

Responding to the TRC's Calls to Action

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission published 94 Calls to Action tasking governments and institutions to amend their policies and practices to redress the harms of the Indian Residential School (IRS) system.

Calls to Action 7 and 92 are particularly relevant to you as a work-integrated learning (WIL) practitioner. With these calls in mind, reflect on how you, through your interactions with WIL program developers and employers, hold power to advance and sustain a process of reconciliation.

Call to Action 7 calls for the elimination of education and employment disparity in partnership with Indigenous groups and government bodies.

Reflect: (How) Does your institution track Indigenous enrolment in WIL? What strategies exist to address create equitable, accessible, and culturally-relevant WIL programs and placements for Indigenous Students? Who leads and advises these strategic initiatives? How do you define your responsibilities as a bridge between students and hiring partners?

Call to Action 92 (i-iii) “call[s] upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:”

i. Build good relationships with Indigenous peoples and commit to consent and consultation.

“Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.”

ii. Create equitable and sustainable opportunities for Indigenous advancement.

“Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.”

iii. Educate staff on Indigenous histories, cultures, treaties, rights and the legacies of Residential Schools.

“Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

Reflect: (How) Does your unit encourage employers to respond to this TRC Call to Action? Are there strategies or resources available to support employers' efforts to create Indigenous-specific WIL placements and training opportunities? What protocols are in place for engaging with employers hiring for industry or infrastructure projects that face opposition and/or legal challenges?