

# Indigenous Metadata Bundle

## C O M M U N I Q U É

**INDIGENOUS METADATA SYMPOSIUM**  
New York City (Lenapehoking) & Virtual  
05.09.23

Indigenous metadata provides critical organization and structure for Indigenous Peoples' data to be findable, accessible, interoperable and with proper attribution, which enables governance, decision-making and cultural authority by Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous metadata guides the inclusion of cultural context, data protections, and ownership for Indigenous rights holders. This helps to recognize, refine, and define the relationships that Indigenous Peoples have with their data.

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**Indigenous Peoples' Data means information and knowledges recorded on any medium and in any format generated by Indigenous Peoples as well as by governments, private sector, and other institutions on and about Indigenous Peoples, their governments, or non-human relations.**

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Indigenous Peoples' Data comprise information, specimens, and knowledges about non-humans with which they have relations; information about Indigenous individuals; and, information and knowledges about Indigenous Peoples as collectives. Indigenous Peoples' Data ranges from traditional and contemporary writings and performances to languages, oral traditions, and ceremonies, living and nonliving specimens and environmental data.



Currently, there are no clear data or metadata fields that support Indigenous Peoples' data rights as articulated in the recently released [Global Indigenous Data Alliance Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Data](#).<sup>1</sup>

**Increasingly, data repositories are asking how to implement the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance<sup>2</sup> as well as identifying the appropriate data and metadata fields to support the inclusion of the Local Contexts Labels and Notices.**

In response to this, [Collaboratory for Indigenous Data Governance](#), [ENRICH: Equity for Indigenous Research and Innovation Coordinating Hub](#), and [Tikanga in Technology](#) hosted the Indigenous Metadata Symposium on May 9, 2023 at New York University to initiate the development of an Indigenous metadata bundle for use across multiple data systems and repositories. Over 60 participants attended the symposium, including representatives from academia, museums, governmental agencies, and nonprofit organizations across the United States, Canada, Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Europe, and French Polynesia.

The goal of the symposium was to initiate the development of an Indigenous Metadata Bundle for use throughout the data ecosystem, including repositories. We are defining the Indigenous Metadata Bundle as a conceptual framework that identifies primary principles that facilitate cross-standard intention and creates the possibility for new fields or elements to be developed that include specificity for Indigenous Peoples Data within a metadata document, bloc, facet or field.

What follows are the recommendations that were brought forward by the symposium participants.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN INDIGENOUS METADATA BUNDLE

### Initial Categories for an Indigenous Metadata Bundle

The following are the recommendations for the initial metadata categories that support the recognition and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples' data. These categories provide the clearest connection directly to Indigenous Peoples supporting the first two tenants of CARE - Collective benefit and Authority to Control.



## GOVERNANCE

Governance includes a range of Indigenous community-determined actions that inform how data are permissioned (including access rights, use rights and editing rights) and defined, and once created how those data are governed.

## PROVENANCE

Provenance information provides the key connection to data origins and defines the relationships that continue to be important to the future use of data. Following the [IEEE Recommended Practice on the Provenance of Indigenous Peoples' Data](#), provenance allows the possibility of future relationships, partnerships and benefit sharing. These relationships underscore the responsibility that Indigenous Peoples have to their data.

## LANDS AND WATERS

Lands and waters refers to physical lands and waters including longitude and latitude data, microbial data as well as the Indigenous concept of all the environmental, ethical, and spiritual relationships encompassed therein. Temporal considerations in relation to place, especially Indigenous conceptualizations of time alongside dates of data collection are important components of this category.

## Citation

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1 | Indigenous Peoples Rights in Data. See: [Hudson et al. 2023](#).

2 | The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics). See: [Carroll et al. 2020](#).

3 | FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability). See: [Wilkinson et al. 2016](#).

4 | See the TRUST Principles for digital repositories: [Lin et al \(2020\)](#).

## PROTOCOLS

Protocols refer to existing Indigenous laws, expectations, and preferences for the care, management, and/or stewardship, for data, including current and future responsibilities. As formal protocols, agreements and permits are implemented, dates that these were entered into, and the relevant parties that are signatories, should be included.

## LOCAL CONTEXTS NOTICES AND LABELS

Local Contexts Notices and Labels do two things. The Notices allow for institutions and researchers to disclose the persistence of Indigenous rights and interests in data. The Labels allow for distinct Indigenous authority and rights to be included as critical metadata.

## Additional Categories for an Indigenous Metadata Bundle

Other recommendations for metadata categories that support the recognition and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples' data arose. These additional categories enable pathways to deepen context and connection to the data for Indigenous Peoples supporting the final two tenants of CARE - Responsibility and Ethics. These categories include: Language; Persistent Identifiers, Classification Systems, Indigenous Names and Taxonomies; Data Quality; and relationships to FAIR<sup>3</sup> and TRUST<sup>4</sup>.