



NUNATSIAVUT
kavamanga Government

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

INUIT TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE DATA STRATEGY

ISSUE DATE: January 09, 2026

CLOSING DATE AND TIME: February 02, 2026 at 4.00pm Atlantic Time

Context

The Nunatsiavut Government (NG) was established in 2005 following the establishment of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (LILCA). LILCA includes self-government provisions rendering the NG a regional Inuit Government within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The NG has authority over many central governance areas including health, education, housing, culture and language, justice and community matters.

The NG is in need of a comprehensive, external-facing data strategy that serves as a resource for researchers and governments to understand Inuit data sovereignty and their role in it. This strategy will be developed in collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Data Governance Strategy and include guidance on the respectful care, protection, and use of Inuit Traditional Knowledge.

Project Overview, Objectives and Scope

Overview

This initiative will ensure that all aspects of data governance, management, and use are guided by Inuit self-determination, uphold the principles of data sovereignty, and incorporate Inuit Traditional Knowledge in ways that are culturally respectful and protect community rights.

The resulting data strategy and supporting frameworks will include background on Inuit data, highlighting Inuit data challenges and needs such as aggregation, limited access and control of Inuit Data, misalignment with data and research priorities, infrastructure, gatekeeping, data quality/ relevance, digital divide, etc. It will provide a clear framework for managing research data, Inuit knowledge - including traditional knowledge, cultural practices, and collective knowledge – as well as other data assets, with the Nunatsiavut Government (NG) serving as the custodian of the data. The strategy will recognize ownership and property rights, implement safeguards to protect them, support equitable partnerships, and build community capacity to engage with and use the data responsibly.

Objectives

The objectives of the Project, in collaboration with the Nunatsiavut Data Governance Strategy, are to develop a comprehensive, Inuit Traditional Knowledge Data Strategy and supporting frameworks, policies, and tools for the Nunatsiavut Government that defines and protects Inuit data sovereignty, establishes clear policies and frameworks for respectful data use and provides practical tools, agreements, and communication plans to guide researchers, governments, and communities in managing, sharing, and safeguarding Inuit traditional knowledge and data. A successful proponent will:

- Create a definition of “Data Sovereignty” for the Nunatsiavut Government using NG’s existing guiding principles.
- Develop clear, culturally appropriate, and legally sound policies for managing an Inuit traditional knowledge data system.
- Develop a clear policy for external stakeholders on data access, sharing, and use aligned with the Nunatsiavut Governance Data Governance Framework and respecting Inuit Data Sovereignty.
- Ensure the data policy respects and uses Inuit traditional knowledge appropriately, including in accordance with the context in which it was provided.

- Design a data system that enables the NG to manage research data and Inuit traditional knowledge – in a way that preserves cultural integrity, recognizes ownership and property rights, and supports fair and transparent collaboration between NG, Inuit communities, and external partners.
- Support and provide training to build Inuit capacity for managing and overseeing all data processes, including research data, Inuit traditional knowledge, and other data assets.
- Help NG identify and suggest ways to protect the rights of Inuit crafters and artists so they keep control over their creative data and information.
- Conduct an environmental scan of Indigenous approaches to knowledge governance, including definitions of Indigenous knowledge, and research ethics, advisory process, and permitting systems, with a focus on recognized Inuit and other Indigenous organizations.
- Review and provide recommendations on how to strengthen the Nunatsiavut Government Research Advisory Committee (NGRAC), including its membership, Terms of Reference, review criteria, application, decision-making, permitting procedures and enhancement of partnerships between researchers/institutions and Inuit communities in Nunatsiavut.

These objectives are achieved through the development of multiple standalone documents, frameworks, policies, agreements, and tools as outlined in the deliverables.

Scope of Work

The scope of this project includes the development of a comprehensive, external-facing Inuit Data Strategy that upholds Inuit self-determination and the principles of data sovereignty. The strategy will address Inuit Data challenges and needs. It will provide guidance on the respectful care, protection, and use of Inuit Traditional Knowledge, cultural practices, and collective knowledge, while establishing safeguards to protect Inuit ownership and rights. The strategy will also serve as a resource for researchers, non-government organizations and other governments, offering a clear framework for responsible data governance and building community capacity to engage meaningfully in data initiatives.

Deliverables

The successful proponent will be expected to provide the following deliverables to support the development of comprehensive data strategy:

Foundations of Inuit Data

A comprehensive background section on Inuit data, including why this strategy is needed, the history of Inuit Data Sovereignty, Inuit perspectives on data, and key challenges. This deliverable will also reference the existing definition of Nunatsiavut Government Data (see below for the details definition) – including Inuit Traditional Knowledge as data and incorporate compelling statistics/stories to illustrate the importance and potential of Inuit data.

Definition of Nunatsiavut Data: *All Nunatsiavut information and data, both internal and external, is valued asset for Labrador Inuit. Nunatsiavut information and data is deserving of careful governance and management around Short-term and Medium-term use and Long-term re-use.*

*Across all physical and digital space and time, **Nunatsiavut Data** is all traditional, historical, archaeological, archival, cultural, social, commercial, legal, governmental, financial, organizational, health, medical, educational, economic, environmental, scientific, lands and resources knowledge that is used as information that impacts the individual and collective rights of Beneficiaries.*

Nunatsiavut Data *includes knowledge that is digitally and physically stored internally and externally from Nunatsiavut.*

Nunatsiavut Data *also includes, but is not limited to, any knowledge and information concerning and for and by beneficiaries, as well as on and for the lands, waters and sea ice protected under the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement.*

*Examples of **Nunatsiavut Data** may include archival records, Inuit cultural material, archaeological material, media files, printed photos, hand-drawn maps, books, carvings, oral histories, biological samples, survey results, notebooks, spreadsheets, electronic health records, sensor measurements, model predictions, and other mediums or forms.*

Inuit Data Sovereignty and Governance Strategy

A detailed strategy will be developed to define data sovereignty specific to Nunatsiavut, outlining Inuit rights to develop, control, and access data collected within their region (using NG's existing guiding principles). This document would serve as the legal and ethical backbone of the Nunatsiavut Data Governance Strategy, ensuring all subsequent actions align with Inuit authority. The strategy will also include recommendations for training, capacity building, and ongoing support to ensure that the principles of Inuit data sovereignty are clear understood and implemented in practice.

External Data Governance Policy

A clear, complete, and accessible policy tailored for external stakeholders, outlining Nunatsiavut Government guiding principles, expectations, and protocols for data access,

sharing, and use. This policy document will guide external researchers, partners, and institutions in aligning with Nunatsiavut Government Data Governance Framework and respecting Inuit Data Sovereignty.

Policies for an Inuit Traditional Knowledge Data System

A set of policies that comprehensively details how an Inuit Traditional Knowledge data system should operate, ensuring NG serving as the custodian of the data with clear rules for storage, access, and use. It would include standards for researchers, such as obtaining permission and following usage restrictions, to maintain Inuit data sovereignty. The NG has an existing Data Governance Strategy. This RFP is intended to expand the Data Governance Strategy to include clear guidelines for external proponents, particularly as it relates to the respectful care, protection, and use of Inuit Traditional Knowledge.

Protocols and Recommendations for Respectfully Incorporating Inuit Traditional Knowledge

A complete set of policies detailing how to respectfully incorporate Inuit Traditional Knowledge into data practices. These policies should ensure Inuit Traditional Knowledge is maintained its holistic form and respected as its own knowledge system. They may include practical examples and best practices to prevent misuse or decontextualization of cultural knowledge. The policies should also provide guidance for both internal and external researchers on respectfully using Inuit and scientific knowledge together in research projects, covering ethical considerations, community engagement strategies, and tools to help researchers in maintain Inuit authority and data integrity. These policies should be developed to be delivered and upheld through the Nunatsiavut Government Research Advisory Committee and include protocols for respectful and appropriate data collection, verification, analysis, and dissemination.

Intellectual Property Rights Guidelines for Crafters/Artists

In addition to any protections that exist under the *Copyright Act*, provide recommendations for a legal framework or set of guidelines protecting the intellectual property of Inuit crafters and artists, ensuring their creative data (e.g., designs, methods) remains under their control and is not exploited, or used without consent.

Detailed Partnership Framework Agreement

A detailed Partnership Framework Agreement that researchers and institutions must sign to collaborate with Nunatsiavut Government, mandating partnership, consent, data security and confidentiality, with ongoing guidance from Inuit. This agreement should ensure research benefits the Inuit community, respects its priorities, and includes provisions to assess potential impacts. While the agreement should be detailed, it must also be flexible, allowing NG to modify it as needed. The agreement should be developed in consultation with partners –

academic, Non-Government Organization (NGO) and other government – to ensure it meet their needs.

Research Oversight and Community Impact Review Framework

A combined process and set of tools to strengthen Nunatsiavut Government’s Research Advisory Committee and its ability to review and guide research projects. This will include a strategic review of the Committee’s membership, Terms of Reference, review criteria, and procedures for application, decision-making, and permitting – ensuring ethical considerations, Inuit values, and community priorities are upheld. The framework will also provide a practical guide/manual for assessing the potential *social, cultural, and community* impacts of research (distinct from environmental assessments)

Communication Plan

A clear and complete package of plans with tools to show how the Nunatsiavut Government Data Strategy’s goals, progress, and benefits are shared with Inuit communities, NG’s staff, and external stakeholders. The plan should explain what data exists (via metadata), including research data and Inuit Traditional Knowledge, in a way that is easy to understand and respects cultural practices. It should include a schedule for updates, templates and key messages for sharing information, guidance on how to talk about data respectfully. The plan should include the main requirements, but additional ideas and tools can be added as needed.

Environmental Scan of Knowledge Governance

A comprehensive report summarizing the approaches of Inuit and other Indigenous organizations for knowledge governance, research ethics, advising, and permitting systems. This report will identify best practices, frameworks, and policies relevant to Nunatsiavut Government context, providing a foundation for strengthening research governance.

Required Proposal Content

Summary

Responses shall include an abstract of no more than one (1) page on the information presented in the proposal and the proponent’s unique qualifications and services.

Project Approach and Workplan

Outline your proposed methodology for completing the above Project Objectives, Scope and Deliverables.

Schedule of Rates and Fees

The proponent shall describe how professional fees will be calculated for each of the tasks outlined in the Project Objectives above. All prices quoted in the proposal are to be in Canadian funds and are to show applicable taxes.

Background, Experience & Capabilities

Provide general information on the proponent, including a brief history and the number of years in business. The proposal should include resumes, relevant project experience, availability, current workload and office location of all key personnel, as well as previous work samples and history relevant to the RFP.

Inuit Content

The proponent must fill out and submit the Inuit Content Scoresheet located in Appendix A of this RFP. Failure to do so will result in the Proponent's receiving a score of zero.

References

The proponent should include references who can speak to relevant work experience.

Evaluation Criteria for Proposals

The NG will evaluate each Proposal received in response to this RFP using the following criteria, which is not intended to be exhaustive and is not ranked in order of preference or priority:

- a)** Completeness, thoroughness and relevance of the proposal submitted in response to this RFP;
- b)** Relevant experience of the proponent;
- c)** Relevant experience and knowledge of key personnel;
- d)** References, including the contact information of former clients;
- e)** Schedule of rates and fees;
- f)** Inuit Content as outlined in the Nunatsiavut Government's *Procurement Act*; and
- g)** Other criteria as may be applicable.

The Nunatsiavut Government reserves the right to discuss any and/or all proposals, to request additional information from the proponents.

The Nunatsiavut Government may not accept the lowest-cost or any proposal and the Nunatsiavut Government reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time. Any proposal that is accepted may be accepted in whole or in part.

The *Procurement Act* will be used to determine the Inuit Content Factor of the submissions and the weighting of the points assigned in this category. **It is the responsibility of proponents to show, in their proposal, a calculation of the Inuit Content Factor as identified in section 17 of the *Procurement Act* and attached hereto as Appendix A. The proponent must include an Inuit Content Scoresheet with their proposal even if the proponent believes that the Inuit Content Factor of their proposal to be '0'. Failure to do so will result in an Inuit Content Factor of '0' being applied to the proposal.**

Instructions to Proponents

Enquiries

All enquiries regarding this Request for Proposals (RFP) must be made in writing by e-mail and addressed to:

Attn:

Sharmin Akhter
Data Leader
Nunatsiavut Government

Telephone: (709) 896-9750 x 265

Email: sharmin.akhter@nunatsiavut.com

Such enquiries should be delivered on or before **January 19th, 2026 at 4:00pm AST** so that questions and answers can be sent to all proponents as an addendum. Information given by word of mouth will not be valid or enforceable.

Addenda

If deemed necessary by the NG, responses to any questions and/or any additional information will be issued by the NG in the form of an addendum, which shall form part of this RFP.

Any addenda issued to this RFP will be posted on the NG website at www.nunatsiavut.com. It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure that it has received any addenda issued prior to the proposal submission date. Upon submitting a proposal, a proponent will be deemed to have received notice of all addenda that have been issued.

Address for Submissions

To be considered, electronic copies of proposals should be sent to:

Sharmin Akhter
Data Leader
Nunatsiavut Government
sharmin.akhter@nunatsiavut.com

NOTE: FACSIMILE TRANSMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Submission Deadline

Proposals must be received on or before **February 02, 2026 at 4:00pm AST** (the “Closing Date”).
PROPOSALS RECEIVED AFTER THAT TIME WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Proposals will be open for acceptance for at least ninety (90) days following the Closing Date.

General Conditions

Governing Law

The laws of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and Nunatsiavut govern this RFP and any subsequent contract that may arise as a result of this RFP.

Cost of Proposal

Preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this RFP is voluntary and any costs associated with proposal preparation, submission, meetings, negotiations or discussions with the NG must be borne by the proponent submitting the proposal.

No Claim

The NG will not be liable to any proponent for any claims, whether for costs, expenses, losses or damages, or loss of anticipated profits, or for any other matter whatsoever, incurred by the proponent in preparing and submitting a proposal, or participating in negotiations for a contract, or other activity related to or arising out of this RFP. Except as expressly and specifically permitted in this RFP, no proponent shall have any claim for any compensation of any kind whatsoever as a result of participating in this RFP and by submitting a proposal each proponent shall be deemed to have agreed that it has no claim.

Proponent's Qualifications

In submitting a proposal, the proponent acknowledges and agrees that it has read, understood and agrees to all terms and conditions described in the RFP and that it has the necessary experience, skills and ability to effectively provide the services.

Acceptance of Proposal

The NG reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP. The NG reserves the right to conduct personal interviews with selected proponents and contact the references provided.

Withdrawal

Proponents may withdraw their proposal at any time prior to acceptance.

No Binding Contract

The NG may, after reviewing the proposals received, enter into discussions with one or more of the proponents, without such discussion in any way creating a binding contract between the NG and any proponent. There will be no binding agreement between any proponent and the NG until a formal contract with negotiated terms has been signed by both the NG and a proponent.

Solicitation of NG Staff and Assembly Members

Prior to the Closing Date, proponents should not establish contact with employees or agents of the NG (including the Nunatsiavut Assembly) regarding this RFP, other than the representative(s) identified without that representative's permission.

Failure to abide by this requirement could be grounds for rejection of the proponent's proposal.

Confidentiality

Any information acquired about the NG by a proponent during this process must not be disclosed unless authorized by the NG, and this obligation survives the termination of the RFP process.

Conflict of Interest

By submitting a proposal, the proponent declares that it has no pecuniary interest in the business of any third party that would cause a conflict of interest or be seen to cause a conflict of interest in carrying out the services.

Modification of Terms

NG reserves the right to modify the terms of this RFP at any time in its sole discretion. This includes the right to cancel this RFP at any time prior to entering into a contract with the successful proponent.

Ownership of Proposals and Freedom of Information

All documents submitted to the NG will become the property of the NG. They will be received and held in confidence by the NG.

Release of Information

While Proposal is Open:

The names of individuals or companies will **not** be released.

At Proposal Opening:

Only the names of proponents will be released, upon request.

After Proposal Opening:

No further information will be released until after a contract is awarded.