



# Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Artificial Intelligence

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# Welcome



## 01 Indigenous Data Sovereignty & AI

Presented by Kristin Kozar, this session begins with a Land Acknowledgement honoring Coast Salish territories and Indigenous stewardship.



## 02 The Longboat Metaphor

“We’re all in this longboat together—carrying stories, responsibilities, histories, and tools for the journey.” This quote highlights collective care and shared movement forward.

# Session Pathway



## Indigenous Data Sovereignty

Why Indigenous Data Sovereignty matters for reclaiming control, protecting knowledge, and affirming rights over data.



## AI and Archives Intersection

Exploring how artificial intelligence supports and challenges archival practices in preserving Indigenous histories.



## Community Engagement & Ethics

Emphasizing relational ethics, care, and inclusive dialogue to overcome barriers and shape policy recommendations.

# What is Indigenous Data Sovereignty?



## Definition

Indigenous Data Sovereignty is the inherent right of Indigenous Peoples to control the collection, ownership, and use of data about their communities and resources.



## Grounded in Sovereignty

It is grounded in Indigenous Sovereignty, expressed through law, land stewardship, kinship ties, language preservation, and culturally specific protocols.



## Living Data

Data is not just information—it is living, relational, and rooted in blood memory, carrying cultural and historical significance beyond raw facts.



## Power and Justice

IDS embodies power, dignity, and justice; archives are not neutral but reflect relationships and responsibilities within Indigenous communities.

# Archives as Sites of Sovereignty



## Archives Hold Memory & Trauma

Archives preserve not only documents but also the collective memory and historical trauma of Indigenous peoples, making them vital to cultural identity and healing.



## Community Control in Archives

Indigenous Data Sovereignty in archives means communities govern how descriptions, access, and usage of materials are determined and enforced.



## Colonial Archives Harm

Traditional colonial archives have excluded Indigenous voices, misrepresented histories, and contributed to cultural harm through control by external authorities.



## Protocols in Policy & Practice

Embedding Indigenous protocols into archival policies ensures respectful, ethical handling of materials aligned with cultural values and sovereignty.

# The Longboat Metaphor



## The Longboat as a Collective Vessel

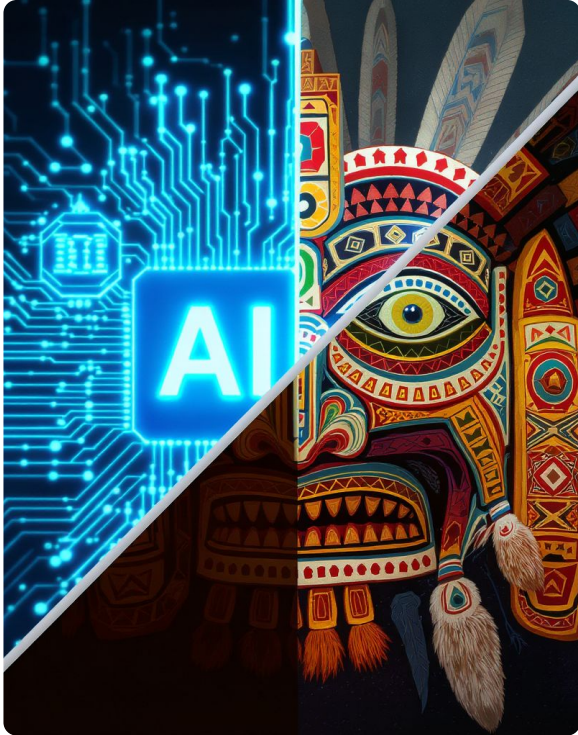
- Sturdy and practical, built to carry diverse items and people.
- Represents unity and moving forward together without leaving anyone behind.
- Emphasizes cooperation and shared responsibility in the journey.
- Tools like AI and archives must be guided by Indigenous values to be meaningful.



## Journey and Decision-Making

- The journey is about how we travel, not just the destination.
- Who decides the route reflects governance and Indigenous leadership.
- What we carry symbolizes values, knowledge, histories, and responsibilities.
- The longboat metaphor highlights the importance of intentional, value-driven choices.

# Artificial Intelligence—Promise and Peril



## Promise of AI

- Enhances search capabilities to locate Indigenous records efficiently.
- Supports repatriation of cultural artifacts and historical data.
- Aids language revitalization through AI-powered transcription and translation.
- Automates metadata creation for more accurate and accessible archives.
- Example: AI transcribes oral histories in Indigenous languages, preserving voices for future generations.

## Peril of AI

- Algorithmic bias can distort Indigenous narratives and reinforce stereotypes.
- Surveillance risks threaten community privacy and autonomy.
- Extraction of data without proper consent undermines sovereignty.
- Risks of re-identification lead to loss of anonymity and cultural sensitivity.
- Talking Point: “AI is a powerful tool—but whose hands are on the steering wheel?”

# Opportunities for Indigenous Data Sovereignty



## Community AI Projects

AI-driven language apps, digital storytelling, and repatriation platforms led by Indigenous communities to support culture and language revitalization.

- Language apps
- Digital storytelling
- Repatriation tools



## Healing Digital Archives

Archives as spaces for healing, cultural transmission, and self-determination, with community control over narratives and access.

- Community archives
- Healing metadata
- Access protocols



## IDS-Aligned Tech

Use of TK/Biocultural Labels, dynamic consent, and community-created metadata to ensure respectful and ethical data governance.

- TK/Biocultural Labels
- Dynamic consent
- Community metadata



## AI for Metadata & Consent

AI enhances metadata creation, manages consent dynamically, and controls access to Indigenous data, supporting sovereignty.

- Automated tagging
- Consent tools
- Access control

# Risks and Harms—What to Watch For

## ↗ Policy Responses

- Embedding Indigenous protocols ensures respect for community values and sovereignty.
- Community review and veto powers prevent unauthorized use and misrepresentation of data.
- Policies promote ethical data stewardship and protect against surveillance abuses.

## ↘ Risks & Harms

- AI and digital archives can mislabel Indigenous knowledge, causing cultural misappropriation and erasure.
- Data extraction often occurs without free, prior, and informed consent from Indigenous communities.
- Surveillance technologies threaten privacy and can exacerbate historical injustices.

# Community Engagement—The Heart of Ethics of Care



## Relationality

Building trust through ongoing dialogue, respecting protocols, obtaining consent, and fostering mutual respect in all interactions.



## Ethics of Care

Applying trauma-informed practice and cultural safety principles ensures respectful, flexible, and supportive engagement.



## Co-stewardship Agreements

Formal agreements that establish shared responsibility and authority between communities and institutions over data and resources.



## Reparative Description

Correcting historical misrepresentations and embedding Indigenous perspectives in the description and management of archives.



## Community-first Access

Prioritizing community members' rights to access and control over cultural data and archives before external parties.

# Barriers for First Nation Communities

## Digital Divide

Limited infrastructure, funding, and access create significant gaps in connectivity and digital resources for First Nation communities.

## Institutional Resistance

Slow policy changes and lingering colonial mindsets within institutions hinder progress toward Indigenous data sovereignty.

## Technical Barriers

Lack of technical support for Indigenous metadata standards, language preservation, and data consent protocols restricts effective use.

## Emotional and Cultural Barriers

Mistrust, historical trauma, and feelings of exclusion impact community engagement and participation in digital initiatives.

# Policies for Change—The Pathway



## Adoption of Foundational Principles

Implement UNDRIP, OCAP®, and CARE principles to ensure respect for Indigenous rights, ownership, control, access, and ethics in data management.



## Co-stewardship Charters

Establish shared governance frameworks that include veto rights, enabling Indigenous communities to actively guide data use and policy decisions.



## Dynamic Consent Schedules

Use perpetual review and event-based permissions to allow ongoing community control over data access and usage.



## TK/Biocultural Labels

Incorporate enforceable metadata tags to protect traditional knowledge and biocultural heritage within digital archives and AI systems.



## Reparative Description

Retire harmful language found in archives through community-led narratives that restore dignity and accuracy.



## Community-First Access & Accountability

Prioritize Indigenous communities with fee waivers, dedicated support, and publish annual Indigenous Archives Accountability Reports.

# The Longboat—Who's Driving?



## Indigenous Governance Leads

Community leaders and Indigenous protocols guide the direction and decisions, anchoring the journey in sovereignty and values.



## AI and Archives as Servants

Artificial intelligence and archival systems are tools designed to serve communities, not extract or exploit their knowledge and data.



## Collective Action & Inclusion

Every member has a seat and role in the journey, emphasizing shared responsibility, mutual respect, and collaborative stewardship.



## Discussion

# Interactive Discussion—What's in Your Longboat??

- What tools do you want in your wagon to support your community's data sovereignty?
- Which practices are essential to carry along on this journey?
- What policies would you prioritize to protect and empower your community?
- Share your fears about challenges or risks on this path.
- Express your hopes and aspirations for this collective journey.

# Closing Reflection & Call to Action

**01 Living, Relational, Collective**

Indigenous Data Sovereignty is dynamic and connected to relationships, culture, and community. It evolves through shared histories and collective stewardship.

**02 Move Together with Care**

Progress requires intentional collaboration rooted in respect, trust, and purpose. Moving forward as one strengthens Indigenous governance and self-determination.

**03 Continue the Dialogue**

Sustain ongoing conversations to share resources, build alliances, and amplify Indigenous voices. Collective action ensures resilient and ethical data futures.

# Resources & Further Reading

- Indigenous Data Sovereignty Network (IDSN) website for foundational principles and updates.
- CARE and OCAP® principles documentation for ethical data governance frameworks.
- 'Data Feminism' by Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein for intersectional data ethics.
- 'AI and Indigenous Data Sovereignty' report by the Canadian Institute for Indigenous Research.
- Community forums and webinars emphasizing ongoing dialogue and alliance-building among Indigenous data practitioners.