

I4DM

Definitional Matrix

GUIDELINES FOR USE

- The term “nothing about us without us” has been used by different movements to ensure that people affected by an issue are leading and at the center of doing the work to shape policy and systems that affect their lives. The I4DM is a tool that reflects and provides some guidance to enact this principle towards the self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. It is meant to make visible that Indigenous led organizations exist in a time when there continues to be unequal distribution of funds and resources to Indigenous leadership and their work.
- The I4 definitional matrix is a tool to encourage settler philanthropic organizations to have courageous conversations. To engage in the process of unlearning and doing the internal work individually and collectively to shift policies and practices with the purpose of increasing the resources and investment to Indigenous led organizations and communities. It is a tool that is meant to be adapted and presented in its full form and not to be exchanged, altered and or recreated. This includes the I4DM table.
- In these lands, one must acknowledge the undeniable historic and ongoing impacts of colonization, displacement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples and Nations. Indigenous sovereignty needs to take place in order to effectively advance Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We encourage organizations to go through a process of learning about reciprocity and what this means for Indigenous led organizations and their work. It is not enough to engage diverse voices but to understand and support Indigenous sovereignty as a higher priority.
- We ask settler philanthropic organizations to reflect and respond to the question - how does the use of this matrix prioritize Indigenous organizations over others? We would also appreciate organizations using this tool sharing back with The Circle their responses to the questions we offer on the definitional matrix.
- We expect organizations to take the definitional matrix in its full form, read and understand the preamble, the matrix and the questions so that this learning and unlearning is embedded within all of your staff and work. These learnings will inform your unique approach to advancing racial equity and increase your justice, equity, diversity and inclusion work in your grant-making and across your organization.
- If you are planning to use this tool to shift your grant making practices towards investing in the leadership and work of Indigenous, Black and racialized led organizations we ask that you please share back the data that identifies who and how much money you granted and how these organizations identified themselves in the I4DM spectrum.

- If you are looking for a tool that will support your work towards centering racial justice and racial equity not only for Indigenous led organizations, we encourage you to also look at existing frameworks developed by these communities or to meaningfully engage the wisdom and leadership of Black and racialized communities working to advance racial justice. It is imperative to also recognize that equity seeking groups are diverse and have unique experiences, therefore it is necessary to engage with each individually in efforts to not homogenize their experiences and knowledge.
- There is an ongoing history of extracting and appropriating Indigenous knowledge, stories, wisdom and work not only in academia but also in the philanthropic and charitable sector. We generously offer this tool for organizations to do their own work internally and shift their resources and power towards Indigenous led work. In the spirit of reciprocity, accountability and integrity, we ask organizations to not only credit the Circle as the authors of this tool but also in some instances, provide financial compensation. If you have questions, we are always open to having a conversation about this. If an organization is struggling to understand how to use and embed this tool please reach out to the Circle as we offer support as a fee for service.
- The I4DM did not come without its own journey. It was a journey of meaningful engagement that gathered the voices, insights, expertise and wisdom of The Circle's Indigenous advisors and members to develop this tool. We want to ensure that if it is used, it is transforming relationships, partnerships and funding practices that lead to Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. In addition to the acknowledgement of this process by crediting The Circle for this tool or by compensating The Circle for its use, we want to learn from your data about how Indigenous, Black or racialized organizations and work have benefited from you using this tool. We would be happy to have a conversation about co-creating a piece to make the learnings visible. We want to share the learnings and mobilize this knowledge so that other philanthropic and nonprofit organizations learn from your journey.