NIPISSING FIRST NATION *A-Kii Bemaadizijik, E-Niigaanwang*
The Land, the People, the Future

RESEARCH POLICY

I.   Purpose

Nipissing First Nation promotes knowledge sovereignty and ethical research that benefits the Nation, its members and is in line with its plans, goals, and aspirations. This policy is intended to guide all research conducted in and about Nipissing First Nation. The policy promotes certainty and clarity and guides the research process.

II.   Definitions

Anonymity: The process through which researches protect privacy by not disclosing a participant's identity after information is gathered. A respondent may be considered anonymous when the researcher cannot identify a given response with a given respondent.

Authorship: Refers to the individual(s) that are given credit for reports, journal articles, presentations or products that may emerge from the research study. Authors of a publication are to be listed in order of the significance of their contribution and should include all and only those individuals who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the work reported and without whose contribution the work would not be complete. All contributors to the work reported would be recognized regardless of their academic credentials or standing at a university.

Collaboration: A research approach that involves community members in all phases of the project. It seeks a collaborative approach that is equitable for First Nation's involved in the research process from the inception of the research idea to the dissemination and publication of research findings. Collaborative research partnerships should embody a committed vision to working together through any challenges or problems that may arise. Such principals provide a solid foundation for partners to develop a strong and meaningful relationship.

Confidentiality: The researcher is able to identify a person's responses but essentially promises not to do so publically in reporting results from a given study or

research project. Confidentiality is maintained when identifiers for respondents are removed from questionnaires and interviews and replaced by numerical identifiers. A master identification file that links the numerical identifiers is then kept separately. In addition, confidentiality is maintained in the reporting of results by ensuring that where verbatim quotes are used they do not reveal the identity of the individual or organization and where demographics are reported they are done so only at that aggregate or group level.

Culture: The commonalities around which a group of peoples have developed values, norms, family units, social roles and behaviors in response to the political, economic and social realities that they face. Culture includes the patterns of beliefs, symbols and values that develop over time among a group of people. Put another way, it is the symbolic order through which people communicate and organize their social lives. Culture is a mechanism through which people adapt to their environment and can help to facilitate collective survival. It is both a bond that holds people together and a boundary that identifies differences from others. Culture is a much broader term than ethnicity in that it is grounded in the fact that groups differ in their worldview, their perspectives, patterns of life, and their concept of the essential nature of the human condition. It is influenced by many factors including one's social location, language, family and social relationships.

Harm: Includes emotional, psychological distress and physical pain. Emotional distress is possible in all research studies in which questions are asked that elicit anxiety, bring up unpleasant memories or cause individuals to evaluate themselves critically.

Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC): Is a specific right that pertains to Indigenous peoples and is recognized in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It allows Indigenous groups to give or withhold consent to a project that may affect them or their territories. Once they have given their consent, they can withdraw it at any stage. Free, Prior and Informed Consent enables Indigenous peoples or groups to negotiate the conditions under which the project will be designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. This is also embedded in the universal right to self-determination.

> **Free**: Consent is given without coercion, intimidation or manipulation. A process that is self-directed by the community from which the consent is being sought, free from encumbrances, expectations or timelines that are externally imposed.

> **Prior**: Consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities.

Informed: Nature of engagement and type of information that should be provided prior to seeking consent and also as part of the ongoing consent process.

Consent: Collective decision made by the rights holders are reached through a customary decision-making process of the community

Privacy: Privacy can be maintained through the use of surveys that are anonymous and confidential in which the identity of the person or group is disguised in publication. In most research, the analysis and reporting of data should be done at the group level. Violations occur under the right to privacy when researchers identify members of the groups that they have studied, release or share an individual's data or responses or covertly observe behavior.

Power: The relationship between the researcher and subjects involves power and trust. Power is legitimated by credentials, expertise, training and the role of science in our society. The potential for ethical abuse is greatest were there are major power and status gaps between researcher and researched.

Stereotypical: A generalized conception of a group of people which results in the conscious or unconscious categorization of each member of that group without regard to individual differences between people in that group.

Trust: Trust occurs within the interplay of culture, influence and relationships of integrity. A meaningful process is based in cultural protocol and is confirmed by a commitment to and continued involvement in a research project.

III. Principals

1. The following principals must be addressed by any researcher who is or intends to conduct research that involves Nipissing related subject matter directly or indirectly.

2. **Ethics**:

3. **Free Prior and Informed Consent**: The consent of Nipissing First Nation and identifiable individuals will be sought and confirmed before the research commences as well as on an ongoing basis throughout and project. Where there are no identifiable persons or groups, then the Research Review Committee and

the Research Steering Committee will be established for areas where collective information or knowledge is considered.

4. **Information Flow:** The research aims or goals as well as anticipated outcomes of a given research process will be conveyed to Nipissing in a clear, concise and appropriate way.

5. **Protection of Rights and Intellectual Property:** The collective and individual rights, interests and the intellectual property rights of the people of Nipissing will be protected during and after the research process.

6. **Transparency:** Research techniques, methods or tools used must be open, direct and transparent. Covert or secret work is not acceptable. All participants will be fully informed that they are involved in a research project before the study begins.

7. **Control Over Results:** Nipissing First Nation will have control over the results of the research process and have the absolute right to exercise this control over the information they have volunteered. This includes the right to control it, to restrict access to the information and to withdraw all or part of the information from the research findings that may eventually become publicly available.

8. **Representation of Research Skills:** The researcher(s) must honestly and transparently represent their skills and experience to those involved in the research.

9. **Personal Gain:** The researchers must not exploit information gained from the research process of individual and collective research participants for personal gain or aggrandizement. Fair compensation will be given for active participation, services or support and must be acknowledged in the final output.

10. **Dispute Resolution:** People involved in research must have the right to engage in dispute resolution as identified in this policy.

11. **Anonymity:** Research participants must be guaranteed the right to remain anonymous in their participation in any given research project.

12. **Incorporation of Values:** The collective values of Nipissing First Nation must be informed and acknowledged within the design and methodology of a research project. Indigenous values are to be upheld at all times. Research methodology,

design and implementation must observe, uphold and protect the Nipissing culture.

13. **Accountability:**

14. **Interests of the Researcher(s):** The main responsibility and accountability of the researcher(s) must be to the people who are involved in the activities being researched. All of these people must be considered to have an equal interest in the project as far as it possible and practical.

15. **Application and Use of Information:** Research participants have an absolute right to know, as far as can be anticipated, what will eventually become of the information that they share as well as any possible use and application of this information.

16. **Editorial Control:** At the outset of a given project the researcher(s) must recognize the need for the results and outcomes of any research contributed by Nipissing or its member(s) to be presented to participating individuals or the Nation for editing before any form of distribution or publication. Nipissing First Nation Chief and Council have a right of veto or censure over Nipissing contributions.

17. **Acknowledgement:** The contribution of any individual or groups that participated in the research will be acknowledged in any research reports or publications except those individuals or groups may wish to remain anonymous.

18. **Terms of Research:** The research question(s) and methodology will be designed in consultation with Nipissing First Nation through the appropriate groups or committees designated in this policy. Such designs should consider the expertise of the Nipissing individuals or groups who will form part of the research.

19. **Equality:** The researcher as well as designated individuals or groups will share the responsibility for continuous monitoring of the research process.

20. **Research Partnership:** Such a research partnership is integral to successful research. A partnership will be developed for each research project on the basis of trust that does not prejudice the interests of any partner making up the partnership. Within a research partnership, the project will be designed to directly benefit Nipissing First Nation. Research partnerships must respect diversity within and between communities. The research partnership will generate documents that are useful for Nipissing Frist Nation, its government

and people. The partnership should respect and support Nipissing language, knowledge and culture. The research partnership should fit in or support Nipissing strategic plans and must build local capacity for research.

21. **Research Skills:** A collaborative process must be established where the researcher or initiator of a research project will take responsibility for sharing and co-developing research skills of Nipissing First Nation institutions and members that can remain in the community and be applied to future projects regardless of the researcher(s) involved in future projects.

22. **Participatory Approach:**

23. **Establishment of Nipissing Ownership**: At the initial stage of a given project it is necessary to establish clear ownership of the end results of the research and where this will reside. At this stage, community ownership or results as well as published results for academic purposes (credits) must be established. This is also the stage at which any royalties to be given to the Nation will be discussed and potentially established.

24. **Research Outcomes:** The outcomes of a research project and the research process itself must make a positive contribution to the needs and aims of the Nation as defined by the Nation, its leadership and any strategic plans. The research must also advance Nipissing values. It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that Nipissing participants are clear about the aims of the research and to co-develop these aims.

25. **Understanding Results:** The findings of any research will be presented to the membership and leadership of Nipissing in a format that is readily understandable and accessible to all and particularly to those who have provided the basis for research findings. As outlined in the Research Agreement established under this policy, the research findings should be presented in oral, written and visual forms in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Research forums.

26. **Summary of Findings**: A summary of any final research reports will be made available to any individual or groups who provided information or participated in the production on the final research report. A full report of the research as well as any copies of subsequent publications related to a given project will be deposited with Nipissing First Nation and any other bodies identified in the Research Agreement.

27. **OCAP:**

28. **Ownership**: Ownership refers to the relationship of the Nipissing community to its cultural knowledge, data and information. The principal states that a community owns information collectively in the same way that an individual owns their personal information. Ownership is distinct from stewardship or custodianship of data or information by an institution that is accountable to the community and is a mechanism through which ownership may be maintained.

29. **Control:** The aspirations and inherent rights of Nipissing First Nation to maintain and regain control of all aspects of their lives and institutions extend to information and data. Nipissing First Nation and its representative bodies must control how information about them is collected, used and disclosed. The element of control extends to all aspects of information management, form collection of the data to its use, disclosure and the ultimate potential destruction of data.

30. **Access:** Nipissing First Nation must have access to information and data about themselves and their communities, regardless of where it is stored or held. This principle also refers to the right of Nipissing First Nation to manage and make decisions regarding who can access their collective information.

31. **Possession**: Possession reflects the state of stewardship of data. Nipissing First Nation possession of data positions data within Nipissing First Nation jurisdiction and within its control. Possession is the mechanism to assert and protect ownership and control.

IV.   **Research Review Committee**

32. A Research Review Committee will be established by Chief and Council

33. A research proposal will be submitted to the Research Review Committee for each potential Nipissing-First Nation related project. The Research Review Committee should include an odd number of members as appointed by Council.

34. The Chairperson of the Research Review Committee and a recorder will be designated by the Research Review Committee.

35. The Chairperson of the Research Review Committee will review the research proposal to ensure that it is complete enough for the Review Committee to make a fulsome review.

36. Should the Chairperson of the Review Committee deem the proposal to be incomplete. suggestions to improve the proposal will be returned to the researcher.

37. Once the Chairperson is satisfied that the research proposal is complete he or she or they will submit the proposal to the members of the Research Review Committee for an ethics review.

38. The Research Review Committee will conduct an ethics review in order to ensure that the project meets the ethical principles outlined above.

39. If the Research Review Committee feels that the proposal does not pass ethics review, then the Chairperson will return the proposal to the researcher with any reasoning or suggestions that the Review Committee wishes to include.

40. If the proposal is deemed by the Research Committee to have passed ethics review, then then the proposal is passed to the Research Committee for the next step in the proposal review process.

41. After ethics review the Research Review Committee will evaluate the proposal for relevance of the topic, quality of capacity building, the principals outlined above and other practical aspects that the Committee wishes to consider.

42. If the Research Review Committee does not support the proposal, the Chair will respond to the researcher declining support for or participation in the project and withhold consent for the project to proceed.

43. If the Research Review Committee supports the project proposal with revision, this will be communicated to the researcher by the Chairperson.

44. Once the Research Review Committee finds in support of the proposal a letter of support and recommendation will be written and delivered to Chief and Council by the Research Review Committee.

45. Chief and Council will give consideration to the project proposal at a duly convened meeting of the Council and pass a resolution or other form of support for the project or withhold their consent or support for the research in question.

Council may request the Chair of the Research Review Committee to facilitate a presentation by members of the Research Review Committee or the researcher(s) in order to facilitate a decision.

46. The Chair of the Research Review Committee will communicate the position of Council to the researcher in due time.

47. Honorariums and or expenses should be offered to Research Review Committee Members for their time and expertise and costs of such should be paid for and reflected in research budgets.

48. The Chair of the Research Review Committee passes any projects consented to by Chief and Council to the Research Steering Committee.

V.   Research Steering Committee

49. A Research Steering Committee will be duly appointed by Chief and Council for each research project.

50. The Research Steering Committee may be comprised in whole or in part of members of the Research Review Committee but should be comprised of an odd number of people.

51. The Research Steering Committee may be comprised of representation of any of the following at the prerogative of Chief and Council:

- Key Nipissing First Nation staff
- Representatives of Chief and Council
- Elders
- Nipissing First Nation community members who may hold specific or general knowledge related to the research project
- Nipissing First Nation community members who have appropriate research skills or background
- Traditional and cultural knowledge keeps
- Nipissing First Nation youth
- Language keepers

52. Each Research Steering Committee will select form their number a Chairperson and a recorder.

53. The role of the Chair of the Research Steering Committee is to convene the meetings of the Committee, create an agenda or each meeting, keep meetings on track and ensure that outstanding actions are followed up on and taken.

54. The Research Steering Committee Recorder will ensure that a record is kept of decisions and minutes of meetings are circulated in advance of each meeting of the Committee.

55. Honorariums and or expenses should be offered to Research Steering Committee Members for their time and expertise and costs of such should be paid for and reflected in research budgets.

56. The schedule of Research Steering Committee meetings will be aligned with the schedules of the Committee members

57. The main function of the Research Steering Committee for each project will be to ensure that ethical values are upheld and that the expectations of Nipissing First Nation, the community and the researcher(s) are aligned.

58. The Research Steering Committee will manage the day to day activities of a given research project and respond to concerns raised by Nipissing First Nation leadership or membership or the researcher(s) in a timely manner.

VI.   Research Protocols and Agreements

59. The success of a research project and positive outcomes for Nipissing First Nation will depend on the relationships that are developed through the research process and the degree of moral and ethical integrity with which protocols, agreements and the principals outlined above are applied. Research protocols provide an essential framework within which to conduct research.

60. All research projects related to Nipissing First Nation, its people, past and physical and cultural heritage will be guided by a research protocol signed by Chief and Council representative(s) and the researcher(s).

61. The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that research conducted in relation to Nipissing First Nation be of benefit to the community and to promote well-designed, Nipissing controlled research.

62. Through setting parameters for research, Nipissing First Nation asserts jurisdiction to make decisions about what the research will cover and what standards the research process must meet.

63. A research protocol may have a number of elements and could include tools such as a code of ethics, a research agreement or a data sharing protocol in order for Nipissing First Nation to establish guidelines to be followed for any research that involves them.

64. A code of ethics would include the principals that would apply to all research activities regardless of who is conducting the research. The code of ethics will include the ethical principles outlined above as well as the principals of OCAP also outlined above and be referenced in the research protocol signed by Nipissing First Nation and the researcher(s).

65. A research protocol will include a reference to the ethical and other principals mentioned above and is a formal and binding contract between the researcher and Nipissing First Nation that details how the principals will be upheld.

66. A research agreement will include identification of projected outcomes and any potential risks for Nipissing First Nation as well as steps that will be taken to mitigate these risks.

67. In signing the research agreement, the researcher(s) will agree to fulfill certain obligations to the community and to follow an agreed up set of steps in collecting, sharing, disseminating and storing data. The research agreement will also identify any sources of research funding and potential employment or monetary compensation for Nipissing First Nation or research participants.

68. A template for a research agreement is provided in Appendix Two attached herein.

VII.   Data Sharing Agreements:

69. All researchers wishing to access, use or share data already owned, controlled and possessed by Nipissing First Nation will sign a data sharing agreement or protocol with Nipissing First Nation for the access to and use of such data.

70. The intent and principals of data ownership, sharing, storage and confidentiality may be similar to a research agreement but is to address specific cases where there is an outside request for data and information to be shared.

71. Nipissing First Nation will establish the content of a data sharing agreement. Chief and Council may call upon the Research Review Committee and other staff to assist in drafting of data sharing agreements.

72. Nipissing First Nation will protect collective rights and interests by establishing rules for the collection, use, storage, disclosure and analysis of data through a data sharing agreement prior to the project commencement.
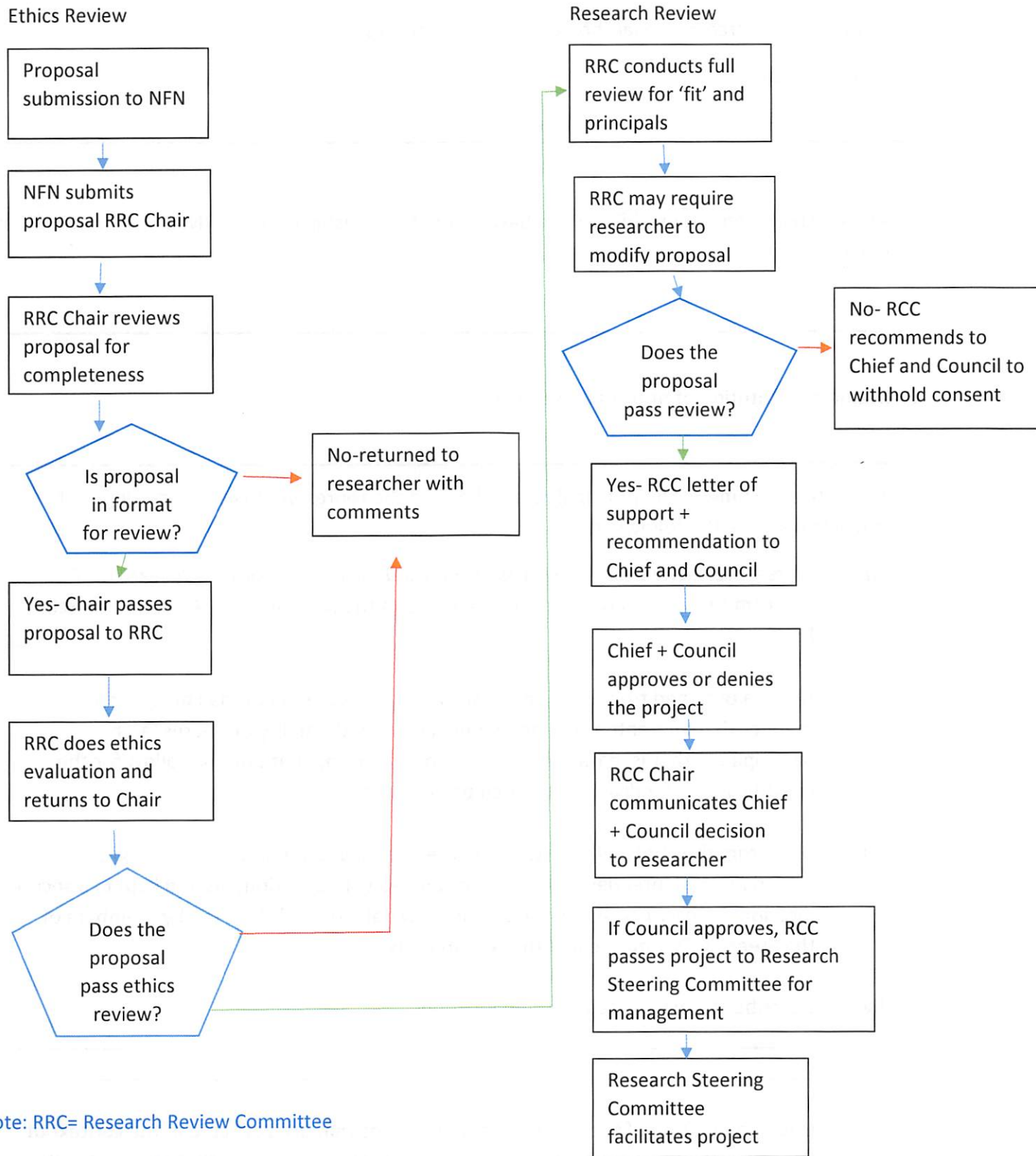
VIII. Outcomes

73. Projected research outcomes will be clearly identified in the research agreement.

74. Employment of Nipissing First Nation members in a given project is essential to the success and should be reflected in the research agreement.

75. Research outcomes must do as much as is possible to support priories established by Nipissing First Nation for the types of capacity development that are required or desired within the Nation.

76. Revenue that is generated through potential research publications will be shared with Nipissing First Nation or individuals who were directly involved in accordance with the research agreement.

IX. Dispute Resolution:

77. Should a dispute arise between Nipissing First Nation and the researcher(s) all parties will in good faith attempt to come to a conclusion of the dispute that is satisfactory to all parties.

78. Should the parties not be able to resolve the dispute then a third party mediator may by selected from names brought forward by the parties. Should the parties not be able to identify a mediator that is acceptable to all parties then the research project will be terminated and all data and information will be returned to Nipissing First Nation.

79. A mediated decision is final.

Approved by Chief and Council, this 21st day of April, 2020

Appendix One: Research Review Process:

Ethics Review

Proposal submission to NFN

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NFN submits proposal RRC Chair

↓

RRC Chair reviews proposal for completeness

↓

Is proposal in format for review?

→ No-returned to researcher with comments

↓ (Yes)

Yes- Chair passes proposal to RRC

↓

RRC does ethics evaluation and returns to Chair

↓

Does the proposal pass ethics review?

Research Review

RRC conducts full review for 'fit' and principals

↓

RRC may require researcher to modify proposal

↓

Does the proposal pass review?

→ No- RCC recommends to Chief and Council to withhold consent

↓ (Yes)

Yes- RCC letter of support + recommendation to Chief and Council

↓

Chief + Council approves or denies the project

↓

RCC Chair communicates Chief + Council decision to researcher

↓

If Council approves, RCC passes project to Research Steering Committee for management

↓

Research Steering Committee facilitates project

Note: RRC= Research Review Committee

Appendix 2: Research Agreement Template:

This is a template that should be adapted to each individual research project

A copy of the research proposal should be attached to this form

Title of the study:

_____

This research agreement establishes the basis of the relationship between (Name of principal researcher):

_____

Of (Name of institution of principal researcher):

_____

In signing this document, the principal researcher and the representatives of Nipissing First Nation acknowledge the following:

(i)   All research activities and reports or publications arising from the research will conform to the research principals outlined in the Nipissing First Nation Research Policy.

(ii)   All data obtained from Nipissing First Nation or its members shall be coded in a manner that guarantees the anonymity and confidentiality of the research participants; that is, data will be coded in such a way that does not allow for the identification of individual research participants.

(iii)   Data from the study will be stored in a secure location. Audio tapes or digital recordings and interview notes will be labeled with pseudonyms and kept in a secure location. Transcripts, surveys and other raw data will only be seen by members of the Steering Committee and the researcher(s).

(iv)   Describe storage procedures and location:

_____

_____

(v)   Upon completion of the study, data and records that are collected in the context of the research study will be destroyed or remain the property of Nipissing First Nation.

This could include completed surveys or questionnaires, transcripts and recording from interviews, other data collected. The analysis and interpretation that arises from the raw data will remain the property of the researchers and the Nipissing First Nation Research committee as appropriate.

(vi)   Describe records management upon completion:

_____

_____

_____

(vii)   Authors of a publication (reports, journal articles, presentations or other products), will be listed in order of the significance of their contribution to the writing of the publication and will include all, and only those individuals who have made a significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to the work reported and without whose contribution on the work would not be complete. Authors of a piece may include the researcher(s), Nipissing First Nation staff, volunteers and Committee members who have made contributions to the writing of the publication. Other persons who were instrumental to the publication by be acknowledged in all publications

(viii)   Results of the research shall be distributed as widely as possible within Nipissing First Nation and reasonable efforts shall be made to present results in a non-technical language and the language of Nipissing First Nation where deemed appropriate by Chief and Council or the Research Steering Committee.

(ix)   Any reports or publications arising from the research shall be submitted to Chief and Council and the Nipissing First Nation CEO prior to distribution to communities and agencies or submission for publication. Nipissing First Nation will review and provide the researcher(s) comments on the proposed publications for adherence to this research agreement within 30 days.

(x)   Nipissing First Nation Chief and Council reserve the right to limit or refuse dissemination or publication of research related to Nipissing First Nation.

(xi)   The researcher(s) shall report on an ongoing basis to the Research Steering Committee or designate(s) on the development, planning and implementation and results of the research.

(xii)   Describe the schedule or such meetings with the Research Steering Committee:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(xiii) The data collected and stored may not be made accessible to others or used for research purposes other than those agreed upon with the knowledge and written consent of Nipissing First Nation.

(xiv)   Describe anticipated outcomes of the project:

_____

_____

_____

(xv)   Describe any risks associated for Nipissing First Nation and the researcher(s) in becoming involved in this research as measures to address and mitigate these risks:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(xvi)   Describe any revenue sharing and employment opportunities resulting from this project:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date:_____

Signature of Principal Researcher:

_____

Signature of Nipissing First Nation Chief Executive Officer:

_____