







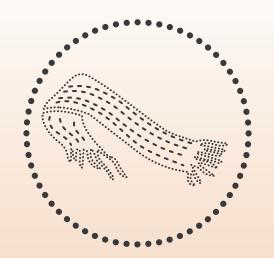


Métis Nation of Ontario ∞

Since 1983, the Métis National Council has been the national and international voice of the Métis Nation within Canada. Through the Canada-Métis Nation Accord, the MNC advocates on behalf of its Governing Members—the democratically elected Métis Governments of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia—to advance Métis rights and interests within their respective jurisdictions, including implementation of the Métis Nation's inherent right to self-determination and self-government. The MNC is committed to accountability and transparency within its operations, and to its relationships with MNC Governing Members. Cassidy Caron is the President of the Métis National Council.

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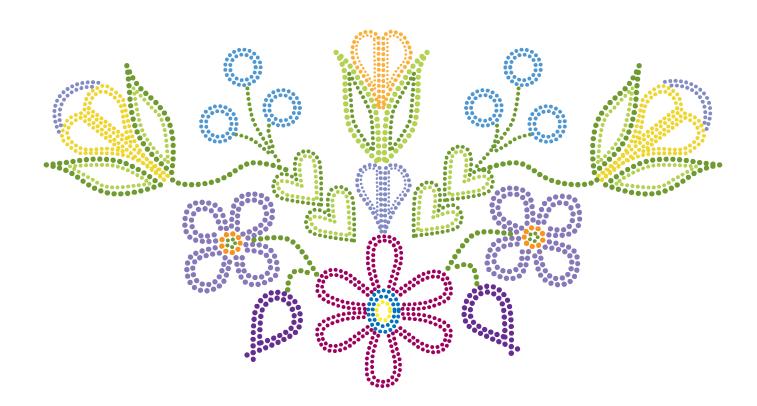
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This document provides a comprehensive list of recommendations made by the Métis National Council (MNC) to parliamentarians in advance of the 2024 federal budget. These recommendations are presented as a direct response to challenges and funding gaps identified by Governing Members and the MNC. By implementing these recommendations, the Government of Canada will be taking meaningful steps to protect and promote the strength and wellbeing of the Métis Nation.

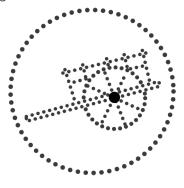


# **Economic Development**

**Recommendation 1:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$158 million dollars to create a Métis Community Economic Development Fund to be administered by MNC Governing Members.

**Recommendation 2:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$12 million dollars in Budget 2024 over five years, with \$4 million in 2024-25, for MNC Governing Members to develop and maintain directories of Métis citizen-owned businesses.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$97 million dollars per year over five years in Budget 2024 for Métis Capital Corporations.



## Housing and Infrastructure

**Recommendation 4:** That the Government of Canada provide \$962.9 million over six years to build community infrastructure to protect and strengthen Métis culture and community.

**Recommendation 5:** That the Government of Canada provide \$1.316 billion over six years to build housing for Métis citizens.

**Recommendation 6:** That the Government of Canada provide \$421.5 million over six years for costs related to governance and property management.

#### **Emergency Management**

**Recommendation 7:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$145 million dollars over 10 years to support the development of training, capacity, and emergency preparedness/management, response, and recovery programming tailored to the needs of the Governing Members and their citizens.

#### Justice

**Recommendation 8:** That the Government of Canada provide \$24.9 million to support Governing Members, the MNC, and Les Femmes Michif Otipemsiwak (LFMO) to implement the Action Plan and ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as required under section 5 of the UNDRIP Act.



#### Healthcare

**Recommendation 9:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$4.6 billion dollars over 10 years to support extended health benefits to the citizens of MNC's Governing Members.

**Recommendation 10:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$3 billion dollars over 10 years to deliver mental health supports to the citizens of MNC's Governing Members.

**Recommendation 11:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$4.3 billion dollars over 10 years to support homecare, long-term care, and palliative care for citizens of MNC's Governing Members.

**Recommendation 12:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$870 million dollars over 10 years to support changes to the existing healthcare system to better serve Métis citizens.

**Recommendation 13:** That the Government of Canada provide funding in the amount of \$660 million dollars over 10 years to support Métis community healthcare.

## Education

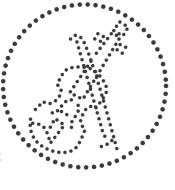
**Recommendation 14:** That the Government of Canada invest \$6.3 billion dollars over ten years to support the development of a Métis primary and secondary education program.

## Language

**Recommendation 15:** That the Government of Canada invest \$518 million over 10 years to support the revitalization of Métis languages.

#### **Self-Determination**

**Recommendation 16:** That the Government of Canada \$30 million over 10 years to build the Métis Nation's capacity to engage in international decision-making and self-determination.



## MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL FEDERAL BUDGET 2024 STATEMENT

The Métis National Council (MNC) is pleased to present this budget proposal in advance of Budget 2024. Celebrating forty years in 2023, the MNC is the national and international representative of the Métis Nation and receives its mandate and direction from its Governing Members: Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC), Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA), the Métis Nation— Saskatchewan (MN-S), and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). Historically, the Métis have worked together to fight for our rights, lands and ongoing existence as a distinct Indigenous People and Nation within federation. This dedication continues as citizens and communities throughout the Métis Nation homeland keep the Nation's distinct culture, traditions, language, and lifestyle alive and pursue their own political, social, and economic development.

Despite being one of Canada's National Indigenous Organizations, Governing Members and the MNC have faced challenges developing the capacity needed to effectually advocate on behalf of the Métis Nation. The MNC and its Governing Members have faced decades of chronic underfunding, and only recently has this begun to change. The MNC is continuing to rebuild, while at the same time realizing aspirations that many Métis citizens have worked incredibly hard for. However, sufficient, long-term, sustainable investment from the Government of Canada is necessary to constructively increase the internal capacity of the MNC and our Governing Members; allowing us to fulfill our mandate to Métis citizens across the Homeland.

MNC Governing Members remain committed to supporting the socioeconomic development of the Métis Nation while delivering the critical services Métis citizens rely on each day. Governing Members and the MNC have been and will continue to be a partner to the Government of Canada as it works to realize its commitments to reconciliation with the Métis Nation and all Indigenous Peoples.

Unfortunately, Budget 2023 saw no new investment in the Métis Nation, even though over previous years, federal funding for programs and services had included significant distinctions-based investments for the Métis Nation. Through the Canada-Métis Nation Accord and due to the work of the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism (PBM), federal budgets are must again continue to address the needs and aspirations of the Métis Nation. The recommendations detailed in this submission will build on this recent progress, ensuring adequate funding to support immediate priorities in the areas of economic development, Métis infrastructure, the environment



and emergency preparedness, justice, healthcare, education, and self-determination.

While these recommendations are only the beginning, they represent meaningful steps that must be taken to rectify long-standing imbalances in the resources available to Governing Members and the MNC. These investments are critical to protect the health and safety of our citizens; they will allow our Métis business communities to thrive; they will address longstanding gaps in Métis infrastructure; they will revitalize Métis education systems; and they will ensure the Métis Nation's needs, interests and rights are reflected in Canada's legal system and international decision-making. What the Métis Nation and Canada have been able to accomplish together is admirable. We have created measurable benefits for Métis citizens, their families and communities. The signing of the Canada-Métis Nation Accord remains a pivotal moment in the relationship between our two nations, recognizing the inherent right to Métis self-government and self-determination. Today, we continue to build on this legacy, working together to advance the rights of the Métis Nation and its citizens.

While there is always more work to be done, we recognize the steps that this government has taken, in collaboration with parliamentarians of all stripes, to support the growth of the Métis Nation. We welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss the needs of our Métis Governments and provide detail to the recommendations outlined in this submission.

Cassidy Caron



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Recommendation 1: Métis Community Economic Development Fund

Governing Members and the MNC understand the priorities of the Métis business community and are well positioned to provide the support that they need - however, funding is required to ensure adequate resources and organizational capacity to deliver economic development programming. Through an investment of \$158 million dollars, Governing Members will implement a Métis Community Economic Development Fund, offering targeted funding to support capacity building, business growth, training, and mentorship opportunities to Métis business owners. This funding will ensure Métis business owners have a comparable level of support to other Indigenous communities eligible for programs administered by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

# Recommendation 2: Building Métis business directories

Publicly accessible directories of Métis-owned businesses are crucial in promoting Métis business relations. These directories will also support Canada's Indigenous procurement targets and will enhance service delivery to these businesses by Governing Members and the MNC, as well as Federal, Provincial and Municipal governments.

An investment of \$12 million dollars over five years will support MNC's Governing Members in developing the components of a Métis business directory, including the creation and implementation of a business certification process and public trademark; an up-to-date business list; and the maintenance of a publicly accessible database.

## **Recommendation 3:** Capitalize Métis Capital Corporations

Métis Capital Corporations (MCC) have played a key role in supporting the growth of the Métis business community. MCCs can provide up to \$1.5 million dollars in loans to Métis businesses or a group of related businesses, offering significantly more financing towards a project than a bank would consider, at a much lower borrowing cost than a bank can offer.

As demand for financing from Métis entrepreneurs continues to grow, MCCs are concerned that they will not have sufficient capital to assist Métis



businesses beyond fiscal year 2023-24, creating the potential for a devastating recessionary impact on the Métis economy. Effectively capitalizing MCCs through an investment of \$97 million per year over five years will ensure that MCCs can continue to provide vital loans to Métis businesses and citizens.

# ADDRESSING GAPS IN MÉTIS HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**Recommendation 4:** Building community infrastructure to protect and strengthen Métis culture and community

Métis culture and community Colonization sought to disconnect Métis from their culture, traditions and way of life. However, through the resiliency of our citizens, communities and Governing Members, Métis customs, culture, and traditions have persevered. Investing in community infrastructure to help sustain, promote, and revitalize the Métis culture and education is critical at this time. Not only will investments help stimulate economic development, but they will also lay the foundation for connecting all Canadians to the Métis Nation by enhancing understanding, compassion, and connection towards Métis history and culture.

Educational facilities and cultural centres would act as centres for sharing, reinforcing, and connecting to Métis culture. In addition to providing physical spaces to Métis citizens to connect, educational facilities and cultural centres would deliver language, dance, crafting, art, food, and other aspects of unique Métis culture to citizens, while also offering opportunities for non-Métis to learn about and connect to Métis culture and history. Centres would also serve as gathering places for Métis community when community events are being held or be offered to citizens



for private gatherings such as weddings or reunions. Communities lost their languages through decades of residential schools and a lack of spaces for speakers. The Michif language in all its forms, as well as Dene and Cree, are vital components of Métis culture. When we speak these languages, we honour our elders and ancestors. Language provides more than just a connection to the past. It is a way to the future. Revitalizing language is essential to ensuring the survival of a vibrant Métis culture and communities for generations to come. Moreover, the investments into tourism related spaces will allow for the promotion, preservation and continuity of Métis cultural activities, practices, knowledge, and self-determination, while also driving economic stimulus for our communities. Investments in infrastructure in our historic sites such as Batoche in Saskatchewan, and Métis Crossing in Alberta will drive economic growth and development for our Governing Members and for Métis communities at large.

A total investment of \$962.9 million over six years will be required to effectively address the educational and cultural community infrastructure needs of our Governing Members.

# **Recommendation 5:** Investing in housing for Métis citizens

The federal government has long cited that every Canadian, regardless of where they live or their background, deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. For the Métis Nation, addressing the systemic gaps in housing, linked to other critical social determinants of health, for our people is critical at this time. Poverty is a complex social issue that requires a multifaceted, policy-based strategy which includes a significant investment into housing.



Many of our citizens are living in a housing crisis and have been for decades. Many live in substandard housing which affects the safety and health of our families and community at large. One in twelve Métis households are overcrowded, which is unacceptable for a developed nation like Canada. A larger majority of homes owned by Métis citizens also require a greater number of major repairs compared to non-Indigenous households.

Developing affordable housing solutions for our Elders will also require critical investment. Many of our Governing Members are seeking to invest in assisted living facilities and residences to ensure that Métis Elders are given culturally appropriate and relevant care.

A total investment of \$1.316 billion over six years to Governing Members will be required to ensure safe, affordable, and accessible housing for Métis citizens.

**Recommendation 6:** Supporting costs related to governance and property management

Democratic, transparent, and accountable institutions are key for Métis Nation self-determination and the participation of Métis citizens in the decision-making of their governments. Investments in infrastructure that supports Métis governance, such as government houses and Governing Members headquarters, gives physical spaces for the exercise of rights and self-determination. These spaces will further support Métis citizens and Governing Members to advocate for their rights and identify their specific needs to close the socio-economic gap.

A total investment of \$421.5 million over six years to Governing Members will be required to construct Métis governance institutions.



#### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**Recommendation 7:** Emergency management capacity building and support

Communities across Canada are seeing the impacts of climate change firsthand, through a drastic increase in forest fires, floods, extreme weather events and other life-threatening emergencies. While Métis communities face greater risks, the Métis Nation has never received funding to support emergency management and or disaster risk mitigation work.

The MNC is calling for a federal investment of \$145 million dollars over 10 years to implement a whole-of-society emergency management approach. This funding will allow the MNC and its Governing Members to build capacity, conduct policy research, support consultations on the emergency management priorities of Métis citizens, advance training opportunities and support GMs to respond to immediate needs (such as evacuations and recovery). Further research will inform the needs and next steps related to emergency management planning for MNC Governing Members, as well as the development of a national Métis Emergency Management Strategy. Funding will support the implementation emergency management strategies, grow internal emergency management capabilities, support on-the-ground emergency response teams, and address the four pillars of emergency management – mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

## **JUSTICE**

**Recommendation 8:** Implementing the Action Plan and ensuring the consistency of Canada's laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

The federal government's United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Act represents a critical step in Canada's efforts to establish a framework of standards for the survival, dignity and wellbeing of Métis Nation citizens and all Indigenous peoples. The Act has multiple ongoing features: the action plan (tabled on June 21, 2023), including the codevelopment and operation of accountability mechanisms, annual reporting requirements, and a broad legislative obligation to ensure all laws of Canada

are consistent with UNDRIP. This last obligation is expansive and encompasses the development of new laws, review of existing laws, and operation of current federal laws.

The duties required to be performed by Governing Members and the MNC to support the implementation of UNDRIP will continue to grow as the Act is understood and implemented across the federal government; however, there is currently very little



internal capacity and resources available to the MNC, Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak (LFMO) and Governing Members to conduct this work. The funding announced in Budget 2022 for the implementation of the UNDRIP Act has been acknowledged by Justice Canada officials as inadequate to support Indigenous peoples, with many describing the \$11 million allocated in the last federal budget as a "down payment". Budget 2023 did not contain additional funding to supplement Budget 2022 and provide the necessary support to implement the Declaration.

The MNC is seeking \$24.9 million to allow the Governing Members, the MNC and LFMO to carry out the implementation of the Action Plan and to conduct the legislative review as obligated by the UNDRIP Act. This would represent an increase of ten times the original allocation of \$415,000 to Governing Members, MNC and LFMO. This additional funding will be essential in ensuring Indigenous partners, like Governing Members, MNC and LFMO, can effectively work alongside the federal government to implement the measures in the Action Plan and to review and update legislation in accordance with the UNDRIP Act. Without these investments, the government of Canada will struggle to implement the Act in a way that truly respects and upholds the rights of all Indigenous peoples

## **HEALTHCARE**

Recommendation 9: Support extended health benefits to the Métis citizens

Past and ongoing legacies of colonization including oppressive systemic policies have contributed to the poor health outcomes faced by many Métis citizens. Unfortunately, countless Métis people have experienced challenges accessing health services and supports due to the financial burden associated with these services. These challenges are exacerbated by the exclusion of Métis people from the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program.



In adhering to the principles of self-determination and co-development, the MNC and our Governing Members are calling for federal funding to develop an extended health benefits program accessible by Métis people. The extended health benefits program should provide health services that are comparable to the benefits provided to First Nations and Inuit people through the existing NIHB. This will require federal investment of \$4.6 billion dollars over 10 years.

# **Recommendation 10:** Mental health and well-being

Mental well-being is a priority for all Governing Members. Supporting citizens to achieve their goals and optimize their well-being requires a strength-based Métis Social Determinants of Health approach that acknowledges intergenerational trauma inflicted by colonialization. A total investment of \$3 billion dollars over 10 years will be required to effectively address the mental health and well-being needs of all Métis citizens served by our Governing Members.

This funding will allow Governing Members to effectively deliver counselling, psychiatry, psychology, social work, occupational therapy, and peer support groups to their citizens, while developing physical mental health infrastructure, such as land-based healing centres, that provide culturally relevant support to Métis people in need.

# **Recommendation 11:** Homecare, long-term care, and palliative care

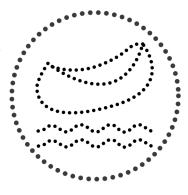
The MNC and its Governing Members are working to ensure Métis Nation citizens in their senior years or nearing the ends of their lives have access to services that limit suffering while providing a comfortable environment that reflects Métis culture and traditions. The MNC is proposing an investment of \$4.3 billion dollars over 10 years to improve access to in-home care, long-term care, and palliative care for Métis people. Together, these services will ensure Métis citizens can stay in their homes longer, can live more fulfilling lives as they age, and can receive medical care specifically tailored to their needs.

## **Recommendation 12:** Changes to the existing healthcare system

The systemic, colonial structures of the existing provincial healthcare systems do not reflect the lived experiences and unique needs of Métis people,

leaving many Métis people feeling excluded and discriminated against when they enter a healthcare setting.

To improve Métis representation in these systems, the federal government can provide bursaries and grants to support Métis students pursuing an education in healthcare. Funding should also educate existing provincial medical staff workers about Métis people and their culture, as well as the



challenges and barriers they may face accessing healthcare. Beyond cultural sensitivity training and staff education, funding should be dedicated to healthcare research that aligns with Métis values and priorities.

Accomplishing these outcomes will require collaborative relationships with First Nations, provincial governments, and the federal government. Capacity funding should be provided to support the creation and maintenance of healthcare liaison teams who are best equipped to carry out this work. The MNC is proposing an investment of \$870 million dollars over 10 years to effectively implement these changes to healthcare systems.

## Recommendation 14: Métis Community Healthcare

Addressing Métis healthcare needs will require access to in-community services and supports that align with Métis values and lived experiences. Our Governing Members are calling for the construction of Métis Community Health Centres acting as comprehensive healthcare hubs and locations for primary medical care delivery for Métis Citizens. Beyond physical community health infrastructure, investments are required to develop and deliver programming on traditional well-being practices that strengthen cultural supports; programs that offer culturally relevant sexual health and reproductive care; pre- and post-natal care programs; expanded telehealth services; and improved access to medical devices. A total investment of \$660 million dollars over 10 years will be required to construct Métis community healthcare infrastructure and develop the necessary programming to best serve Métis citizens.

## **EDUCATION**

**Recommendation 15:** Investing in Primary and Secondary Education for the Métis Nation



The development of a Métis-specific program for primary and secondary education lags far behind similar programs for other Indigenous peoples. Métis education infrastructure is almost non-existent in the major metropolitan areas within the homeland, and Métis educational resources are often only made possible by diverting resources away from other program areas.

Creating a network of Métis learning centres across the Métis homeland will ensure Métis learners see themselves reflected in their institutions, while providing non-Métis learners with access to quality educational resources on the Métis. The development of Métis primary and secondary education requires long-term, predictable funding that includes an escalating formula for regional funding models for elementary and secondary education. Funding must be comparable to investments made by Indigenous Service Canada for First Nations students.

Total program expenditures for the Métis primary and secondary education program would be \$6.3billion dollars over ten years, allowing the Métis Nation to implement a long-range primary and secondary education program for Métis people, thereby respecting UNDRIP principles and demonstrating equity-driven considerations within Indigenous education.

## **LANGUAGE**

**Recommendation 16:** That the Government of Canada support the revitalization of Métis languages

The Métis have been known by many names, the flower beadwork people, the road allowance people and the people who own themselves. With our Métis Governments on the verge of realizing the aspirations

of our ancestors, and the announcement of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, Canada can support the Métis Nation as we exercise our inherent right to self-government, revitalize our language and reclaim our history.

The Indigenous Languages Act was the first fully co-developed piece of legislation in Canada's history. It was the result of collaboration between the Government of Canada, the Métis National Council, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Assembly of First Nations.

However, the implementation of the Act has not met the standards set it out in the co-development process. The current proposal-based funding model

has run counter to the distinctions-based and government-to-government process. Without flexible, long-term support, we will continue to lose Métis language speakers, and along with it, our culture.

Métis languages are an important part of Métis identity, and the revitalization of our languages is an important exercise in the realization of Métis rights. This goes to the heart of article 13 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

## Article 13

- Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to
  future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies,
  writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names
  for communities, places and persons.
- 2. States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.

That is why the MNC is proposing the following \$518 million over 10 years for the MNC and Governing Members to revitalize Métis languages

#### **SELF DETERMINATION**

**Recommendation 17:** Investing in the Métis Nation's capacity to participate in international decision-making

Self-determination, self-government, and recognition of treaties (UNDRIP Articles 3, 4, 37) was identified as the top Métis priority in Canada's United Nations Declaration Act Action Plan. Specifically, the Action Plan commits that "Canada will recognize, support and advance the exercise of Métis rights to self-determination, and the inherent right to self-government, recognized and affirmed by section 35 and protected by section 25 of the Constitution Act, 1982, in a manner that is consistent with the UN Declaration through constructive, forward-looking, and reconciliation-based approaches and negotiations premised on rights recognition and implementation."

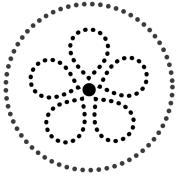
Moreover, the Action Plan recognizes the intimate connection between selfdetermination and participation in decision-making processes as articulated



in UNDRIP Articles 5, 28, 19, and 34. It outlines a commitment to co-develop principles and processes with the Metis Nation through the Permanent Bilateral Mechanism to implement these articles effectively. This cooperative approach acknowledges the importance of meaningful Metis participation grounded in a nation-to-nation, government-to-government relationship.

Self-determination is not only exercised domestically within Canada. Decision-making processes at the international level have a direct impact on the rights and prosperity of Métis citizens. Recent examples include implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) domestically in Canada, and the negotiations of the Indigenous Peoples Economic Trade and Co-operation Agreement (IPETCA) between Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Chinese Taipei, and the negotiation enhanced participation of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations.

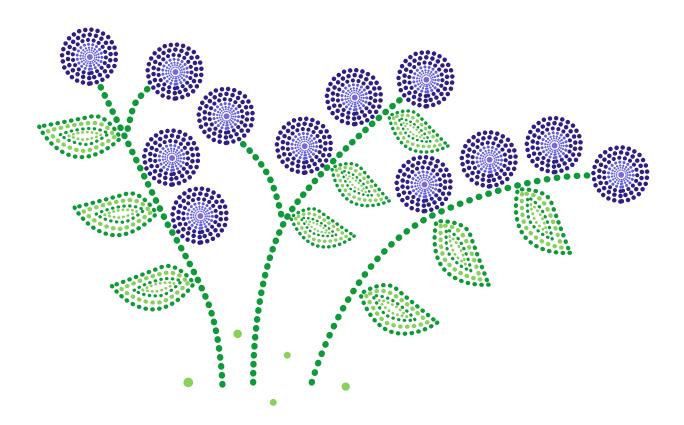
Despite being affected by the outcomes of negotiations of international initiatives such as the UNDRIP, IPETCA, and enhanced participation, the Métis Nation does not currently have predictable and flexible funding which provides it with sufficient capacity to undertake international activities to support the rights, prosperity and well-being of Métis citizens. As a result, it is not able to participate in activities such as the implementation of the IPETCA and other international decision-making processes which affect Métis rights and prosperity.



To be a strong, constructive, and clear voice for the Métis Nation, and to protect and promote the rights and prosperity of Métis citizens, MNC is asking the Government of Canada for funding to support Métis Nation self-determination and participation in international decision-making.

The Métis National Council is seeking \$30 million over 10 years fees to support the following proposed activities:

- Consultations with Governing Members and Métis Citizens for the development of a Métis Nation International Strategy
- Research and engagement on international issues: to monitor international developments, provide analysis, and build relationships with other Indigenous Peoples, Non-Governmental Organizations, and UN Member States and entities.
- Métis Nation participation in international activities, including international conferences and negotiations.





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