Terms of Reference for the RAIC
Indigenous Task Force
(May 2025)

1. **Name:** RAIC Indigenous Task Force (ITF)

2. **Type:** Governance, reports to the Board of Directors

3. **Purpose:**

   3.1   Advocate for Indigenous architects.

   3.2   Access to Architecture: Advocate for equitable participation of Indigenous peoples in architecture. Increase awareness that Indigenous nations & communities host the architecture in our regions, have a right to participate in planning decisions, to benefit from the economic activity stemming from architecture, and to have equitable access to architectural amenities in our respective nations and communities.

   3.3   Efficacy: Through advocacy, support the efficacy and impact of Indigenous architects and Indigenous architecture to meet current challenges in the architectural profession, in Indigenous nations & communities, in built environments, and in the living systems that host built environments.

   3.4   Indigenous Knowledge: Foster the ongoing growth and development of Indigenous architectural knowledge systems. Improve awareness, increase access to resources, create opportunities for knowledge sharing, and liaise with other Indigenous organizations in the design & building industries.

   3.5   Resist Appropriation: Advocate on behalf of Indigenous architects & Indigenous architectural knowledge systems to identify and address issues of infringement and appropriation. Foster awareness, respect, and care for Indigenous architectural knowledge systems. Consider the effects on future generations, the needs of the present, and the integrity of ancestral teachings.

   3.6   All Generations & Life Systems: Through architectural advocacy, support Indigenous peoples from all generations (Children, Youth, Adults, and Elders / knowledge carriers) to participate in the architectural profession, to benefit & benefit from the built environment, reintegrate architecture with its host lands, and regenerate the living systems that support architecture.

4. Background:

4.1 Indigenous people have great capacity and right to lead the discussions that affect them. Community engagement by outsiders is often late in the process, hasty and watered down, with silence from the participants regarded as consent.

4.2 We as design professionals also have capacity to listen, to aid in the process by asking the right questions that will engage the communities. Our task force comprised of indigenous professionals and experienced individuals have a stake in the health of these communities.

4.3 Many government-built settlements in Indigenous communities have been compared to Third World situations. The adequacy and quantity of housing is often lacking, as are basic municipal services such as firefighting and clean drinking water. These settlements are frequently affected by preventable natural disasters, such as seasonal flooding. Spaces and structures that support traditional cultural practices, and therefore Indigenous identity, are seldom provided. The living conditions in these communities embody the inequities faced by Canada's indigenous peoples.

4.4 Indigenous peoples do not have equitable access to architecture. Indigenous architects are underrepresented in the profession both in numbers and in leadership positions in larger sized firms. Indigenous peoples do not equitably benefit from architectural economic activity. Indigenous nations and communities are underrepresented in planning and funding decisions pertaining to architecture. Indigenous peoples are severely underrepresented in industries that intersect with architecture, such as engineering, construction, and manufacturing firms. Indigenous communities experience severe and chronic underdevelopment and lack access to architectural amenities.

4.5 It is the position of the RAIC that the correction of these conditions is integral to the effort to achieve reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, and that the communities themselves must lead the discussion. It is the intent of this task force to provide credible, trusted thought leadership in support of this position.

4.6 To achieve this, the task force will prepare detailed documentation in support of advocacy pertaining to the RAIC ITF's purpose.

5. Membership:

5.1 Task force members will include RAIC members – or non-members with professional experience with – Indigenous nations and communities.

Members may include architects, interns, students, and allied professionals.

5.2 Task force members may also include RAIC members at large interested in being active allies to the ITF.

5.3 The Chair/Co-Chair(s) of the task force shall be selected by the members of the task force. The Board of Directors is responsible for appointment of chair/co-chair(s)

5.4 In the event that no RAIC Board member is part of the task force, a Board liaison will be selected by the Board of Directors.

6. **Scope:** There shall be only one ITF with national representation.

7. **Authority:**

7.1 Works with RAIC staff designate, providing advice, recommendations and support as outlined;

7.2 Shall not maintain separate bank accounts or investments, purchase property or hire employees;

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7.4 Shall not have the legal authority to sign contracts, incur liability on behalf of the RAIC or to otherwise bind the RAIC; and

7.5 Cannot expand or alter its structure without express written permission from the Board of Directors.

8. **Resources and budget:**

8.1 ITF will be assigned an RAIC staff for operational support, as per CEO.

8.2 ITF will work with the RAIC staff designate to prepare an annual work plan with associated budget.

8.3 The annual work plan and budget must be approved by the CEO prior to implementation.

8.4 If applicable, continuing education activities must be organized in collaboration with RAIC staff and with RAIC operational policies and processes.

8.5 RAIC staff maintain final authority and decision making for any continuing education activities.

8.6 The RAIC designated staff is responsible for oversight of ITF budgets.

8.7 RAIC will provide resources to facilitate meetings for example, tele/videoconference access.

8.8 RAIC will provide ITF website presence and operational support for the RAIC website, within the RAIC committee microsite. Website content will be subject to RAIC communication policies and procedures.

8.9 RAIC will provide operational support related to marketing and communication for the ITF subject to RAIC policy and procedures.

9. Deliverables

9.1 Annual workplan and budget (September 15);
9.2 Annual activity report (April 30).

10. Amendments of the Terms of Reference

10.1 Amendments to the Terms of Reference can be provided by the ITF for review and approval by the Board of Directors.