous Guardians and their professional recognition across Canada.

COMPOSITION

1. The JWG will be composed of eight Indigenous Guardian knowledge keepers from across the country and four Government of Canada's representatives from relevant departments and a limited number of agreed upon ex-officio members.
2. The JWG will be co-chaired by an Indigenous Guardian knowledge keeper and an ECCC representative.
3. Alternates are not contemplated. The co-chairs will ensure consistency of the participants to the JWG (an Annex will be appended to these Terms of Reference listing active members).
4. The co-chairs will consider requests for self-financed observers as appropriate.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The JWG's responsibility is to inform and propose the framework for the creation of the Network; therefore at this time:

Members will seek to:

1. Work together and maintain respectful, positive, transparent, and cooperative relationships to achieve shared goals and collective commitments.
2. Improve knowledge and understanding of the Indigenous Guardians movement and Network, through open engagement and dialogue.
3. Recognize and reflect the diverse and evolving relationships between First Nations and the Crown.
4. Attend planned meetings and be adequately prepared to engage in informed discussion.
5. Table documents in a manner that permits adequate advance review by all members, wherever possible.
6. Avoid unilateral actions or initiatives that ought to be brought to the JWG.

Co-chairs will:

1. Review and approve meeting agendas prior to their circulation.
2. Provide coordination, leadership, and guidance during meetings; and seek consensus and dispute resolution, as needed.

Ex-officios will:

1. Participate, provide input and generally support the work of the JWG.

The JWG may:

1. Invite and rely upon subject matter experts.
2. Create sub-committees as appropriate to accomplish tasks as agreed to in the work plan.

JOINT SECRETARIAT

1. The JWG will be supported by a joint secretariat, made up of ILI and Environment and Climate Change Canada support staff, who will work in partnership as directed by the co-chairs.
2. The Secretariat functions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Drafting reports, papers, and related documents as necessary, under the direction of the co-chairs and resulting from the work of the JWG;
 - b. Developing and circulating an agenda and meeting materials prior to and in advance of each meeting wherever possible;
 - c. Developing Records of Decision (RoD) from each meeting, which will include the date and location of each meeting, attendance, a high-level summary of items discussed, and any decisions/action items;
 - d. Organizing meeting logistics in collaboration with the co-chairs; and,
 - e. Completing other administrative duties as required.

WORK PLAN

1. **Develop** *interim* assessment and eligibility criteria of Indigenous Guardians programs for membership to the Network and funding support (e.g., Tiers 1,2,3, see ILI Discussion Paper); framework for “Indigenous Guardians”, rooted in culture, learning the language, understanding the relationship with land, cultural responsibilities, laws.
2. **Determine** how the remaining pilot funds will be accessed by First Nations and administered by the Network starting April 2019.
3. **Develop** a budget for Year 1 of the Network (Year 2 of pilot funding distribution) and network operational needs.
4. **Develop** effective evaluation methodologies respecting an Indigenous lens, to measure the effectiveness of individual programs and of the Network in serving existing, new, and developing Guardians initiatives.
5. **Develop** models or possible options for the structure of the Network, e.g., a Board with 50/50 membership, a Table of Nations with 50/50 membership, other options (ILI Discussion Paper), and the Terms of Reference of Network, representation, accountability; Regional Networks connected?
6. **Develop** a national training and education curriculum framework for Guardians and Guardian coordinators, informed by inventory of existing programs, with the goal of both designations achieving professional certification in Canada. Careful recognition of unique local and regional approaches to education and training is necessary and will be protected.
7. **Develop** “best practices” process.
8. **Address** data collection.

9. **Continued work towards** proposal and budget for the development of the business case for the long-term and inclusive partnership between Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the Government of Canada on Guardianship in Canada, recognizing that the initial pilot investment.
10. **Ensure** the following are considered and respected in the development of the Network to the extent possible: *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*; UNDRIP (Articles 29, 32 and FPIC); TRC Call to Action 45.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION WITHOUT PREJUDICE

1. Unless otherwise agreed by the JWG, all discussions, papers, and recommendations, draft or otherwise, will be presented on a without prejudice basis, recognizing that members will consult and share information internally within their respective organizations, and that the federal government is subject to the *Access to Information Act*.
2. Issues of confidentiality should be raised at the time and in a manner that avoids creating undue barriers to information sharing or open discussion.

REPORTING

1. The JWG is accountable and will report to the ILI, through Valérie Courtois, Director, and the Minister of ECCC, through Dr. Niall O'Dea, AADM.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

1. Documents, discussions or recommendations of the JWG will not be made public until such time that there is agreement to do so by the JWG.
2. Any communication purporting to speak on behalf of the JWG will be jointly approved by the co-chairs, in advance.
3. The joint secretariat will distribute draft external communications to all members in advance for comment.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

1. In the event of a dispute at the JWG, best efforts will be made to resolve it through the cooperation of all members. Where such a dispute cannot be addressed by the JWG, it will be brought to Valérie Courtois and Dr. O'Dea to whom the JWG is accountable.

Agreed by consensus December 19, 2018



Training and Education: Executive Summary

This discussion paper focuses on the role of the National Network in Guardian training and the future direction for the Network. The proposed questions and suggestions build on the available documentation and work in the existing Guardian programs. Two areas identified as requiring more attention are 1) network development, and 2) Guardian training arrangements – including the question of professional certification. Furthermore, we ask what kind of overall structure and educational components are needed to support effectively programs that: (i) operate at place, culture, and community-specific model levels; (ii) collaborate through sub-regional and regional networks; and, (iii) are supported by the national network.

The document is divided into four main sections to address the following questions:

1. How can a Network benefit local Guardian programs?
2. What is the role of sub-regional and regional networks within the National Network in the training context?
How has regional networking been done so far?
3. How can a National Network benefit local Guardian training? What are the shared features between different training programs?
4. Where next?

The following potential training-related opportunities and benefits exist in national level collaboration:

- Training collaborations between Nations or communities, either to learn from one another or to develop meaningful training programs together.
- Providing a platform, or portal, that compiles and maintains up-to-date information about available training programs and models across the country, including how-to and lessons learned aspects of, for example, network and collaborative training program development, or negotiating and developing memoranda of understanding (MOE) with universities.
- Sharing training materials or models.
- Developing opportunities to cross-pollinate and co-create ideas, knowledge, and practices between and across the Nations.
- Working towards national recognition of Indigenous Guardian training, e.g. by helping to identify critical components needed in both local Indigenous and Western scientific components of the training, such as inclusion of local language, local traditional knowledge, Elder engagement, etc., and that the education is always driven by the Indigenous worldview.

Sub-national networks, in turn, can be beneficial and help cut the cost of training/operations in many ways, for instance, by:

- Helping to strengthen the building of trust and alliances for further collaboration, data sharing, shared logistics, etc.
- Sharing the workload
- Building a larger student body/ the total number of Guardians
- Sharing or decreasing the costs, in general, or pooling resources for specific skills training, especially in Western science.

In operational contexts, collaborative training makes sharing information about observations between the Guardian programs easier and it can make the monitoring more effective. Networking over specific topics can help strengthen the training programs communities are able to offer.

There are currently 30 Guardians programs in place; some provide training only within the community and some collaborate to provide formal training. Some of the training programs rely almost entirely on the local and traditional knowledge, whereas others include Western science to varying degrees in the training, collaborating with post-secondary educational institutions (e.g., Vancouver Island University in British Columbia and St. Mary's University in Nova Scotia) or consulting companies (e.g., Ecotrust and the Firelight Group). Common to all the programs is that they are applied and based on experiential hands-on learning that takes place mostly in the communities. The training is usually provided by Elders and University Lecturers/College Professors, or specialized trainers (e.g., safety consultants, professional biologists, etc.) depending on the topic. Both students and the academic lecturers come to the communities to learn.

A well-designed training program that combines Indigenous and Western science can be a great investment for the communities. The benefits of Guardian programs go well beyond environmental monitoring. Studies show that adding a training component increases the benefits for the communities. According to the *Analysis of the Current and Future Value of Indigenous Guardian Work in Canada's Northwest Territories*, including formal training in Guardian programs would improve the quality of data that Guardians collect (based on both Indigenous and Western knowledge). Furthermore, the *Social Return on Investment (SROI)* calculations in the report indicated that adding a training component in a Guardian program can increase the SROI that is generated from \$2.5 to \$3.0-\$3.7 per dollar invested.

A nationally accepted formal accreditation may be necessary in order to gain broader acceptance and brand recognition for Guardian programs. Accreditation will require shared minimum standards and possibly formal collaboration with post-secondary institutions. The importance of local context in Guardian Programs makes the question of training standards a delicate one. What are our shared values and principles for Guardian training? Having some common national standards (or building blocks) that signify the essence of Guardian programs might make it easier for potential partners or funders to recognize the true value of the programs.

The current training programs focus primarily on training the frontline Guardian practitioners. Communities with more established programs have also identified a number of other needs that have arisen from their daily operations. There is a need for more advanced training to 1) have individuals with sufficient skills to manage the Guardian program (e.g., human resources, budgets, public relations, or data for decision-making and policy development), and 2) analyse the collected data. Data without proper analysis has limited value and Guardian programs need data analysts who understand both Western and Indigenous worldviews.

Other training-related learning opportunities offered by the National Network relate to practicalities of arranging the training: how to select appropriate post-secondary partners; how to approach universities or colleges; how to maintain Indigenous control over the curriculum; what to include in the curriculum, etc.

Questions that must be discussed are found throughout the document. The essential ones relate to these two central issues:

- What role should the Network have in providing direction to Guardian training development?
- Is there a consensus about the need for some degree of standardization?



Eligibility and Assessment Criteria: Executive Summary

Too often, initiatives fail because funds are structured and tools are developed without the critical insights of the day-to-day realities of the people and institutions they aim to support. The First Nations-Federal Pilot Joint Working Group (JWG) wanted to address this by ensuring eligibility and assessment criteria were developed by Guardians for Guardians. Collectively, the JWG members have over 100 years of experience with Guardian initiatives and networks, including managing initiatives on-the-ground. Their experience spans from coast to coast to coast. These people know, from their experiences, the needs of Guardian initiatives in a variety of ecological, social, cultural and economic contexts. Most importantly, the JWG worked in a good way – making offerings, asking for spiritual guidance and expressing gratitude when it was received. Greetings and thanks were offered to the Creator, Elders and ancestors for the gifts they have provided.

The Eligibility and Assessment Criteria Committee was tasked to 1) articulate the Fund goals for First Nations, and 2) develop the fund structure and tools for allocating funds to First Nations Guardian initiatives. From the outset, five principles guided the work:

- Proof of concept: Demonstrate the Indigenous Guardians Pilot Initiative and develop the business case for long-term funding beyond 2022;
- Support a diversity of initiatives: Fund First Nations Guardian Initiatives at all levels of development;
- Create an enabling environment: Focus on enhancing opportunities to access funding of an appropriate scale and duration to demonstrate environmental stewardship and human well-being (social, economic, and cultural);
- Provide a fair and accessible application process: Identify candidate First Nations expressions of interest and proposals that meet the goals of the First Nations portion of the Indigenous Guardians Pilot Initiative;
- Timeliness: Create tools and a process that would allow, in a timely manner, successful applicants to access funds through Contribution Agreements by the end of June 2019 and sooner if possible.

The JWG aimed to be thorough so that selection committee members would have the appropriate information to make difficult decisions on eligibility in the context of limited resources. On the other hand, the application forms and selection process were intentionally kept simple with plenty of guiding questions to support the development of comprehensive proposals.

Fund Goals

The First Nations portion of the Indigenous Guardians Pilot Initiative is intended to support First Nations' Guardian initiatives that propose to achieve the following goals:

Give First Nations greater responsibility and resources to manage their traditional lands and waterways;

- Facilitate partnership with First Nations in monitoring ecological health, maintaining cultural sites, and protecting sensitive areas and species.
- Benefit shared natural and cultural heritage and grow economic and social prosperity.
- Produce measurable change for individual Guardians, First Nation communities, Guardian networks, and Canadians sharing in the bounty and beauty of the lands and waters under their stewardship.

Fund Structure

Three fund categories were developed (see below) and each applicant is asked to self-identify with a Tier based on the capacity and attributes of their initiative. Detailed guidance (not rules) will be provided in the Applicant Guidelines. Applicants are asked to use their best judgement to determine which Tier fits their scenario.



Tiered Funding Framework

Tier 1 – New Initiatives

- 1-year proposals (work to be completed by March 31 of fiscal year funds are awarded in)
- Annual proposal intake. Can reapply multiple years but funding in one year is not a guarantee of funding in a subsequent year. Maximum allocation \$60,000/year/proposal
- Total available for all Tier 1 Guardian groups for 3 years: \$1.8M (\$600,000/yr)

Tier 2 – Established and Emerging Community Initiatives

- 3-year proposals (multi-year)
- Total available for all Tier 2 Guardian groups for 3 years: approximately \$2.9M

Tier 3 – Established and Emerging Network Initiatives

- 3-year proposals (multi-year)
- Total available for all Tier 3 Guardian groups for 3 years: approximately \$2.9M

The committee decided to create an opportunity for 3-year block funding for Tiers 2 & 3 to allow for longer-term Indigenous Guardian initiative planning. We heard from Guardian initiatives' managers that stable funding over a longer period would unlock their initiative's true potential, making it easier to maintain staff, conduct their monitoring and research, and work through all seasons. Three-year block funding also provides a greater level of certainty making it easier to leverage in order to access secondary funds. Consequently, there will only be one in-take for Tiers 2 & 3.

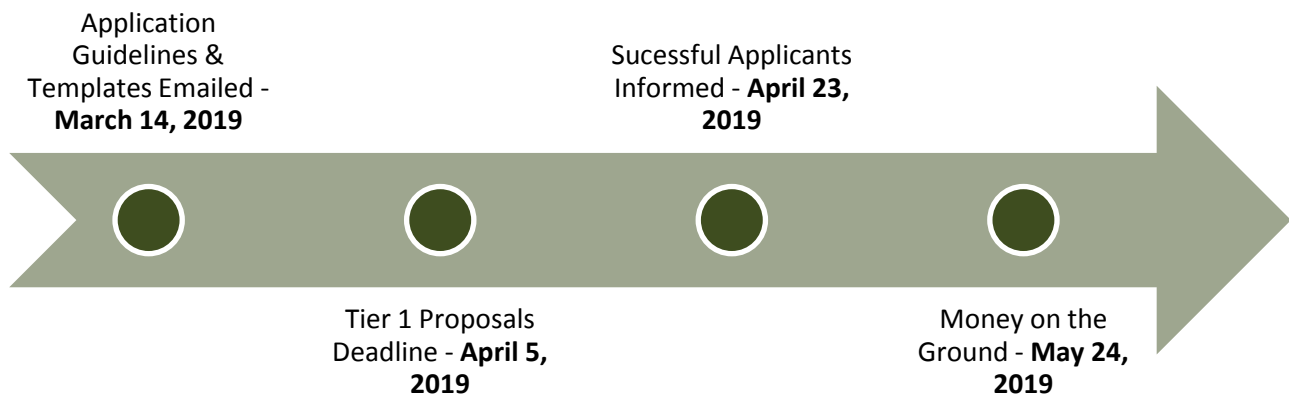
Projects will be selected from submissions with the best chance of success (with long-term programming in mind).

Next Steps

The Eligibility and Assessment Criteria Applicant Guideline, Tier 1 Proposal Template, and Tiers 2 & 3 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) Templates will be emailed to First Nations on March 14, 2019.

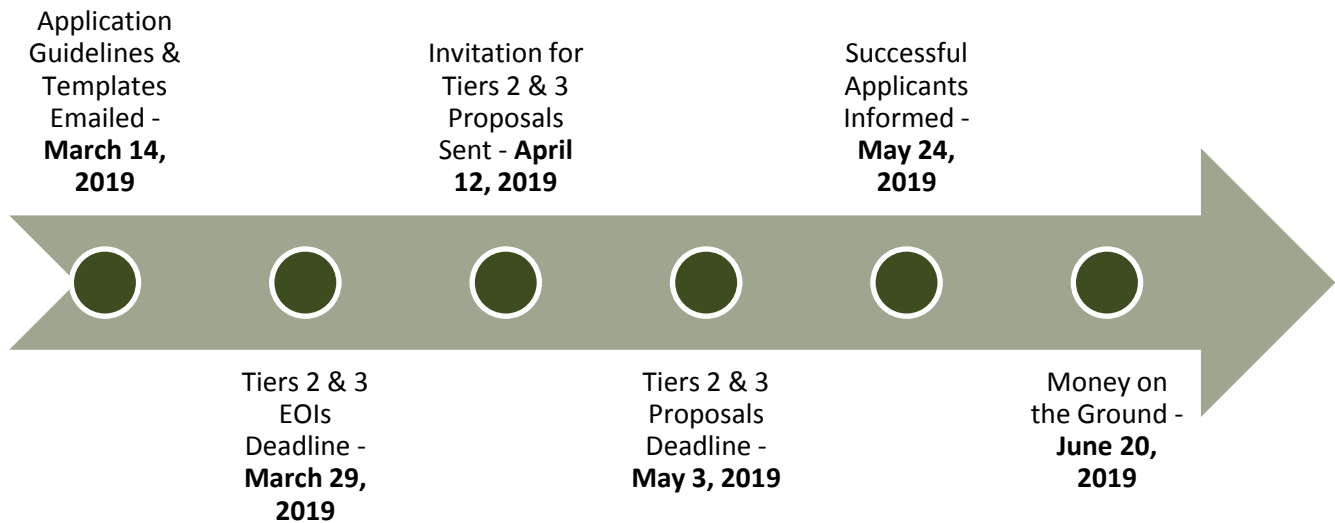
Tier 1

Proposal launch will be on March 14, 2019. Applicants identified in Tier 1 will have until April 5, 2019, to submit their proposal. Successful proposals will be informed the week of April 23, 2019, and they may expect to have money starting May 24, 2019.



Tiers 2 & 3

Proposal launch will be on March 14, 2019. Applicants identified in Tiers 2 & 3 will have until March 29, 2019, to submit their expression of interest. Successful expressions of interest will be informed the week of April 12, 2019, and they will have until May 3, 2019, to submit their proposal. Successful proposals will be informed on May 24, 2019, and they may expect to have money starting June 20, 2019.



We recognize that these timelines are tight. Based on their experience and continuous engagement with Guardian initiatives, committee members believe that submission development is possible within the timelines. This timeline will allow successful Tiers 2 & 3 Guardian initiatives a field season in 2019.

In order to have signed contribution agreements by early July 2019, the processes for review and contribution agreements should be completed as quickly as possible. The JWG anticipates there will be many proposals and EOIs to review, and developing a number of contribution agreements all at once will be time consuming as well, hence the staggered submission dates for Tier 1 and Tier 2 & 3 proposals.



Proposed Structure of the National Indigenous Guardians Network and Partnership with the Government of Canada

A true Nation-to-Nation approach to the partnership between Indigenous Peoples and the Government of Canada is needed to advance the Guardian initiative, and the institutional and governance structures developed should reflect such an approach. This can only be accomplished through an adequately-resourced and fully operational Network, with joint decision-making authority regarding the distribution of the remaining pilot funds. The Network will support the best possible representation from the regions to carry on this process. We are therefore proposing the following structure which includes two central elements:

- A. **National Indigenous Guardians Network:** This Network will be governed by a ten-person Board, each Board member nominated by a process appropriate to their region as determined by the respective AFN Regional Chief.

The Board will undertake the following:

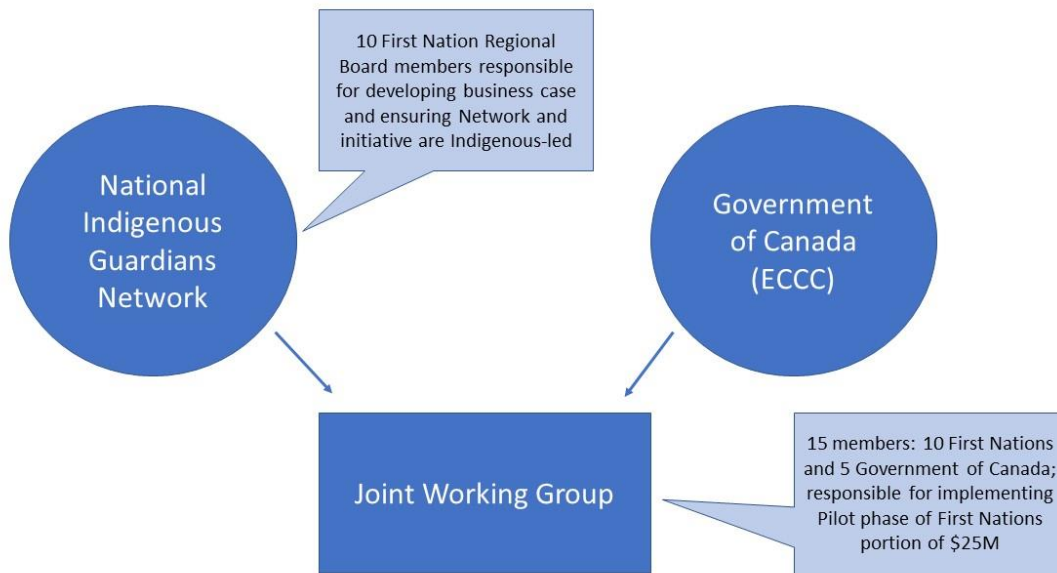
1. Put forward a national voice of Guardians through their Nations to create and build upon connections between Indigenous Guardians initiatives across Canada.
2. Safeguard Indigenous leadership of the Indigenous Guardians movement.
3. Emphasize the Nation-building element of Guardians initiatives.
4. Provide oversight and direction for the work of appointees to the Joint Working Group.

- B. **Joint Working Group:** This Working Group will be comprised of ten Indigenous appointees (each nominated by a process appropriate to their region as determined by the respective AFN Regional Chief) and the five federal appointees.

The Joint Working Group responsibilities will include:

1. Developing criteria for eligibility and assessment for the remaining pilot funds;
2. Participating in the decision-making process around the distribution of remaining pilot funds;
3. Demonstrating success through partnership that supports a financial investment by the Government of Canada in Guardians initiatives; and
4. Overseeing the development of a strong business case for substantial investment in the future.

It is proposed that the Board of the Network and the First Nations representatives on the Joint Working Group be selected through a regional process that is led by the AFN Regional Chiefs at the next opportune time in the business of their respective organizations. In the interim, the present Joint Working Group would oversee the distribution of funds in the fiscal year 2019-2020 to support Guardians initiatives and assist in the transition to a fully operational Network and regionally represented Joint Working Group.



Proposed Structure of the National Indigenous Guardians Network and the partnership between First Nations and the Government of Canada (ECCC)



Investing in Guardians – Towards a Bright Future: The Business Case for Expanded Guardians Initiatives and Evaluation

As we move towards building a partnership with the Government of Canada to support a National Indigenous Guardians Network with an investment greater than the initial \$25M, it is important to have a systematic and methodical approach to making the business case for further investment by the Government of Canada and other potential partners.

While it is the responsibility of the National Indigenous Guardians Network to lead the development of the business case, it will be important for the Joint Working Group (JWG) to provide inputs and ensure that strategic decisions on investments during the life of the Pilot are made based on the goal of making the case for further investment.

Indigenous colleagues in Australia have taken this same approach to gradually increase the investments of the Government of Australia in Rangers programs (Australian equivalent to Guardians). The Network would do well to take the Australian experience and approach into consideration in the design of the Guardians Business Case. It has resulted in a “scaling up” of government investments in Ranger programs, and it now averages \$90M Australian dollars per year.

Building a Business Case

An outline of a Business Case will be developed by the Executive Director of the National Consortium for Indigenous Economic Development at the University of Victoria and ILI Senior Advisor, Miles Richardson, and a team of experts from the Gustavson School of Business and the Faculty of Law at the University of Victoria. The proposal for consideration by the Board of the National Indigenous Guardians Network will be presented at the First Nations’ National Guardians Gathering scheduled for March 12-13th 2019.

The Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI), along with its partners at the International Boreal Conservation Campaign (IBCC), are exploring the development of a series of economic analyses on the economic benefits of Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship, which will be available to the Network for its consideration.

The Coastal Steward Network and TNC Canada, now known as Nature United, commissioned the report “Valuing Coastal Guardian Watchmen Programs: A Business Case” which serves as input and inspiration for the consideration of the Network. The report can be found here:

https://www.indigenousguardianstoolkit.ca/sites/default/files/Community%20Resource_Guardians-valuationreport_v10_Final_TNC%20Canada.pdf

Evaluating Success from an Indigenous Perspective

To attract further investment it is important to demonstrate the full impact of this new approach to supporting stewardship. It must measure accurately both the traditional indicators of success for programs administered by the Government of Canada (employment, funds expended, financial management indicators, etc.) and measure Indigenous indicators of success. Importantly, evaluations of the Guardian initiatives funded through the pilot and as a function of the national Network will include measuring the impact of strengthening Indigenous Nationhood and the fulfillment of the Indigenous cultural responsibility to lands and waters.

Existing Evaluation Frameworks

The Government of Australia has invested in exploring a more fulsome approach to evaluating the return on investment on socio-economic values in the Working on Country program. These evaluations have highlighted the wide breadth and depth of the impacts on socio-economic values of such programs on the Indigenous communities that operate the individual initiatives. These evaluations have demonstrated that for every dollar invested, there is an average return of 3 dollars on that investment in socio-economic value. Further information on these evaluations can be found here: <https://www.socialventures.com.au/sva-quarterly/healthy-country-healthy-people/>

The Dehcho First Nations, Lutsel’Ke Dene First Nation, the Indigenous Leadership Initiative and Tides Canada supported an evaluation of two existing programs in the Northwest Territories by Social Ventures Australia, the group that has led the development of the evaluations in Australia. The evaluation concluded that for the Dehcho and Lutsel’Ke initial investment of \$4.5 million in both programs, a return valued at \$11.1 million in social, economic, cultural and environmental values was attained (see Figure 1). In other words, for every \$1 invested, approximately \$2.5 of social, economic, cultural and environmental value has been created for stakeholders.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that more investment in the Lutsel’Ke and Dehcho Guardian initiative will likely yield even greater returns. Additional funding for year-round full-time work, complemented by training to enhance the quality of monitoring activities, can increase the amount of social, economic, cultural and environmental value from \$2.5 to \$3.7 for every \$1 invested.¹ The report can be found here:

<http://www.ilinationhood.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/value-in-indigenous-guardian-work-nwt.pdf>

¹ SVA Consulting. Analysis of the Current and Future Value of Indigenous Guardian Work in Canada’s Northwest Territories. <http://www.ilinationhood.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/value-in-indigenous-guardian-work-nwt.pdf>

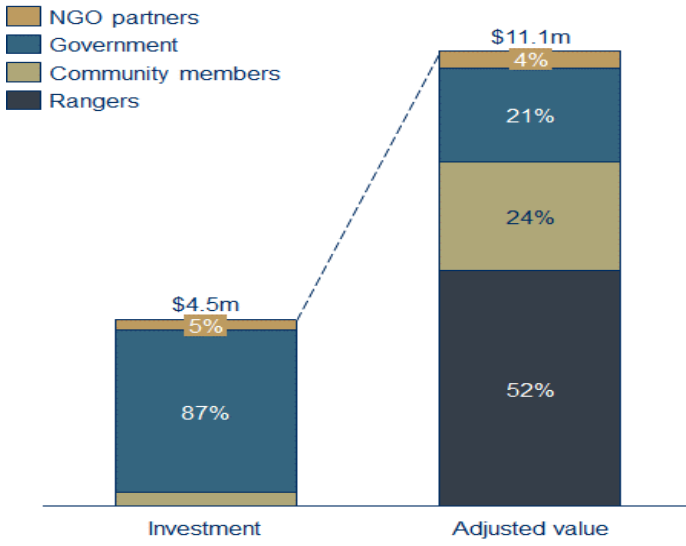


Figure 1 : Return on investment for stakeholders



Where We Are Going

These documents are presented at the First Nations' National Guardians Gathering in Vancouver with the goal of "standing up" the Indigenous Guardians movement and celebrating where it is supported and recognized within Indigenous communities and by other public governments, industry, ENGOs and the philanthropic community. While this work represents many months of dedicated effort and contributions from the First Nations-Federal Pilot Joint Working Group it is also the culmination of over four years of work and input by Indigenous Nations, communities and organizations like the Indigenous Leadership Initiative.

A collective effort was made to propose a meaningful and Indigenous-based approach to establishing the permanent presence of Guardians across Canada. The Network will strengthen our own understanding of Nationhood by supporting strong and responsible relationships with our territorial lands, waters, other Canadian governments and Canadian people in general. It is our collective hope that this work will serve the National Indigenous Guardians Network in a way that is constructive and helpful in advancing the vision of a truly national network of well-funded Guardian initiatives across Canada.



If we take care of the land, it will take care of us