PATHWAYS
EXECUTIVE SEARCH



# Executive Lead – Operations

Office of the Commissioner of
INDIGENOUS
LANGUAGES

# The Organization

The Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages (OCIL) is an independent organization established under the Indigenous Languages Act to promote and champion Indigenous languages and support the efforts of Indigenous Peoples across Canada to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen their languages. Its work is grounded in the recognition that Indigenous languages are fundamental to identity, culture, spirituality, relationships to the land, worldviews and self-determination.

Established following the passage of the Indigenous Languages Act in 2019, OCIL is part of a much longer movement led by Indigenous Peoples to protect Indigenous language rights and reverse generations of language loss. The Commission's first Commissioner and Directors were appointed in 2021, with representation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.

**Vision:** All Indigenous languages in Canada are safe, vibrant and thriving.

**Mission:** The Commission promotes and champions all Indigenous languages in Canada and supports Indigenous Peoples in the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of their languages, so that no language is left behind.

**Mandate:** Under the Indigenous Languages Act, OCIL's mandate includes:

- promoting and increasing awareness and understanding of Indigenous languages;
- supporting the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen their languages;
- supporting innovative Indigenous language projects;
- facilitating the resolution of language disputes and reviewing complaints; and
- undertaking research and studies related to the funding and use of Indigenous languages.

The Commission also plays an important accountability role, reporting annually on the use and vitality of Indigenous languages in Canada; the needs and progress of Indigenous communities and language organizations; the adequacy of federal funding for Indigenous language initiatives; and the implementation of the Indigenous Languages Act.

# The Organization continued

## Strategic Priorities

The Commission's 2021–2026 Strategic Plan places Indigenous communities at the centre of its work. Its five interconnected strategic priorities are:

- **Communities:** strengthening relationships with Indigenous communities and ensuring that communities remain at the heart of OCIL's decisions and activities.
- **Office and Infrastructure:** continuing to build the governance structures, policies, systems, and physical infrastructure required of a national organization.
- **Operational Capacity:** developing the people, organizational structures, and functions required to fully deliver on the Commission's mandate.
- **Relationships:** establishing and strengthening relationships across Canada and internationally to broaden and amplify efforts to reclaim, revitalize, maintain, and strengthen Indigenous languages.
- **Projects:** advancing research, innovation, and other initiatives that further OCIL's mandate, including exploration of new technologies and approaches to language education and revitalization.

The plan takes a holistic approach: these priorities are understood as interconnected rather than sequential, with learning, adaptation and relationships integral to how OCIL measures progress. Community involvement, continuous improvement, and OCIL's effectiveness as a partner are central to its approach to measuring success.

Review the 2021-2026 strategic plan **here**, and the 2025-2026 Annual Report **here**.

## Governance

The Commission is an independent organization established under the Indigenous Languages Act. It is led by a Commissioner and up to three Directors, who are appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, following consultation with Indigenous governments, governing bodies and organizations. The appointment process is designed to ensure representation of the interests of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples.



# The Organization continued

## Looking Ahead

As OCIL concludes its first five-year strategic period, it has evolved from a newly created organization into a national and international convenor on Indigenous language revitalization. Recent work has included research into the health and vitality of Indigenous languages and the adequacy of funding; development of pathways for fluency and immersion teacher education; engagement with Indigenous communities and language champions; support for innovation; and expanded national and international collaboration.

Its work contributes to implementation of the Indigenous Languages Act, relevant Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the objectives of the United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032).



# The Opportunity

The **Executive Lead – Operations** is a senior leadership role with broad responsibility for the people, systems, and corporate functions that support the Commission's work. Reporting to the Commissioner and CEO, the Executive Lead – Operations provides strategic and operational leadership across Finance, Human Resources, and Information Management, with responsibility for compliance, organizational performance and effective people management.

The Executive Lead – Operations will play a key role in strengthening practices that reflect Indigenous values, knowledge systems, cultural protocols and approaches to governance, accountability and relationships. Working closely with the Executive Lead - National Centre for Indigenous Languages, the position will support the development of an environment that recognizes the distinct rights, perspectives and priorities of Indigenous Peoples. The role will bring a demonstrated understanding of Indigenous organizational development and relational accountability to organizational planning and decision-making, to ensure operational practices support the Commission's unique mandate and responsibilities to Indigenous Peoples.

As a trusted advisor to the Commissioner and CEO, the Executive Lead - Operations will bring an operational perspective to organizational planning, decision-making, and the implementation of priorities. Working in close partnership with the Executive Lead - National Centre for Indigenous Languages, they will help connect the Commission's operational capacity with its broader mandate, while ensuring strong internal systems, accountability and collaboration across the organization.

# Key Responsibilities

## Operational Oversight and Leadership (40%)

Lead operational planning processes across all business lines through an Indigenous-centred approach that reflects in a manner that reflects Indigenous values, perspectives, knowledge systems and approaches to governance.

- Support the development of operational policies and processes that are culturally responsive, accessible and reflective of Indigenous approaches to relationship building, collaboration, and accountability.
- Identify opportunities to adapt conventional administrative practises to better support Indigenous ways of working and the Commission's unique mandate

## Finance:

- Oversee OCIL's financial activities to ensure effective financial stewardship, compliance with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements, and adherence to the terms of federal funding agreements in line with the Commission's strategic objectives and legislative obligations.
- Provide strategic oversight of the administration of federal funding, including federal funding agreements, eligible expenditures, financial controls, reporting obligations and compliance obligations.
- Ensure there is an effective system for accurate, reliable, and timely financial reporting.
- Monitor and report financial performance, compliance, and internal financial controls to ensure adherence to established budgets and take corrective action as required for all items, including those with impact on OCIL's current and future business decisions.
- Ensure financial and administrative processes are in line with funder are responsive to the realities of working with Indigenous Peoples, communities, Elders, knowledge keepers and language champions
- Provide timely, accurate, and complete reports to all stakeholders and ensure all legislative reporting requirements are met.

# Key Responsibilities

## Human Resources:

- Oversee OCIL's HR policies and practices, providing leadership and guidance on HR matters.
- Champion culturally responsive, inclusive and trauma-informed human resources policies and processes. Provide leadership to the Senior Manager – Finance & HR in HR program management, including cohesive and high-performing teams, collective results delivery, and contribution to the vision and mandate of the Commission.
- Provide leadership in the development and implementation of a progressive workforce/talent strategy which ensures high-quality staff are recruited, performance is enabled and managed, and workplace safety is maintained.
- Promote recruitment, retention and professional development approaches that recognize Indigenous knowledge, lived experience, and community-based leadership.
- Develop effective and measurable goals for performance of the Human Resources business line.
- Support approaches to employee relations, conflict resolution and organizational change that recognize Indigenous perspectives and culturally responsive practices.
- Promote opportunities for employees to continually strengthen their understanding of Indigenous histories, rights, languages, cultural protocols and contemporary realities.
- Understand and meet health and safety compliance responsibilities, ensuring clear consultation and communication with employees on health and safety issues.

## Information Management:

- Oversee and provide direction to the IT/IM business line, including leadership, guidance and knowledge in records, archival and retention systems.
- Advance information management practices that respect Indigenous data sovereignty, Indigenous intellectual and cultural property rights, and ethical stewardship in respect of the collection, management, use and sharing of information.
- Monitor the information management processes and ensure procedures are adequate and efficiently organized.
- Provide oversight on the maintenance of records.

# Key Responsibilities continued

## Strategic Leadership (30%)

- Contribute to and actively promote the Commission's purpose and oversight of strategy, organizational priorities, vision and values.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and contemporary impacts of colonial systems on Indigenous Peoples and organizations and apply this understanding to organizational leadership and implementation of corporate services.
- Foster relationships and approaches that respect Indigenous protocols, knowledge systems and diverse perspectives.
- Translate strategic priorities into multi-year operational plans, work plans and measurable outcomes in alignment with Commission's direction and Indigenous perspectives and approaches.
- Manage and maintain key internal and external relationships to ensure consistent messaging, expectations and operational readiness
- Represent the Commission in meetings, consultations and engagements as directed by the Commissioner and CEO and provide a good information flow with others in the Commission.
- Work collaboratively with the Executive Lead, National Centre, to support integrated organizational planning, shared strategic priorities, and effective coordination between corporate operations and mandate delivery.
- Support the enhancement and growth of a cohesive organization through an Indigenous-centred lens
- Actively participate as a leader within, and member of, the Commission's team.

## People and Team Leadership (30%)

- Build and maintain a positive, cohesive and high-performing team, primed to deliver collective results within an Indigenous-based operational framework grounded in respect, reciprocity, cultural humility, relational accountability, and shared learning.
- Provide guidance, coaching and leadership to direct report managers as required
- Lead and reinforce a strong accountability and high-performing culture, with engagement, collaboration across teams, knowledge sharing, ongoing learning, creativity, and Indigenous values
- Demonstrated leadership in providing a culturally responsive and trauma-informed environment.

# Key Responsibilities continued

- Facilitate interdepartmental coordination to ensure smooth workflow, informational exchange and decision-making while promoting a strong Indigenous-based structure and process.
- Ensure that project goals are well-defined and communicated to team members.
- Support the Commission in building and maintaining strong working relationships among the management team.
- Oversee effective and appropriate communication and sharing of information, knowledge, and expertise within the Commission.

## Compensation

The salary is $180,000 per year. The Commission offers a competitive benefits package, including medical and dental benefits, a pension plan, paid holidays, and additional days off throughout the year, including federal and provincial holidays. The Commission offers a wonderful supportive work environment, with opportunities for career development, mentorship, and professional development.

## Location and Work Arrangement:

This role is located in Ottawa with a hybrid work arrangement. Considerations can be made for cities with OCIL offices.

# The Candidate

The ideal candidate is an experienced operational leader with strong business acumen, sound judgment, and the ability to provide oversight across multiple corporate functions, including finance, human resources, and information management. They will be comfortable translating strategic priorities into operational plans, supporting organizational decision-making, ensuring compliance with legislative and governance requirements, and advancing organizational effectiveness through an Indigenous-centred lens. They will demonstrate an ability to deliver culturally responsive and trauma-informed leadership and the ability to work effectively with Indigenous Peoples, communities, Elders, and knowledge keepers.

# The Candidate continued

The successful candidate will bring a collaborative and accountable leadership approach, with the ability to build trusted relationships, support high-performing teams, and foster alignment across the organization. They will demonstrate an ability to integrate Indigenous values, knowledge systems, and culturally responsive practises into operational leadership.

The successful candidate will bring demonstrated experience managing and administering public funding, including federal funding agreements, reporting requirements and obligations to ensure the effective stewardship of public resources.

## Qualifications and Experience

- Experience working with Indigenous organizations or communities.
- Degree in Finance or Business, or equivalent work experience
- Four or more (4+) years of executive leadership, finance, and human resources at management level.
- Senior-level experience administering and managing federal funding.
- Experience applying Indigenous values and culturally responsive approaches to policies, operations and processes.
- Knowledge of IT/IM systems and business lines, including Indigenous data sovereignty and information governance.
- Bilingual (French/English and/or Indigenous Language)
- Strong negotiation skills with the ability to problem-solve collaboratively.
- Excellent communication, organization, and relationship-building skills.
- Experience fostering culturally responsive and inclusive workplaces.
- Preference will be given to Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) Candidates.

The Commission recognizes that language requirements may create barriers for qualified candidates and is committed to a flexible approach that supports equitable access to employment opportunities.



# The Application Process

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume in PDF format to Pathways Executive Search outlining your interest, qualifications, and experience.

Email: **Applications@PathwaysExecutiveSearch.com**, please include **OCIL: Executive Lead – Operations** in the subject line.

For more details or to further explore this important leadership opportunity, please contact:


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**Pathways Executive Search** is an international executive recruitment firm, known for its ability to attract and recruit talent in culturally grounded ways. Guided by Indigenous values and principles of Indigenous inclusion, Pathways walks with those looking to broaden candidate pools, find qualified and experienced candidates, and live out their values and commitment to creating workplace cultures where people can thrive.