

# Special considerations for doing research in the NWT

The Northwest Territories is a vibrant hub for research and innovation. This resource documents some of the unique controls in place to ensure high-quality, respectful research in our territory. Session 6 will provide more in-depth guidance on some of these requirements; this document will prepare potential researchers to understand how these requirements might make or break a research plan.

## Research Licensing

**All research in the NWT must be licensed.** Before you get a research license, the plan for your research must be shared with northern residents. This is part of the application process: you will submit a plain language summary of your research plans, then groups at the local, territorial and federal levels will review and consider your project. The number and type of permits that you have to apply for will depend on your research plan, your intended methods, and location of your research.

The Aurora Research Institute (ARI) is responsible for licensing research in the NWT. ARI strongly recommends that prospective researchers consult with the community *before* submitting a research license application. Establishing relationships in the community in advance ensures that local perspectives can inform your study plan, demonstrates support in the community for your project, and shows community partners that you want to work with them.

More information available here:  
<https://nwtresearch.com/licensing>



## Other Permits

In addition to these territorial research licenses and permits, your proposed research may require additional licensing or permits depending on:

- where the research is taking place (e.g., in a Parks Canada National Park, in a Migratory Bird Sanctuary)
- what type of research (e.g. Health or Contaminated research)
- what methods of research (e.g. Interviewing human participants)

Examples of other permits you may need to conduct your research are included in the chart below – it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure all the proper approvals are in place before undertaking research.

*Table 1: Territorial bodies Authorizing Research in the Northwest Territories. Adapted from Aurora Research Institute, [Research in the Northwest Territories: A Guide for Researchers](#) (2019).*

Type of Permit / License	Required for:	For more Information
Scientific Research Licence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research in the NWT that does not fall under Wildlife or Archaeological legislation requires a Scientific Research Licence</li> <li>• Obtained through the Head Office of ARI in Inuvik</li> <li>• Apply on-line via POLAR (Portal to Online Licence Applications for Research)</li> </ul>	Website: <a href="http://polar.nwtresearch.com">http://polar.nwtresearch.com</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:license@nwtresearch.com">license@nwtresearch.com</a>
Wildlife Research Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research studies on any vertebrates (including migratory birds and species at risk, but excluding fish and marine mammals), terrestrial invertebrates or wildlife habitats anywhere in the NWT</li> <li>• Issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)</li> <li>• If handling animals, you must also submit an Application to Handle Wildlife to the Chair of the NWT Wildlife Care Committee (NWT-WCC).</li> </ul>	Email: <a href="mailto:wildliferesearch_permit@gov.nt.ca">wildliferesearch_permit@gov.nt.ca</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/services/permits-researchobserve-and-handle-wildlife-nwt">http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/services/permits-researchobserve-and-handle-wildlife-nwt</a>
Archaeologists Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research in archaeology requires a NWT Archaeologists Permit</li> <li>• Applications submitted to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC) in Yellowknife.</li> </ul>	E-mail: <a href="mailto:archaeology@gov.nt.ca">archaeology@gov.nt.ca</a> Website: <a href="http://www.pwnhc.ca">http://www.pwnhc.ca</a>

## Land Claim Regions

The NWT has many Indigenous governments that have jurisdiction over research happening on their territory (e.g., Akaitcho Territory Government, Dehcho First Nations, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Northwest Territory Metis Nation)

To get approved for a research license in the NWT, you **MUST** get written confirmation that you have reviewed a plain language version of your research proposal with the agencies and/or communities that could be affected by your research **AND** that those decision-makers have no concerns regarding the project. Researchers are encouraged to reach out to the communities directly to get these approvals. The community organization(s) you may need to talk to will depend on the scope, methodology, and location of your study.

For more information and contact information of relevant organizations within each settlement region, consult *Research in the Northwest Territories: A Guide for Researchers* available on ARI's website: [https://nwtresearch.com/sites/default/files/ari\\_guide\\_to\\_research\\_2019\\_0.pdf](https://nwtresearch.com/sites/default/files/ari_guide_to_research_2019_0.pdf)

