

ʔitqawxawizikimik

Everyone Holds This Belief Together

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ART BY DARCY LUKE

Guiding Principles for Research and Engagement Within the Ktunaxa Nation

These guiding principles have been identified through the ongoing *xaxqanaʔ ʔitkiniʔ* research project, which centers on Ktunaxa knowledges, philosophies and intellectual traditions.

While developed in the context of research, these principles hold relevance across problem-solving and engagement activities for all non-Ktunaxa people working within ʔamakis Ktunaxa *Ktunaxa territory*.

Furthermore, they offer insights that can inform other collaborative endeavors that engage community partners and knowledge systems—with proper contextualization and local consultation.

When working on research and engagement within the Ktunaxa Nation, there are no prescribed steps or shortcuts. It is necessary for researchers to engage in meaningful reciprocal relationships, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to maintaining good relations.

These principles are offered as an invitation for initial reflection, which should always come before pursuing research and engagement activities within the Ktunaxa Nation.

Please direct any questions or feedback to both:

Dr. Christopher Horsethief chorsethief@ktunaxa.org
Research Co-Lead & Community Knowledge User

Dr. Sana Shahram sana.shahram@ubc.ca
Research Co-Lead & IH Embedded Health Equity Scholar

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Guiding Principles

1. kitqawizikniyam

For things to be connected together

Relationships between Ktunaxa people and non-Ktunaxa researchers must start before conception of the research project. Appropriate resources, compensation and time should be invested to create and sustain these relationships. Recognizing dominant models of research are often deadline based, it is important to understand that these relationships need to move at the speed of trust, ensuring safety for all researchers involved. Connecting early with Elders and Knowledge Holders (via the Traditional Knowledge & Language [TKL] sector) is essential for guidance and direction on appropriate contacts and processes for your inquiry.

2. ni? ya ksu?ki?upxa

One who still knows something well

Ktunaxa science, built on millennia-old knowledge systems, is valid and rigorous. Learning from Ktunaxa experts to ground activities in locally-specific and culturally-informed protocols, language, methodologies and ways of knowing is strongly encouraged ([see examples here](#)). For example, forming an advisory group of Elders and Knowledge Holders, with budgeting for adequate time and compensation for accessing this expertise throughout projects, is appropriate. Consult TKL for up-to-date honoraria rates and for local catering recommendations for all events and meetings. Whenever possible, employ Ktunaxa-endorsed service providers while in ?amakis Ktunaxa.

3. ?itqawxani?witiyam

A group of people thinking as one

Research partnerships should be grounded in a spirit of co-learning, co-creation of knowledge, and reciprocity to advance mutual goals. All stages of the research process, from planning through completion, should involve meaningful dialogue with a myriad of voices from the Ktunaxa Nation community(ies) relevant to the project, as well as leadership and staff from Ktunaxa Nation administration and governance. Activities should be community-driven, follow the leadership of cultural/ linguistic

experts (generally Elders and Knowledge Holders) and respond to community- identified priorities. Research or engagement activities that relegate Ktunaxa people as passive subjects are unacceptable.

4. ?ukka?a?titma?

To own jointly

Research projects are long-term investments and should aim to contribute to meaningful change for Ktunaxa citizens and future generations.

Funding should invest in and support efforts to revitalize, preserve and restore Ktunaxa language, traditional knowledge systems and knowledge sharing processes, and Ktunaxa scholars and researchers, in meaningful ways for communities. Transparent and regular reporting should include explicit accountability to these aims in order to ensure contribution to strengthening capacity and resiliency in Ktunaxa communities.

5. suki?qapikimik

To do everything with a good heart

Research needs to be reviewed and authorized by the Ktunaxa Research Ethics Committee through their application process prior to other institutional ethics boards. All research and all members of the research team are accountable to Ktunaxa Nation's Code of Ethics for Research ([find here](#)) and other Ktunaxa policies, and these policies supersede any other institutional policies that govern researchers' activities.

6. ksuki? haki? wizki?in kupxa?

To care for, to carry forward, knowledge

The Ktunaxa Nation remain the rightful steward of all research and results from work within Amak?is Ktunaxa. Data belongs to all participants involved in the research; as such, participants, including their family members and subsequent generations, can access data indefinitely. Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC) should steward the data and control its access. By default, data should be anonymized. However, researchers should honour participants' requests for direct attribution when appropriate.

The xazqana? ?itkini? Many Ways of Working on the Same Thing project

The xazqana? ?itkini? project ([website here](#)) is bringing non-Indigenous and Indigenous knowledge-holders together, in meaningful and anti-colonial relationship, to co-design solutions that promote equitable health outcomes across the Ktunaxa Nation. Overseen by Ktunaxa Elders and Knowledge Holders in the xazqana? ?itkini? Advisory Group, Phase 1 of this project (2018-2020) focused on the development of a mutually meaningful Ktunaxa Community Model of Wellness ([report here](#)). Informed by this model, our team is now co-designing solutions to the problem of disconnection to promote the health of Ktunaxa Nation citizens and those who live within ?amakis Ktunaxa.

7. ktunwakakin kupxa?

To uncover knowledge

Cultural knowledge and ownership of knowledge is an integral part of the collective identity, cultural preservation and self-determination of the Ktunaxa Nation, and should not be exploited or co-opted under any circumstances. Appropriate cultural authorities decide if and how information or other creative outputs (e.g. images, videos, audio recordings) are shared. Non- Ktunaxa individuals do not dictate changes or modifications. Reports, publications, grant applications, presentations and any other forms of knowledge sharing should privilege Ktunaxa voices, create space for Ktunaxa language and reflect Ktunaxa knowledge, ways of knowing and ways of sharing information.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING EXAMPLES:

- Present data in block quotes to preserve nuance whenever possible.
- Host research reports and media on KNC's website; other communication channels can redirect to this source.
- Use plain language and avoid jargon or technical terminology.
- Embed and contextualize research findings within the local cultural setting—avoid translation across cultural domains or extrapolating to pan-Indigenous generalizations.