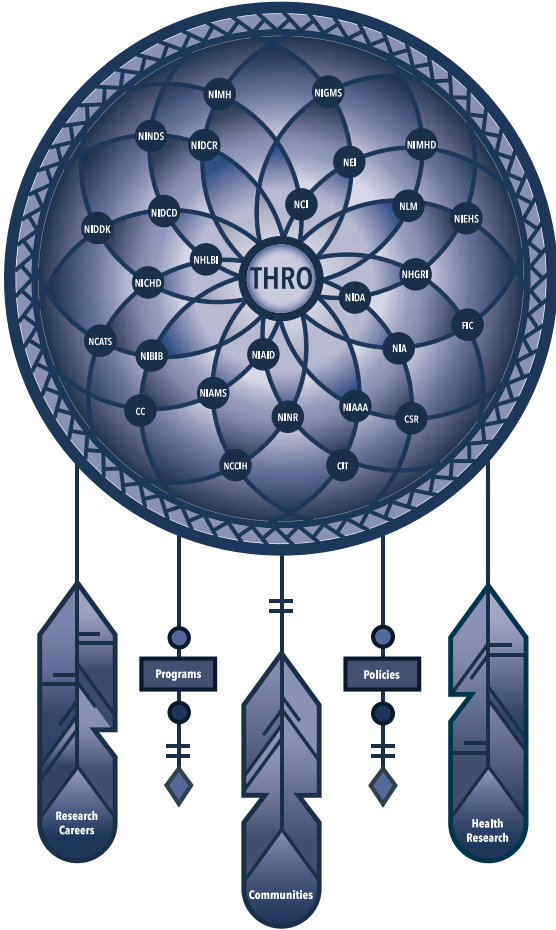


NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023



Tribal Health Research Office



NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research

FY 2019–2023

The purpose of the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023 is to improve the National Institutes of Health’s relationship and collaborative efforts with American Indian/Alaska Native communities by enhancing communication and collaboration, building research capacity, expanding research, and enhancing cultural competency and community engagement.

Foreword



The Tribal Health Research Office (THRO), established in 2015, has reached a milestone that will have a significant impact on biomedical research with American Indian and Alaska Native communities through the publication of the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research for FY 2019–2023. A trans-NIH effort, the Strategic Plan sets the groundwork to further strengthen relationships between the NIH and American Indian and Alaska Native communities to promote health research. Foundations to enhance engagement through active collaboration and communication are critical in developing access to new innovations, research capacity building, and workforce development through student and faculty training.

The THRO's role in overseeing the implementation and evaluation of the elements of the Strategic Plan will contribute to the overarching goals of the agency to support biomedical research that will improve the health of the nation. The Strategic Plan also is an excellent platform for increasing awareness about American Indian and Alaska Native health research opportunities within our intramural and extramural communities.

Many have contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan, and I extend my sincere appreciation for all of their efforts in articulating the strategic priorities.

I invite you to explore the [THRO website](#)¹ for information and updates. I look forward to continuing to build stronger research partnerships between the American Indian and Alaska Native communities and the NIH.

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, National Institutes of Health

THRO Director's Message

A unique government-to-government relationship exists between Indian Tribes and the federal government. This relationship is grounded in the U.S. Constitution and in numerous treaties, statutes, federal case law, regulations, and executive orders that establish and define a trust relationship with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes. This relationship is derived from the political and legal relationship that American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes have with the federal government and is not based on race. Currently, there are 573 federally recognized tribes across the United States, each having its own language, customs, traditions, and health needs.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Tribal Consultation Policy (TCP) was created to strengthen the government-to-government relations with Native communities to improve the health of Tribal nations. The Tribal Health Research Office (THRO) was established in 2015 to ensure the [effective implementation](#)² of the [HHS Tribal Consultation Policy](#)³ by coordinating Tribal health research-related activities across the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and serving as the NIH point of contact for Tribal leaders and communities.

The THRO is pleased to announce the launch of the first NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research for FY 2019–2023. The Strategic Plan marks a milestone for the NIH in that it establishes a roadmap for the agency to address health research needs for American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The strategic objectives are predicated on effective communication and collaboration through meaningful engagement with American Indian and Alaska Native communities and leaders. This Strategic Plan will rely on effective partnerships with community researchers, federal partners, and other stakeholders to successfully meet each objective. A key outcome from these partnerships is the ability to identify metrics for use in monitoring and evaluating the progress of research endeavors while enhancing the scope, research capacity, and training of the health researchers. This is an important step toward improving the health and health-related outcomes of Native communities and is a fundamental principle in NIH's mission to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability, and to improve the health of the nation.

As Director of the THRO, I want to acknowledge the American Indian and Alaska Native communities that have engaged with the THRO and provided valuable insight and contributions to help shape and direct the office's initiatives. The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) plays a critical role in addressing the needs of underrepresented communities and is a valuable partner to the THRO. We will continue to rely on the NIMHD for its expertise in many areas that are important to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Additionally, I want to thank the representatives from across the NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs), especially members of the NIH Tribal Health Research Coordinating Committee (THRCC) and THRO staff, for their efforts in finalizing this Strategic Plan.

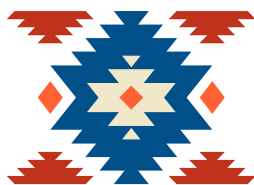
Thank you all.

Sincerely,

Dave Wilson, Ph.D.
Director, Tribal Health Research Office

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Purpose of the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023..... | i |
| Foreword | ii |
| THRO Director’s Message | iii |
| National Institutes of Health | 1 |
| Tribal Health Research Office..... | 1 |
| THRO Mission Statement..... | 2 |
| NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research..... | 2 |
| Strategic Goals | 5 |
| Strategic Goal 1: Enhancing Communication and Collaboration | 6 |
| Strategic Goal 2: Building Research Capacity for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities | 8 |
| Strategic Goal 3: Expanding Research | 10 |
| Strategic Goal 4: Enhancing Cultural Competency and Community Engagement | 12 |
| The Path Forward: Developing the Strategic Plan..... | 14 |



National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is the nation's biomedical research agency—making and supporting vital, life-saving discoveries and improvements to the health of the nation. The mission of the NIH is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and apply that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability. The NIH, through its Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs), aims to improve its relationship with American Indian and Alaska Native communities by supporting indigenous health research.

Tribal Health Research Office

In December 2010, the HHS issued a [Tribal Consultation Policy \(TCP\)](#),⁴ which states that before any HHS action is taken that will significantly affect Indian Tribes, consultation with Indian Tribes will occur to the extent practicable and permitted by law. The policy calls on each HHS Operating and Staff Division to have an accountable process ensuring meaningful and timely input by Indian Tribes in the development of policies that have Tribal implications. In 2014, the NIH released the [NIH Guidance on the Implementation of the HHS Tribal Consultation Policy](#)⁵ to facilitate the implementation of the TCP by the ICOs. For purposes of the NIH TCP implementation guidance, the term “Indian” will be used to refer to Indian Tribes as defined in the United States Code Title 25*, and the Tribal leadership that represents them. A key recommendation from the implementation guidance was the establishment of the [Tribal Health Research Office \(THRO\)](#).⁶ In 2015, the THRO was created in recognition of the importance of ensuring meaningful input from and collaboration with Tribal nations on NIH programs and policies in accordance with the 2010 HHS TCP. The THRO is positioned in the Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI) in the NIH Office of the Director (OD).

* 25 U.S.C. § 479a1 (1994).

THRO Mission Statement

The THRO's mission is to support the development of culturally relevant biomedical and health research vital to improving American Indian and Alaska Native health. In addition, the THRO aims to build trust in the relationships and facilitate further collaboration among American Indian and Alaska Native communities and the NIH ICOs through research efforts that are acceptable and useful to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. To accomplish this, the THRO—

- ◆ Supports, plans, coordinates, reviews, and evaluates American Indian and Alaska Native health research and activities
- ◆ Facilitates collaborative input from federally recognized Tribal communities and Tribal organizations to relevant NIH policies and activities
- ◆ Supports enhancing American Indian and Alaska Native community capacity to innovate in health research
- ◆ Promotes and supports the training of a diverse research workforce to reduce the health disparities in American Indian and Alaska Native populations.

NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research

The NIH is committed to building a strong, coordinated community of American Indian and Alaska Native researchers and expanding scientific knowledge to improve the health of American Indian and Alaska Native communities. To guide the NIH in accomplishing its mission, the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research includes a comprehensive set of strategic goals and objectives. The Strategic Plan focuses on enhancing communication and collaboration, building health research capacity for Tribal communities and organizations, evaluating progress, and expanding research while simultaneously enhancing cultural competency and community engagement.

To establish priorities and guide trans-NIH activities, the THRO developed the first Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023. This document solidifies the THRO's commitment to enhance the NIH's relationship with American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The THRO will play a key role in facilitating and collaborating with the ICOs to meet the goals and objectives of the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023. The THRO will continue to serve as a primary educational resource on Tribal relations for the ICOs, and to support the ICOs in establishing communication and initial engagement strategies to aid in meeting the strategic objectives.

How Does the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research Support NIH’s Vision for Biomedical Research?

The NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research FY 2019–2023 describes the alignment of the THRO’s mission and objectives with the NIH’s mission to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and apply that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability by drawing on specific connections to the NIH-Wide Strategic Plan, FY 2016–2020. The NIH-Wide Strategic Plan, which was developed to “ensure the agency remains well positioned to capitalize on new opportunities for scientific exploration and address new challenges for human health,” includes four interdependent objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1:
Advance Opportunities in Biomedical Research

OBJECTIVE 2:
Foster Innovation by Setting NIH Priorities

OBJECTIVE 3:
Enhance Scientific Stewardship

OBJECTIVE 4:
Excel as a Federal Science Agency by Managing for Results

NIH OBJECTIVE 1: Advance Opportunities in Biomedical Research emphasizes areas including health promotion, exploring fundamental science, and developing treatments and cures. The THRO is committed to working closely with all NIH ICOs and other federal and non-federal partners (including each HHS Operating Staff Division), and collaboratively with American Indian and Alaska Native communities and organizations to advance biomedical research opportunities in these areas of focus with innovative strategies to support American Indian and Alaska Native research and researchers.

NIH OBJECTIVE 2: Foster Innovation by Setting NIH Priorities includes the NIH focus on setting flexible research priorities based on the best current science to serve as an effective and efficient steward of public resources. To support the NIH achieving this objective, the THRO works closely with advisory and representative bodies to gather input regularly on the alignment of NIH health research support with the public health needs of American Indian and Alaska Native communities and Tribes. To measure and enhance the transparency of this support for American Indian and Alaska Native health research, the THRO leverages NIH portfolio analysis tools to conduct and publish regular and detailed funding analyses.

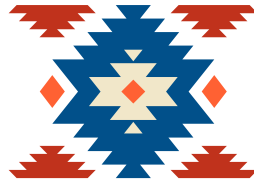
NIH OBJECTIVE 3: Enhance Scientific Stewardship emphasizes the foundational principles of rigor, reproducibility, and innovation in research. Supporting the development and retention of an outstanding health and biomedical research workforce plays a central role in the NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research. The THRO works collaboratively with the

NIH ICOs, extramural researchers, academic institutions, and Tribal communities to increase participation of American Indian and Alaska Native biomedical researchers in the scientific workforce.

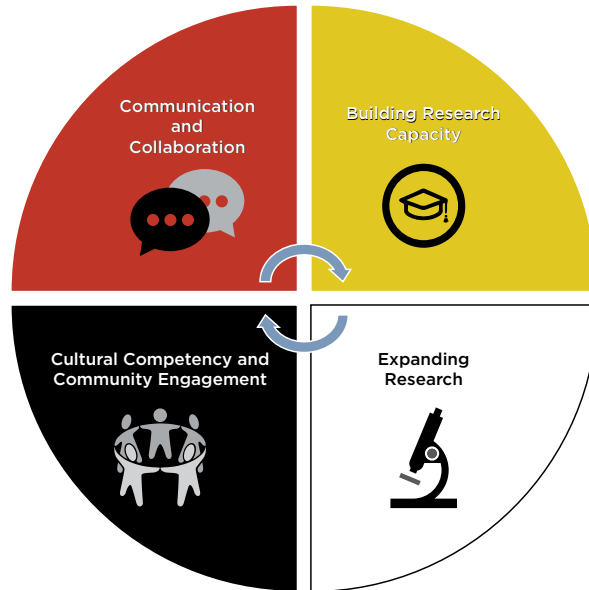
NIH OBJECTIVE 4: Excel as a Federal Science Agency by Managing for Results reflects the imperative that the NIH maintain public trust and serve as an efficient and effective steward of public resources. The Trans-NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research outlines THRO activities that support consistent and meaningful engagement with American Indian and Alaska Native representatives and communities to continuously evaluate the true value of health research initiatives, methodologies, administration, and review processes.

The THRO also prioritizes activities and support for research to develop evidence-based interventions to reduce disparities, including the influence of sex and gender on health and disease in alignment with the NIH's commitment to women's health. The THRO is uniquely positioned to address the social determinants of health, disease, and disability; disproportionate disease risk; and opportunities for progress in prevention as crucial factors in the development of prevention strategies and treatment interventions in areas with disparities in health outcomes across sex and gender.





Strategic Goals



To address the scientific priorities and broader NIH mission in American Indian and Alaska Native health research, the NIH is aligning its collaborative activities with four strategic goals. The THRO, along with the NIH ICOs, developed processes and metrics for evaluating progress on the strategic objectives and their supporting action items to achieve these goals. These processes and metrics—designed with the support and guidance of the Tribal Health Research Coordinating Committee (THRCC), a trans-NIH committee composed of representatives from the NIH ICOs—will support improving overall program efficiency and effectiveness; building a strong, coordinated community of American Indian and Alaska Native researchers; and expanding scientific knowledge to improve the health of American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

In December 2018, the THRO presented the final FY 2019–2023 Strategic Plan to the NIH leadership for review and approval. The Plan was released to the public in 2019.



Strategic Goal 1:

Enhancing Communication and Collaboration

Enhancing communication and collaboration is vital to building relationships based on trust and integrity. The NIH seeks to promote and strengthen communication and collaboration between the NIH and American Indian and Alaska Native communities, as well as among its ICOs, on native health research and discoveries. The goal is to develop a strong, coordinated community of American Indian and Alaska Native researchers and expand scientific knowledge to improve the health of American Indian and Alaska Native communities, as well as to develop research that will be accepted by and useful to these communities.

Strategic Objectives:

- 1.1 **Increase bidirectional communication and coordination** among the NIH, Tribal nations, American Indian and Alaska Native researchers, American Indian and Alaska Native-serving organizations, and agency partners.
- 1.2 **Enhance NIH Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) input** to NIH policies and activities related to American Indian and Alaska Native health.
- 1.3 **Enhance internal trans-NIH communication** to consolidate and coordinate information about American Indian and Alaska Native health needs and ICOs' research, interests, and activities.
- 1.4 **Improve trans-NIH communication with the scientific community** about American Indian and Alaska Native health research, health disparities, and related ICOs' research and activities.

Strategies:

Communication

- ◆ Coordinate in-person meetings either at program research sites or in communities when possible.
- ◆ Communicate and coordinate via the THRO website, THRCC SharePoint, publications, site visits, collaborative documents, and speaking engagements.
- ◆ Create a group email list to disseminate American Indian and Alaska Native-related funding announcements, publications, and other important information for American Indian and Alaska Native health research.
- ◆ Create a central resource for all NIH American Indian and Alaska Native communities with information on NIH ICOs' American Indian and Alaska Native research activities and disseminate the information via the THRO webpage.
- ◆ Develop a biannual newsletter and distribute it via the THRO's social media outlets.
- ◆ Continuously develop and deploy communication strategies to improve access and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of social media platforms, including social media analytics.

Collaboration

- ◆ Establish THRO social media accounts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) to disseminate information, create new partnerships, and strengthen existing ones.
- ◆ Conduct outreach to and solicit input from external American Indian and Alaska Native research and American Indian and Alaska Native-serving organizations, for example, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), National Indian Health Board (NIHB), the Native Research Network (NRN), the Association of American Indian Physicians (AAIP), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH).
- ◆ Host biannual, in-person meetings to gather input from TAC members and American Indian and Alaska Native communities about NIH health research programs and policies that affect them.

Performance Metrics

1. Utilize comprehensive Web analytics to monitor activity and outreach aligned with the THRO's communication objectives.
2. Establish and leverage a social media presence to expand outreach, develop collaborative initiatives, and build awareness of THRO activities.
3. Convene biannual, in-person TAC meetings to facilitate conversation between TAC members and the NIH.
4. Develop collaborative partnerships with external American Indian and Alaska Native-serving organizations to create and enhance THRO processes for effective communication.

Accomplishment Highlights

Tribal Data Sharing and Genetics Policy Development Workshop⁷

Albuquerque, NM
August 30–September 1, 2017

NHGRI Tribal Genetics Research Brief: American Indian and Alaska Native Communities and Genetics Research, March 2018⁸

The THRO/NHGRI collaboratively developed and published this genetics research guide with input from Tribal representatives on culturally appropriate language and information.

Biannual, in-person TAC meetings held regularly since September 2015⁹

In alignment with the responsibilities described in the NIH Guidance on the Implementation of the HHS Tribal Consultation Policy, the TAC has met twice yearly since its inception in September 2015, to exchange information about NIH research policies, programs, and priorities, and to discuss issues that may require government-to-government consultation.



Strategic Goal 2:

Building Research Capacity for American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

To build the research capacity in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, the THRO will work with all NIH ICOs to support research that recognizes the diversity of American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, Tribal organizations, Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and American Indian and Alaska Native researchers. The THRO also will work with NIH ICOs to support research processes that respect the diversity of the communities that support and are supported by Tribes and Tribal organizations. The THRO will work collaboratively across the ICOs to enhance NIH support for research priorities identified by American Indian and Alaska Native communities, recognizing and respecting that the desired outcomes of research will vary among American Indian and Alaska Native communities, institutions, and organizations. The NIH also will work to promote flexible assessment measures, identify potential barriers and models to overcome them, and address the concept that the training of current and future researchers and capacity building are intertwined.

The NIH recognizes the importance of supporting the increased participation of American Indians and Alaska Natives in the biomedical workforce. To support the next generation of American Indian and Alaska Native researchers, the NIH will develop innovative programs and strategies to enhance scientific training opportunities across the continuum from high school students to postdoctoral and tenure-track investigators. The NIH currently supports regional training hubs, creating partnerships with Tribal nations and universities. The training hubs enhance the scientific skills of high school students over two summers to prepare them for competitive internships at the NIH. The THRO is committed to collaborating with the ICOs to develop additional training programs to support and expand the training pathway for American Indian and Alaska Native health and biomedical researchers.

Strategic Objectives:

- 2.1 **Form collaborative partnerships** with Tribes, communities, and research groups to develop strategies for improving American Indian and Alaska Native health research.
- 2.2 **Examine and address the varying complexity and diversity of needs for building research capacity** among different American Indian and Alaska Native groups.
- 2.3 **Increase awareness of relevant NIH research** support and training opportunities among American Indian and Alaska Native groups.
- 2.4 **Expand support for** American Indian and Alaska Native researchers to increase their capacity to secure NIH funding.
- 2.5 **Work to increase the number of American Indian and Alaska Native students** who pursue health and biomedical research careers.
- 2.6 **Strengthen ICO understanding** of how the NIH can best address the health research priorities of American Indian and Alaska Native communities.
- 2.7 **Engage ICO collaborators to expand NIH capacity** to support new and existing research with American Indian and Alaska Native communities and groups.

Strategies:

Building Capacity

- ◆ Support the establishment and dissemination of information on internship programs and mentorship opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native researchers to intended audiences.
- ◆ Establish programs that will provide individual and institutional support for research, including targeted grantsmanship training programs.

- ◆ Develop a comprehensive Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidance resource, including a list of Tribal IRBs, IRB training opportunities, and additional information on American Indian and Alaska Native health research and IRBs.

Collaborative Partnerships

- ◆ Evaluate information on Tribes and how it applies to conducting research.
- ◆ Using information gained from direct engagement with Tribes, develop and expand on the “Points to Consider” document designed for NIH reviewers assessing applications focused on AI/AN populations.
- ◆ Engage the THRCC to support ICO collaboration directly with American Indian and Alaska Native communities with interests in ICO-related grant topics.
- ◆ Utilize widely attended events, including Tribal Consultations, to form direct connections with American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

Performance Metrics

1. Leverage NIH analysis platforms to measure and identify gaps in support for the health research capacity of Tribes, Tribal organizations, and TCUs.
2. Engage the TAC to collaboratively develop strategies for addressing health research capacity needs in different American Indian and Alaska Native communities.
3. Collaborate with ICO partners involved in American Indian and Alaska Native community engagement and health research capacity building with American Indian and Alaska Native communities.
4. Enhance external partnerships with American Indian and Alaska Native-serving organizations and academic institutions and Tribal entities.

Accomplishment Highlights

NIH presentations at the AISES 2018 National Conference, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, October 4–6, 2018¹⁰

Tribal Health Research Office
Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE)
Office of Scientific Workforce Diversity (SWD)
Sexual & Gender Minority Research Office (SGMRO)

2018 NIH/IHS/SAMHSA Tribal Consultation on Opioids¹¹

On May 21 and 22, 2018, the NIH collaborated with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to hold the first tri-operating division Tribal Consultation/Listening Session on the opioid epidemic in Indian country. The 2-day session included a number of presentations from federal and Tribal partners on national and Tribally specific trends in substance-related health outcomes, analyses of the social determinants of health impacting behavioral health outcomes, new research on addiction science, and upcoming funding opportunities.

NIH Request for Information (RFI): Soliciting Additional Input to the NIH 2018 Tribal Consultation on the Opioid Crisis in Indian Country¹²

On January 25, 2019, the NIH issued an RFI to solicit additional input from its stakeholders, including members of the scientific, Tribal, advocacy, and patient communities; basic, clinical, and translational scientists; as well as other interested members of the public.



Strategic Goal 3:

Expanding Research

To further advance research in American Indian and Alaska Native communities, the THRO will work with all NIH ICOs to recognize the historical background, unique challenges, and need to enhance existing opportunities and create new ones. For these changes to be comprehensive, meaningful, and sustainable, bidirectional engagement with American Indian and Alaska Native communities is imperative. Cultural and contextual nuances must be considered to maintain integrity and strengthen the THRO/NIH relationship with the Tribes.

Strategic Objectives:

- 3.1 **Facilitate the increase of American Indian and Alaska Native health and biomedical research**-focused applications.
- 3.2 **Support ICO identification of existing research gaps and health disparities**, and the development of evidence-based, innovative strategies to address them.
- 3.3 **Support the development of training opportunities** across the NIH ICOs for American Indians and Alaska Natives in the biomedical research workforce.
- 3.4 **Collaborate with ICO partners** to increase research opportunities through funding opportunity announcements (FOAs), with input from RFI solicitations for American Indian and Alaska Native researchers and American Indian and Alaska Native-focused projects.
- 3.5 **Support the increase of health and biomedical research grant applications** from American Indian and Alaska Native health and biomedical researchers and for American Indian and Alaska Native-focused health research.

Strategies:

Internal Partnerships

- ◆ Align THRCC, TAC, and Tribal Consultations with existing research and American Indian and Alaska Native community needs.
- ◆ Support increasing funding mechanisms that strengthen NIH networks with American Indian and Alaska Native communities, including administrative supplements to support early stage American Indian and Alaska Native researchers.

External Collaboration

- ◆ Increase awareness of FOAs that address communities, research questions, or methodologies that are aligned with American Indian and Alaska Native community needs.
- ◆ Increase awareness of FOAs that promote innovative methodologies to design and conduct research in small populations.
- ◆ Increase partnerships with Native American Research Centers for Health (NARCH), Intervention Research to Improve Native American Health (IRINAH), and other existing programs that partner collaboratively with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, Tribally based organizations, and research institutions.

Performance Metrics

1. NIH support to increase the diversity of funded research in American Indian and Alaska Native communities (e.g., new FOAs, training opportunities, etc.)
2. NIH ICO workshops and trainings that support American Indian and Alaska Native research and researchers
3. NIH support specific to American Indian and Alaska Native research

Accomplishment Highlights

2017/2018 Tribal Epidemiology Center Collaborative Funding Announcements

2018 Collaborative Minority Health and Health Disparities Research with Tribal Epidemiology Centers (R01)¹³

2018 Collaborative Minority Health and Health Disparities Research with Tribal Epidemiology Centers (R21)¹⁴

Publication of the first NIH American Indian and Alaska Native Health Research Portfolio Analysis

American Indian/Alaska Native Health Research FY 2015|A Quantitative Portfolio Analysis of Research Funded by the NIH, May 2018¹⁵



Holistic Approach to Healing



Strategic Goal 4:

Enhancing Cultural Competency and Community Engagement

The THRO will collaboratively engage all NIH ICOs to better promote an authentic, inclusive, and equitable partnership with American Indian and Alaska Native communities by improving cultural awareness and respect across the NIH and its intramural and extramural research programs. The THRO is committed to the enhancement of cultural competency throughout the NIH and strengthening American Indian and Alaska Native community engagement.

Strategic Objectives:

- 4.1 **Increase awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity** across the NIH ICOs in the following areas:
 - ◆ American Indian and Alaska Native cultural structures and elements
 - ◆ Historical basis of challenges to conducting health research in Native communities
 - ◆ Capacities and skills needed to conduct effective health research with and for American Indian and Alaska Native communities, beyond traditional academic training
- 4.2 **Work collaboratively across the NIH ICOs to enhance the active engagement** of American Indian and Alaska Native communities in all stages of research:
 - ◆ Concept development to direct dissemination of findings to the community
 - ◆ Discussion on implications for indigenous health outcomes
 - ◆ Translation into clinical practice
- 4.3 **Develop a comprehensive strategy to build trust and ensure collaboration** between the NIH ICOs and American Indian and Alaska Native communities and Tribes.

Strategies:

Cultural Competency

- ◆ Design NIH-wide American Indian and Alaska Native Cultural Respect and Competency Training with input from the NIH TAC, the NIH American Indian and Alaska Native Health Communications and Information Work Group led by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS), American Indian and Alaska Native professional associations, and researchers.

Community Engagement

- ◆ Gather input from the NIH TAC, American Indian and Alaska Native professional associations, researchers, and other stakeholders for guidance on developing training content for conducting health research in American Indian and Alaska Native communities; and continue to develop and expand the “Points to Consider” document using information gained from direct engagement with Tribes.

Performance Metrics

1. Impact evaluation of the “Points to Consider” guidance document on NIH ICO support for American Indian and Alaska Native health research
2. Workshops and trainings educating NIH program officials, researchers, and reviewers on research and cultural issues unique to American Indian and Alaska Native communities
3. Community feedback on *the effectiveness of* THRO’s outreach and dissemination of American Indian and Alaska Native health research and collaboration information

Accomplishment Highlights

Hull, S.C., D.R. Wilson (Diné). “Beyond Belmont: Ensuring Respect for AI/AN Communities Through Tribal IRBs, Laws, and Policies.”¹⁶ *The American Journal of Bioethics* 2017;17:7:60-62.

Walajahi, H., D.R. Wilson (Diné), S.C. Hull. “Constructing Identities: The Implications of DTC Ancestry Testing for Tribal Communities.”¹⁷ *Genetics in Medicine* 2019. doi:10.1038/s41436-018-0429-2.

Storytelling about Health and Wellness in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities Video Challenge (2016)¹⁸

National Native American Heritage Month Announcement¹⁹ (November 9, 2017)

Native American Heritage Month Announcement²⁰ (November 19, 2018)



Pottery by David Paytiamo, photo courtesy of the National Library of Medicine.

The Path Forward: Developing the Strategic Plan

The NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research establishes a direction and vision for NIH Tribal Health Research for FY 2019–2023. Development of the Plan was carried out collaboratively through consecutive rounds of input and review from stakeholders and committees internally, externally, and among senior NIH leadership.

In 2016, the NIH TAC worked collaboratively with the THRO to generate strategic priorities. In May 2017, the priorities were organized into strategic categories, presented to both the TAC and the THRCC, and refined into five strategic priorities. The THRCC established subcommittees to develop and define strategic objectives and performance metrics for each strategic priority.

The NIH Annual Tribal Consultation, held in June 2017 in conjunction with the National Indian Health Board's Tribal Public Health Summit in Anchorage, Alaska, focused on soliciting Tribal leader and community input to the NIH Tribal Health Research Strategic Plan.

In December 2017, the THRO issued the public Request for Information [NOT-OD-18-110](#),²¹ designed to solicit input from other government agencies, nongovernment experts, the community, and other stakeholders. The input received informed the development of the Strategic Plan. In August 2018, the THRO presented the first NIH Strategic Plan for Tribal Health Research to the THRCC and received extensive feedback. This feedback helped the THRO to produce a draft of the Strategic Plan in November 2018.



Endnotes

- ¹ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro
- ² dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/policy
- ³ www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/iea/tribal/tribalconsultation/hhs-consultation-policy.pdf
- ⁴ hhs.gov/sites/default/files/iea/tribal/tribalconsultation/hhs-consultation-policy.pdf
- ⁵ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/policy
- ⁶ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro
- ⁷ [dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/dpcpsi/document/Meeting Summary_Tribal Genetic Research and Data Sharing Policy Workshop_508.pdf](https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/dpcpsi/document/Meeting_Summary_Tribal_Genetic_Research_and_Data_Sharing_Policy_Workshop_508.pdf)
- ⁸ [dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2017 AIAN Communities and Genetics Research_508.pdf](https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2017_AIAN_Communities_and_Genetics_Research_508.pdf)
- ⁹ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/tac
- ¹⁰ conference.aises.org/agenda
- ¹¹ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/consultationMay2018
- ¹² grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-19-059.html
- ¹³ grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-17-484.html
- ¹⁴ grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-17-483.html
- ¹⁵ dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/NIH_AI_AN_PA_2015_508FINAL_opt.pdf
- ¹⁶ [dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Beyond Belmont Ensuring Respect for AI AN Communities Through Tribal IRBs Laws and Policies.pdf](https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Beyond_Belmont_Ensuring_Respect_for_AI_AN_Communities_Through_Tribal_IRBs_Laws_and_Policies.pdf)
- ¹⁷ [dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/dpcpsi/document/Constructing identities- the implications of DTC ancestry testing for tribal communities.pdf](https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/dpcpsi/document/Constructing_identities_the_implications_of_DTC_ancestry_testing_for_tribal_communities.pdf)
- ¹⁸ dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/storytellingchallengewinners
- ¹⁹ [dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Professor Erik Sorensen Save the Date v4_508.pdf](https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Professor_Erik_Sorensen_Save_the_Date_v4_508.pdf)
- ²⁰ dpcpsi.nih.gov/sites/default/files/pictures/2018_NAHM_save-the-date_final_508.pdf
- ²¹ grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-18-110.html



Connect with the THRO

 <https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro>

 DPCPSI@od.nih.gov

 301-402-9852



National Institutes of Health
Tribal Health Research Office