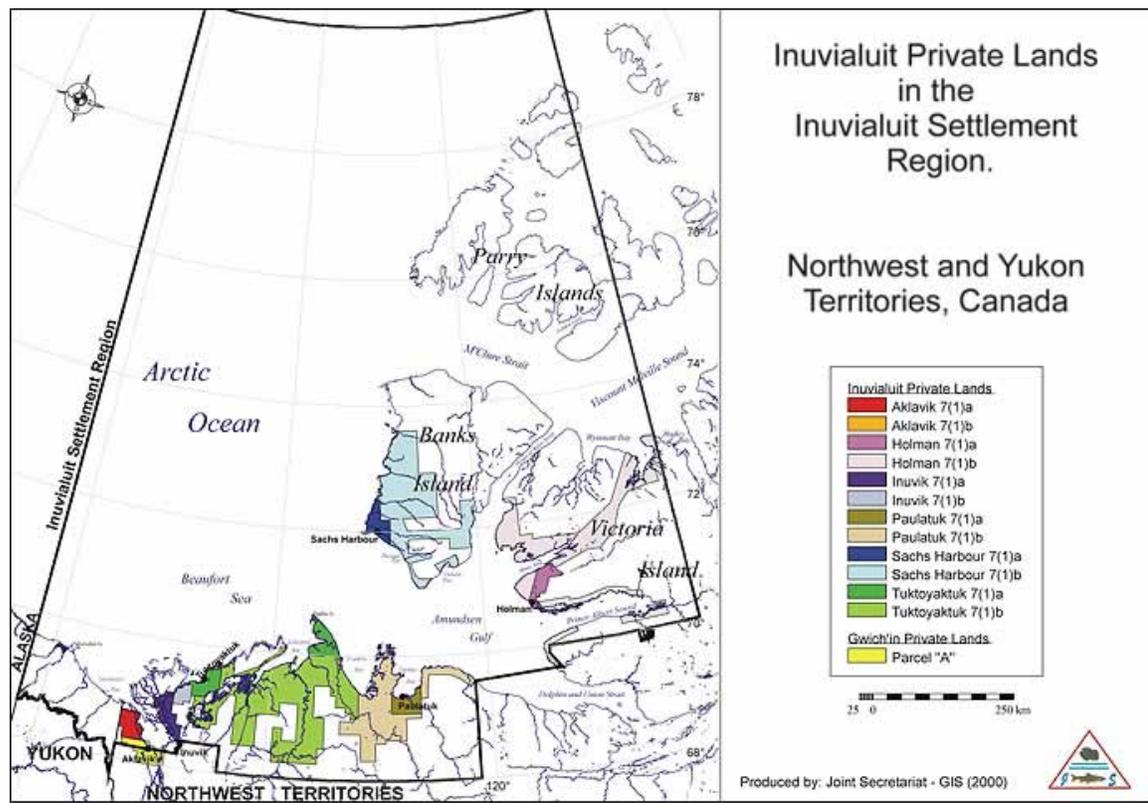


# Inuvialuit Regional Corporation Guidelines for Research in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region



The following is a brief introduction to the Inuvialuit Research Policy and is meant to be an overall guide as to how a researcher should approach Inuvialuit communities to establish and undertake research projects; and how Inuvialuit Institutions and communities can coordinate and facilitate research projects. It is an expectation that Inuvialuit Institutions are consulted on research as they have authority to approve research as well as have a support and facilitating role for research in the ISR.

*For the complete ISR Research Policy and Guide including required forms, please contact the Inuit Research Advisor, Shannon O'Hara, at 867-777-7026 or [SO'Hara@irc.inuvialuit.com](mailto:SO'Hara@irc.inuvialuit.com).*

Inuvialuit are interested in exploration of and acquisition of knowledge and information to improve their social, cultural and economic conditions. In recent years, communities have required research project protocols to safeguard their interests, and promote positive and productive research experiences. Inuvialuit have also seen valuable results from research projects using multi-disciplinary approaches that include Inuvialuit worldviews and knowledge, and that promote sustainable development and meaningful partnerships that improve Inuvialuit circumstances and enhance local and Inuvialuit Institutions capacity.

Research participants and Inuvialuit communities draw upon their knowledge and experiences to understand and evaluate research proposals and their willingness to participate. Researchers must be aware that the knowledge and experiences of Inuvialuit are valid reference points for understanding and engaging with researchers and research projects. Part of respecting the context of any research project includes listening to and respecting, by putting process safeguards in place, experiences of marginalization and exploitation can be eliminated.

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### **IRC Objectives for Supporting Research in the North**

Research has increased in the North, particularly in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Climate change, Arctic sovereignty, resource development and the social and environmental issues facing Inuvialuit are some of the main foci for research. Canadian and foreign academics contribute to the increase in research by undertaking projects in the context of major funding opportunities such as the International Polar Year, and in response to the North being one of the main research priorities of organizations such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Inuvialuit institutions, particularly those with responsibilities for land and resource management, work independently and with government agencies on monitoring, program implementation and related research informing local, regional, national and international resource governance decision making.

All research can potentially influence well-being and policy making in the ISR. IRC is committed to ensuring that research done in the ISR is coordinated as much as possible and that research contributes to a broader legacy in the form of increased capacity within the ISR. Specifically, IRC objectives for supporting research within the ISR include:

- Increased Inuvialuit research capacity within Inuvialuit Institutions and communities (organizational capacity)
- Effective coordination of research to ensure that multi-disciplinary or integrated approaches are taken with research,
- Identifying research needs and priorities of Inuvialuit communities and organizations,
- Advocate for understanding of the relevance of research with 'outside' researchers,
- Promoting incorporation of Inuvialuit knowledge and its usefulness and practicality for planning and decision and policy making,
- Capitalizing on the positive economic benefits that research may bring to communities,
- Inspiring and building confidence in Inuvialuit, particularly youth, to pursue education and careers within academia, cultural skill development, and science based careers.

## **Role of the IRC in Facilitating Research Within the ISR**

Research generates knowledge and information that can be useful to the Inuvialuit with respect to understanding, anticipating and mitigating circumstances, as well as in governance policy and decision-making. Scientific research coupled with Inuvialuit cultural knowledge can assist decision making for future developments. Inuvialuit cultural norms require meaningful networking with affected stakeholders and decision makers within the settlement region. Current resource management, legal and regulatory regimes also require networking with external players such as government departments, regulatory agencies and industry.

The Inuvialuit have conducted their own research and participated in various research partnerships and networks to define research questions, conduct research and incorporate research findings into decision making. Some IRC agencies have extensive experience working with researchers, as do some Inuvialuit communities. Other agencies and communities have less experience.

The role of the IRC in research is to:

- Implement the Inuvialuit Research Policy;
- Provide a process and guidelines for researchers to follow when seeking to involve Inuvialuit in their research;
- Participate meaningfully in research by providing assistance, skilled staff, meaningful input into research design and input, suggestions for research topics and potential uses of research findings, and where possible to provide in-kind or monetary support to augment the research funds researchers bring to the project;
- Assist researchers to secure external funding for research that will be of benefit to Inuvialuit;
- Utilize research projects and results to inform decision making, and assist Inuvialuit communities in doing the same.

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## **Considerations for Working in the ISR Working with Inuvialuit Cultural Knowledge**

Inuvialuit have lived on the land for thousands of years. Inuvialuit culture, language and subsistence practices are derived from intimate knowledge of the land and its rootedness in a close physical and spiritual relationship with the land. This cultural knowledge and way of life is often referred to as Traditional Knowledge. It is the foundation of the culture and identity of Inuvialuit.

Because this knowledge is rooted in a way of life, the term “traditional” refers to its continuity with the past; however, it is knowledge that is constantly used, updated, revised and accommodated to changing situations and circumstances. Like every culture, Inuvialuit culture and knowledge is in constant development as cultural values and beliefs must negotiate and accommodate new circumstances and situations.

It is important to consider Inuvialuit cultural knowledge in research because culturally, Inuvialuit are different from non-Inuvialuit. Because Inuvialuit knowledge is rooted in and shapes both land-based and human relations, and in knowledge of the land and the human place within it, it can be of benefit to questions and issues, ranging from the practical (where are Beluga whales are found at certain times of year?) to the more abstract (what is the significance of Beluga whales for material and spiritual culture?). Working with Inuvialuit knowledge holders can only enhance the amount and type of data gathered, and contribute to building relationships between researchers and communities. Below are some guidelines for incorporating Inuvialuit cultural knowledge in research:

1. Inuvialuit cultural knowledge holders are recognized within their communities. They may be Elders, or experienced land users or cultural practitioners (eg sewers, artists, tanners).
2. When working with Inuvialuit cultural knowledge, its transmission should occur in a way that benefits the community where possible. For example, group interviews with Elders may include youth and adults.
3. Knowledge gathering should be done in a way that is respectful. Each community will have its own protocols for approaching Elders about being involved, how they should be involved, and methods for working with them that are most respectful (eg meeting times around their schedules, use of translators, ensuring that voice or video recording is acceptable, and pre-research relationship building required).
4. Knowledge gathering and use must be based on informed consent. This may require discussions with community representatives or with individual knowledge holders. Informed consent includes the right of a research participant to withdraw from the research at any time and to withdraw their information at any time.
5. Ownership, control and possession of the information gathered are issues that must be addressed as part of a research agreement. This is for both raw data and methods of dissemination. This aspect may touch on issues such as ownership and possession of audio and videotapes, copyrighting of materials resulting from the research, publication credits and acknowledgements, and uses of raw data after the research project is completed.
6. Findings based on or incorporating Inuvialuit cultural knowledge must be reported back to the community in a manner that ensures characterizations of and use of Inuvialuit cultural knowledge is accurate and respectful, and respects cultural protocols around the knowledge, as well as any commitments the researcher may have made with respect to information use at the time of its collection.
7. Researchers are encouraged, where possible, to utilize Inuvialuit translators to conduct research on Inuvialuit cultural knowledge.

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### **Capacity Building**

Where possible, researchers should attempt to hire Inuvialuit to conduct research. Interested researchers should contact IRC who will provide information to assist in seeking staff or working with communities to identify and hire individuals, including possibly accessing education and training opportunities that may benefit the research project.

## **Treatment of Information**

The Inuvialuit are not interested in “being researched”. Inuvialuit people, organizations and communities are interested in working with researchers to understand phenomena shaping the world and its well-being. This should be done in ways that are respectful and inclusive. This respect includes working in partnership to determine who should own information that is gathered, and mechanisms that will be used to ensure that researchers can conduct quality research on which findings can be based, and that Inuvialuit retain control of knowledge provided by and produced about Inuvialuit. Such mechanisms will vary from project to project. This issue should be addressed in the Research Agreement. A related but important issue to the Inuvialuit is access and use of research findings. Although it is recognized that some information will be confidential the overall results and conclusion of the findings would be useful to the overall Inuvialuit population and institutions when making decisions about issues and their future. Again in the Research Agreement access to and use of research findings must be addressed and researchers will be accountable in providing a final report to the community and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation.

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## **Ethical Principles**

The *Tri-council Policy Statement on the Conduct of Ethical Research with Humans* is a basic resource with which all researchers should be familiar and follow. Every research project should receive ethical approval from the appropriate ethical review board. IRC requires proof of ethical approval in order to conduct research with Inuvialuit.

In addition to ethical approval, researchers should work with community representatives and the Inuit Research Advisor to find out about cultural and local protocols for doing research with Inuvialuit. Researchers are reminded that working with Inuvialuit will be a cross-cultural experience for the Inuvialuit and the Researcher. Issues of cultural non-understanding are more likely to complicate research projects where solid relationships have not been built. Solid relationships will position the research partners to work together in ways that are respectful, and set the groundwork for overcoming the inevitable issues that arise in the context of cross-cultural interaction. Researchers are encouraged to engage in a process of self-awareness development, to identify their own cultural values and assumptions and be open to understanding those of the Inuvialuit. Research partners may have a process worked out informally or in a research agreement as to how they might anticipate and mitigate cross-cultural tensions that may arise during research, and use such tensions to energize rather than undermine a research project.

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## **Where do I start?**

If you have an idea for research in the Inuvialuit region, we suggest you begin the process of working with us by preparing a draft proposal that will consist of a literature review, project description, your CV and at least 3 references.

1. Write a literature review. The literature review will tell us that you are serious about the research, and that you know what you are talking about. It will tell us how your research will fit with what has already been done, or how it will fill in existing research gaps. The literature review is a first step in any successful research project.
2. Review the Inuit Tapariit Kanataami publications called *Negotiating Research Relationships: A Guide for Researchers* (1998), and *Negotiating Research Relationships: A Guide for Communities* (1998). Be prepared to reference the guides in your project description with respect to accommodating unique circumstances of doing research in the ISR.
3. Write a brief project description. Once you know what has been done, tell us what you want to do and how you plan to do it. In your project proposal, tell us how you would like to involve Inuvialuit and Inuvialuit organizations in your research, appropriate to the scale of your project and the stage of academic or research career that you are at. If this will be your first time doing research, or doing research in our region, tell us about what resources or experiences you will draw on (mentors, other researchers, work with other communities) that will assist you in accommodating the unique circumstances of doing research in the ISR. We can advise or assist in the development of your project description and what research methodologies would be useful. In add, and why or why not a standard research agreement will be used in structuring the research project.
4. Tell us about yourself. Be prepared to provide us with your CV and a half-page biography. We will also ask you for references, for your academic ability and for your character. If you are interested in doing research with us, you will understand that a long history of colonial-based research in our communities has sometimes left negative impressions of researchers. We will check references and/or speak to your supervisor/Head of Department during this phase of the research proposal process.

Factors that will be considered when reviewing research concepts or proposals is to gather the views and interests of Inuvialuit Institutions and communities on, at least: the methodology and purpose of the research, degree of Inuvialuit participation necessary, use of traditional knowledge, and reporting and accountability requirements. While we are not opposed to research that is mainly the result of sheer academic curiosity, we encourage researchers to tell us about how their research can be of benefit to Inuvialuit.

5. Contact the Inuit Research Advisor. The contact information for the Inuit Research Advisor is:

Shannon O'Hara  
Inuit Research Advisor  
[S'OHara@irc.inuvialuit.com](mailto:S'OHara@irc.inuvialuit.com)  
867-777-7026  
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation  
Bag Service #21, Inuvik, NT, X0E0T0

Your initial contact will allow you to introduce yourself and set up a mutually agreeable time for a telephone call to discuss your project. You should allow at least one week between submitting your draft proposal, and receiving confirmation for a date to discuss your project. If the IRC or its agencies has a specific expert on staff that you would want to discuss the project with or possibly have involved in the project, you should identify

the person when you make your first contact. If there is an expert from a university or any other organization (eg a federal or territorial government department) you should also identify that person. This will help us to fairly and quickly assess the project and make suggestions for your formal proposal.

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### Research Agreements

The dialogue in the previous section between the researcher and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation will be sufficient to provide a letter of support so the researcher can carry on in receiving funding and formal approval from licensing agencies including the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation in terms of a formal research agreement.

A research agreement is an agreement between the Researcher and Community/Organization describing how they will work together to complete the Proposed RESEARCH PROJECT. The research proposal will be attached to the Research Agreement and the Agreement acknowledges that it has been reviewed and received the support of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation.

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The Following is a Draft Research Agreement:

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Project Title and Start Date:

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Project field dates/seasons (day/month/year and locations) timeline (may attach as **Appendix A**):

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Name, contact information and affiliation of Researcher:

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Name, contact information and affiliation of Researcher Supervisor/Department Head:

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Name, contact information and affiliation of Inuvialuit Partner representative:

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List of Permits Obtained (include issuing Institution Name, Duration, Conditions) :

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Permits in progress and expected confirmation date:

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Proof of Ethical Review (attach as **Appendix 2**) or expected confirmation date:

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Copies of informed consent form (attach as **Appendix 3**):

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Documentation of funding sources (attach as **Appendix 4**) and/or expected confirmation dates and details:

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Names and contact information of Inuvialuit community advisors:

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Names, contact information and positions of community-based staff (Attach position descriptions, workplans etc as **Appendix B**):

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Project Plain Language Summary:

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Standard Terms and Conditions of the Research Agreement:

The **Researcher NAME** and **Inuvialuit Research Partner Organization NAME** agree to the follow terms that will guide the conduct of the **research project NAME** described above and in the appended documents.

1. Any original data gathered during this research project will remain the property of the Inuvialuit Research Partner, and will remain with the partner organization or its designate. The information will be managed in a way that honors any commitments to confidentiality made to research participants.
2. The Researcher and Inuvialuit partner organization may make an agreement about how data or originals will be stored, accessed and used in the future (attach as **Appendix 5**).
3. The Researcher may use and access the data, including possessing copies of original data for the purposes of using it in the ways described in the research proposal. If the Researcher wishes to use the data differently or for other purposes, the Researcher must seek and gain prior permission of both the partner organization and individual research subjects through a process as determined by the original Inuvialuit partner organization or the IRC.
4. Any research participant may withdraw from the research project at any time and request any data they have provided be withdrawn, destroyed or returned.

5. The Researcher and community partner organization agree to communicate updates and results of the research as described in the project communication plan (**Appendix 6**). Research participants and representatives of Inuvialuit Organizations may request updates at any time and receive updates within a reasonable timeframe.
6. The Researcher and Inuvialuit partner organization agree to abide by the IRC Research Policy and follow the IRC Research Guidelines.
7. The Researcher will ensure that the research is conducted in a way that does not endanger the wellness or physical safety of staff or participants. The Researcher is responsible for ensuring appropriate and adequate safety precautions are taken and followed, including providing training and requiring certifications of staff; obtaining appropriate liability and injury insurance; and following any ethical and professional standards of conduct appropriate to their area of inquiry. (Attach proof of insurance coverage or training plans etc as **Appendix 7**).
8. The Researcher indemnifies and saves harmless the Research partner organization and the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation from any liability and by signing this agreement waives any legal claim against these or any Inuvialuit organization or individual associated with the research project for any event that may occur during any phase of the research project.

SIGNATURE BLOCKS, DATES, WITNESSES