

General Consultation Report Form¹

Under the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference ([WHEC2022](#))
[Section for Higher Education](#) | Division for Education 2030

Basic information

Dates of consultation	January 25, 26, February 15, 16, 17, 21			
Location of consultation	Virtual across Canada: Ottawa, Arviat, Iqaluit, Inuvik, Goose Bay, Montreal, Lethbridge, Victoria			
Hosting organisation(s) (include webpage if available)	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) Website: https://www.itk.ca/			
Name and email address of key contact person	Riley Winters winters@itk.ca Vanessa Chaperlin chaperlin@itk.ca			
Complete name, title, and affiliation of moderator(s)	Riley Winters, Policy Advisory, ITK Vanessa Chaperlin, Senior Policy Advisor, ITK			
Language of consultation	English			
Time spent in consultation (minutes)	480			
Number of participants	20			
Participant profiles (please, briefly describe the composition of the group)	Participants consisted mostly of Inuit Nunangat University Task Force members who work in government and/or education sectors across Inuit Nunangat. Some consultation was done with expert practitioners in Inuit education and leadership, and Canadian and international university governance.			
Countries represented by participants	Canada			
Stakeholder groups (please mark with an “x” as appropriate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professors/ Researchers	<input type="checkbox"/> Students/Youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Higher education managers/authorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private sector
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NGOs/civil society	<input type="checkbox"/> International organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy makers/government	<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please, specify):

¹ This template includes some elements used by the consultation developed by [The Futures of Education](#) initiative.

Which theme did you choose for this consultation?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 1: Impact of COVID-19 on higher education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 7: Financing higher education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 2: Higher education and the SDGs | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 8: Data and knowledge production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 3: Inclusion in higher education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 9: International cooperation to enhance synergies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 4: Quality and relevance of programmes | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 10: The futures of higher education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 5: Academic mobility in higher education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please, specify): |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 6: Higher education governance | |

Synthesis of contributions

Kindly provide a summary, synthesising and reflecting the ideas provided by all participants. There is no need to identify participants. Consultation reports should not exceed 1,200 **words**, including the responses to the three questions outlined below (consider a balance of approximately 400 words per response). If necessary, add attachments. Remember that question 1 is general, but questions 2 and 3 should refer to the specific theme you have chosen (see list in **Annex 1**).

Question 1: *What should be the present and future role of higher education to favour the wellbeing of humans and sustainability of societies?*

The Inuit Nunangat University Task Force (INUTF) is currently implementing Recommendation #8 of the *National Inuit Education Strategy (2011)*: “Establishing a University in Inuit Nunangat.” The vision for this new university is that it will foster a more robust civil society and space for critical development and inquiry, expand post-secondary opportunities relevant to Inuit, and become an economic and cultural engine for Inuit communities currently facing a variety of pressures.

Through some of their initial dialogue, the INUTF and partners established the following founding principles for higher education:

Care for community

INUTF are currently engaged in a cooperative movement to build a university that is committed to build on community strengths and sustain and strengthen Inuit society.

The university will provide an infrastructure of knowledge through which Inuit can understand and create solutions for their own communities, ultimately building community capacity. The university will enable Inuit to access knowledge toward their life-long process of learning and development, eventually reaching stages of wisdom where they will carry and pass on knowledge themselves. Strengthening Inuit self-determination, the university will address issues of governance, the environment, business, health, education, and language and cultural preservation.

Governance structure based on Inuit principles

A university governed by the values of its majority population will make decisions that serve its communities well. For Inuit, human wellbeing comes first, and is attained through thought traditional knowledge (TK, including the principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ, Inuit epistemology). An Inuit governance model founded on TK and IQ principles, such as balance and harmony, will provide an education system that students will understand and connect with. IQ states that a person is led from their heart, and that a capable mind and body will follow a healthy heart. Good governance and leadership must stem from the heart, and wellbeing is fundamental for developing knowledgeable minds and capable people.

Establish a clear vision

It is an essential responsibility of the INUTF and the future governing body of INU to establish a clear vision rooted in community needs to provide the greatest possible benefit to communities in the region. Revisiting and reinvigorating the vision throughout the life of the university will ensure that its purpose is maintained and not easily swayed by the influence of external forces or motivations.

Create a place that serves all students

The INU will be a place of joy and safety for its students, teachers, and staff. Governed by Inuit, the university will provide open, accessible, and relevant programming that is lived and applicable to Inuit life. The university will be a place that provides opportunities for all Inuit to contribute, and to obtain the highest levels of learning. This learning environment requires flexible and accessible wrap-around student support systems.

Question 2: *What are the main **challenges/problems/gaps** in relation to... [rephrase content relative to the main theme you have selected]?*

Unique challenges require unique solutions

Some of the unique challenges that the INU governance will face are:

Connecting communities in four vast and remote regions: Located mostly above the treeline, Inuit Nunangat consists of 51 communities across four jurisdictions over roughly 35% of Canada's land mass and 50% of its coastline. Developing a university in Inuit Nunangat where most communities are accessible only by air or boat, and divided by thousands of miles where essential infrastructure, such as housing, water, roads, broadband, and social services have been neglected, will come at a very high cost and will require a strong determinant vision with innovative solutions. The INU governing board will also need to navigate regional, provincial, and national jurisdictions in order to create an accrediting institution that is accountable to students across the four regions with diverse aspirations for their communities.

Degrees not available in mother tongue: The Inuit language, Inuktitut, is the first or preferred language spoken by the majority of Inuit, and yet fluency is declining, and in some regions endangered. Much of Inuit worldview is situated in its language, and governance conducted in Inuktitut is essential for performing its role. Canadian universities do not offer degrees in Inuktitut, and post-secondary programs offered in Inuktitut are not given the same level of accreditation as those in French and English, and so graduates of post-secondary enter governing positions without Inuktitut higher education, contributing into a cycle of declining fluency and endangerment. Further complicating the precarious state of Inuktitut in Inuit Nunangat is the inequitable and insufficient funding dedicated to heritage language, compared to those for learning English and French.

Exclusion of Inuit values in current systems: Colonial education systems have little consideration for Inuit-specific knowledge systems or living conditions, and they do not address the barriers faced by Inuit students, so Inuit cannot rely on these structures for developing their system of higher education. INU leaders will have the challenge of pushing back on inflexible programming, impenetrable bureaucracies, strict regulations and enrolment practices, and design an Inuit-led system that builds back pride, confidence and resilience toward learner success and community self-sufficiency.

Inequity & Inaccessibility: The legacies of racism, colonialism, and exclusion of Inuit continue to act as barriers to educational attainment. Some of the social and economic disparities within Canada include: 34% to 86% Inuit to non-Inuit have high school diplomas, the median income of Inuit to non-Inuit is \$23,500 to \$92,000 CAD, and 52% to 9% Inuit to non-Inuit live in crowded homes. Inuit often take 9-10 years to obtain a university degree, and the 5% who do are highly sought after for high-ranking positions before having the opportunity to serve the general public first. Inuit identity and inspiration are rooted in the arctic and yet most post-secondary student must leave their homeland to obtain a degree in higher education.

Question 3: What needs to *change* or be *created* to face these challenges *within* and/or *outside* of higher education institutions?

In the initial discussions about developing an INU governance model, the INUTF and partners have identified some important criteria for addressing the challenges and pursuing the vision of the university.

Inuit control: All aspects of university decisions and operations will be regulated by Inuit. While remaining accountable to government and funders, the university will remain autonomous from government, private sector, or other outside entities, allowing Inuit the space and time to re-envision the future of their communities. This entails retaining control of the design and delivery of academic programs, research in the Arctic, implementation of student supports and services, degree-granting, application and exit criteria, and the careful choice of partners and affiliates to the university.

Inuktitut as a Pillar: The maintenance, revitalization, and promotion of Inuktitut across all fields and sectors in Inuit Nunangat will be a pillar of university governance. Inuktitut will be integral to the culture of the school, and the governing body will ensure the university is a place where Inuit can go to strengthen their language, become teachers, researchers, administrators, and merchants who thrive using Inuktitut.

Participatory Governance: Governance should engage the people in communities who will be impacted by the activities of the university through a rotation of representatives from each community across Inuit Nunangat. This engagement would go beyond governance to include co-creating programming and student support services that are integral to Inuit culture and needs, and maintaining solutions for the feasibility and sustainability of the university.

Collaborative and decentralized: Decision-making and university operations should not take place in an ivory tower that is beyond reach of the people it serves. Starting small, good governance builds a strong network of Inuit-selected partners and affiliates that respect and support Inuit self-determination and control over Inuit knowledge and land. Through a horizontal model, governance will happen by consensus with all positions held within the university, including instructors, students, elders, technicians who represent all four regions and their distinct communities. This model will build community capacity and engagement avoiding distance between the university operators and its direct stakeholders.

Flexible, accountable, and process-oriented: A governance body must address issues as they come up, learn from failings, and readjust when veering from the vision. This requires systems that are agile and able to adapt to the dynamic needs of students, staff, and the communities, and that have the know-how to push back against systems that are not working. For example, visionaries will start by learning from the successes of existing post-secondary programs, and work to empower, rather than overlap their initiatives.

Visionary and Action-oriented: Governance will maintain a vision that builds on the pride of Inuitness. Inuit stories, for example, provide Inuit with ways to expand their imagination to help invent solutions to problems. Holistic approaches must be embedded into the foundation of the university, right from its governance model. Inuit laws and worldview will guide and stabilize human lives and society, through compassion for one another.

Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were particularly emphasised during this consultation?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: No poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 14: Life below water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Zero hunger | | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 15: Life on land |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Good health and well-being | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 16: Peace and justice strong institutions |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 4: Quality education | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 10: Reduced inequality | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 5: Gender equality | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 13: Climate action | |

You may provide additional feedback...

Are there any other issues that should be considered in relation to higher education challenges and options in your community, your region, the world?

Is there any other comment you wish to share with UNESCO or the organisers of the WHEC2022?

A Call for Action

A strong system of governance requires respect and support for Inuit ways of teaching, learning, and knowledge of climate, good governance, society norms and practices from partners and stakeholders across Canada and around the world.

This paper is a call to action to work with us, learn from us, and support the reinvention of higher education through the inclusion of Inuit specific policies and approaches to the international road map. Universities are encouraged to support Inuit path to self-determination by learning about Inuit unique place in time, and our need for time to re-strengthen families, homes, society from colonial traumas.

List of participants

[Please, include the moderator (s)]

M r./ M rs .	First name	Last name	Title/organisation	Nationality	Email address (if the participant wishes to receive information about the WHEC2022)	Indicate with a "NO" if the participant DOES NOT want to be
	Natan	Obed	President, Inuit Tapiriit	Canadian		
	Joe	Karetak	IQ Research Coordinator, Aqqiumavvik Society	Canadian		
	Shirley	Tagalik	Chairperson, Board of Directors, Aqqiumavvik	Canadian	inukpaujaq@gmail.com	
	Papatsi	Kotierk	Policy Analyst-Education & Language, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (INUTF)	Canadian		
	David	Korgak	Assistant Director-Social & Cultural Development, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (INUTF)	Canadian		
	Jesse	Mike	Director of Social & Cultural Development, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.	Canadian		
	Lisa	Meshar	Director of Post-Secondary Student	Canadian		
	Roger	Robidoux	Deputy General Manager, Kativik Ilisarniliriniq	Canadian		
	James	Vandenberg	Education Consultant,	Canadian		
	Piers	Kreps	Associate Director-Government Affairs,	Canadian		
	Alexandrea	Gordon	Policy and Research Coordinator-Government Affairs, Inuvialuit Regional	Canadian		
	Leena	Evic	Executive Director,	Canadian	leena@pirurvik.c	
	Tracy	Evans-Rice	Assistant Director of Training & Employment-Education Division,	Canadian		
	Roxanne	Nochasak	Post-Secondary Student Councillor-Education Division, Nunatsiavut	Canadian		

	Jodie	Lane	Director of Education, Nunatsiavut Government (National Committee on	Canadian		
	Michael	Mahon	President & Vice Chancellor, University of	Canadian		
	Ralph	Nilson	President Emeritus, Vancouver Island	Canadian		
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