

# **BES Reconcili-ACTION Plan 2025**



**EXECUTIVE SEARCH**

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## 1 Preamble

As an organization partnering with many underrepresented communities that continue to face systemic barriers when it comes to employment, education, and other institutional inaccessibilities, we stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples' movements across the globe for sovereignty and collective freedom. Based on what we have both witnessed and continue to witness, we recognize the importance of moving beyond acknowledgment and committing to mobilizing towards a collective future, while learning about the historical inflictions of systems of erasure that still exist today.

It is important that we embody the *truth* in truth and reconciliation. To start, we recognize the ongoing ways in which colonial, imperialist, and fascist agendas have devastated Indigenous communities on Turtle Island. Languages, cultural practices, and access to ceremony, tradition, land, food, medicine, and natural resources have been systematically disrupted and violently erased across generations. The learned and lived experience passed from grandparent to grandchild progressively carries a different weight, shaped both by histories of deep fragmentation and resilience.

Simultaneously, we honour the wisdom, steadfastness, healing, and growth that has existed since time immemorial. This work is not about simply recounting histories of harm but about reflecting on its ongoing impacts and deepening our engagement with the iterative process of unlearning, learning, and doing.

Building on the initiatives from BES Executive Search's first Indigenous Rights Working Group (in 2022-2023), our second group iteration (currently running from 2024 through 2025) outlines a Reconcili-ACTION Plan endeavouring to research, action, (self) educate, connect, and partner, to further embed Indigenous worldviews into our practice. Our first Reconcili-ACTION Plan was shared in the public domain in January of 2023 and its structure was encouraged by [Reconciliation Thunder's 94 Calls to Action](#). Our current Reconcili-ACTION Plan takes on a similar structure, consisting of eight (8) sections: 1) Preamble; 2) Learning and Reflecting; 3) Understanding; 4) Explore; 5) Recognizing; 6) Action; 7) Telling Others, and 8) Resources. Reflecting on the [6 Actions of Reconcili-ACTION](#)—*Learn, Understand, Explore, Recognize, Take Action, and Tell Others*—offered as part of [#94in94 Campaign](#), our team collectively commits to each of these sections.

This Plan exists as an evolving guide to our commitment to reconciliation work, detailing the measures and actions we are committed to taking. This work is iterative and ensures that we continue to embrace and integrate Indigenous epistemologies and ways of being—to stand in solidarity with Indigenous acts of sovereignty, self-determination, and freedom and to honour ancestral wisdoms, inventions, and contributions. Each year, we will continue to review and make iterations to this document during the month of January to ensure that we remain responsive and accountable to Indigenous communities, colleagues, candidates, and clients.

## 2 Learning & Reflection

Continued **LEARNING** and **REFLECTION** about the historical, present-day, and future lived experiences and realities of our Indigenous kin on Turtle Island in concrete ways that reinforce a focus on truth-seeking and, in turn, mobilization. As part of our internal team's educational programming this year, we have and will continue to commit to the following:

### 2.1 Completed to Date

#### 2.1.1 Monthly Indigenous Thought Leadership Workshops

Beginning in April 2024 through September 2024, BES Executive Search staff collaborated in groups of 2-4 to attend online seminars/workshops. After engaging in all seminars, each group created internal learning sessions to share with the greater team. In gratitude and recognition of the workshops our team attended, please see the respective organization links:

- [Indigenous Works Webinar: How to Recruit More Indigenous People Into the HR Profession](#)
- ["The Five Pillars of the Inherent Right to Self-Government" Rebuilding First Nations Governance Project's Next Webinar](#)
- [Advocacy Series Presents...Language as Advocacy](#)
- [Cultural Competency Lessons through the Wisdom of Elders](#)
- [Indigenous Identity Fraud Summit](#)
- [How do we address the barriers to Reconciliation](#)

#### 2.1.2 Virtual 'Lunch and Learn' Seminars

Over the course of five days, BES Executive Search staff attended and engaged with seminars hosted by the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) (NCTR), covering the following areas of learning and exposure:

- Residential School Systems
- Unconscious Bias
- Systemic Discrimination
- Intergenerational Trauma
- Indigenous Rights
- Calls to Action (#94in94)
- Colonial Systems

#### 2.1.3 Truth and Reconciliation Day (and Orange Shirt Day) 2024:

BES Executive Search staff complement attended an in-person walk and learning session hosted by Alan Jamieson (Cayuga, Six Nations of the Grand River) to learn about the relationships between natural environment and built landscape in Tkaronto.

#### 2.1.4 BES Fest (BES Executive Search Festival):

As a result of our 2023 Reconcili-ACTION Plan, BES Fest was a free, full-day event hosted at Daniel's Spectrum in Regent Park, Toronto. Led by the Marketing and Community Relations department, BES Fest incorporated a wide range of programming to offer the greater community.

To learn about the facilitators, organizations and community members we collaborated on this event, please see their work shared here:

- [Indspire](#)
- [Chrystal Tabobandung / RAISE](#)
- [kinSHIFT](#)

## 2.2 Current and Ongoing

BES Executive Search staff will hire and collaborate alongside Indigenous community members, artists, and/or facilitators to workshop alongside the entire staff complement. This will promote meaningful dialogue and foster a deeper understanding of Indigenous perspectives, histories, and cultural practices while centering Indigenous voices in our learning journey.

## 2.3 Understanding

**UNDERSTANDING** the history and legacy of residential schools means that we approach our work in a trauma-informed way and in a way designed to highlight meaningful Indigenous representation. Call to Action #92 mentions the importance of providing education of management and staff about Aboriginal history, especially as it concerns residential schools. As part of our work with organizations and community partners, we understand that part of the work of inviting partnership with Indigenous community must include an acknowledgement of past and ongoing harm. We will commit to this in the following manners laid out below.

## 2.4 Exploratory

### 2.4.1 Educational

BES Executive Search seeks to develop partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations to provide educational workshops that foster deeper understanding of key topics, such as Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination rights.

BES Executive Search will be collaborating with [RAISE](#), to host a series of storytelling sessions. These sessions will bring valuable awareness of Indigenous perspectives and experiences, emphasizing meaningful dialogue around cultural, traditional and historical understanding.

BES Executive Search is committed to ongoing team-building initiatives centered around trauma-informed practices. As part of this commitment, we will explore Harm Reduction Training to help staff gain practical skills and insights to better support Indigenous communities and address related issues in a culturally sensitive way.

BES Executive Search invests in collective learning through various mediums. Over the course of the calendar year, the entire staff complement will be offered varying books, articles, essays, podcasts and/or short films to engage with. We will continue to explore works from a variety of sources and authors, each offering different scholarship and Indigenous liberation movements on Turtle Island. This approach will allow staff to expand their understanding of Indigenous history, rights, and cultural contexts, allowing for continuous growth and dialogue within the team.

## 3 Exploring

**EXPLORING** the intersections between treaty, constitutional, Indigenous, and human rights in Canada means a commitment to our continued education and relearning. We recognize that focusing on anti-Indigenous racism and Indigenous solidarity work will require a balance of listening, organizing, actioning, and emphasizing the right to self-determination. As part of our exploration process, we are committed to and will continue to dedicate time in the following ways:

### 3.1 Current and Ongoing

#### 3.1.1 Indigenous Rights Working Group

In fall/winter of 2024, BES Executive Search's Indigenous Rights Working Group comprised of five (5) volunteer members of the staff complement. This group researched and assessed all internal and candidate/client-facing processes to ensure alignment within our commitments. The group also led the development of our 2025 Reconcili-ACTION Plan and all elements that our team will be committing to throughout the course of the current calendar year. The working group will continue to meet and collaborate until the end of Spring 2025, to oversee and manage the ongoing projects and Plan commitments.

#### 3.1.2 Procurement and Advertising

Led by the Operations and Community Relations Department, BES Executive Search will be exploring additional approaches to advertising and communicating job opportunities to broaden the range of potential Indigenous community members seeking employment. Through outreach to Indigenous-led organizations, virtual groups and membership-based associations, we aim to build stronger connections and greater access for Indigenous community members to seek and retain employment.

Further to this, research is being led by the greater team to develop a more comprehensive network and database with Indigenous communities and associations.

#### 3.1.3 Marketing and Education

Led by the Marketing Department, BES Executive Search will explore the development of a mini-conversational series for National Indigenous History Month. Throughout the month, we will feature a conversation with an Indigenous leader, facilitator or community member, providing valuable insights and fostering learning around Indigenous perspectives and practices.

#### 3.1.4 Recruitment Process

We will continue to create a better space of care during the interview and consultation process for our recruitment assignments. This initiative will focus on creating supportive, respectful environments that honour Indigenous ways of being and knowing.

## 4 Recognizing

**RECOGNIZING** the rich contributions of Indigenous peoples involves highlighting Indigenous community builders, artists, advocates, Elders and knowledge holders. As part of our commitment to recognizing Indigenous wisdom, we will practice what is laid out below.

## 4.1 Current and Ongoing

With the leadership of the Community Relations Specialist, the BES Executive Search team has been assembling an evolving compilation of work containing Indigenous-led or founded agencies and organizations we endeavour to foster ongoing, long-term relationships with. BES Executive Search will endeavour to connect with Indigenous community builders, members, artists and knowledge holders on a grassroots level. We will contact these individuals and organizations bi-monthly to determine how we can use our platform to further advance, recognize and amplify Indigenous initiatives, advocates, and organizations.

BES Executive Search's social media platforms will be used to amplify Indigenous community organizing efforts, artistry, research, news, and to advance Indigenous led initiatives.

One of the many ways in which this will occur is through our weekly "We Source" initiative; an initiative that ongoingly shares locally based resources, ceremonies, events, showcases, protests, and other community-oriented initiatives.

Another avenue in which Indigenous artistry will be amplified is through our Monthly Music Medley project; a project where five (5) artists are highlighted on our social media platforms, monthly, for community to listen. With this initiative we will highlight several Indigenous artists throughout the 2025 year.

BES Executive Search will continue to offer all shortlisted candidates a \$100 honorarium as a gesture of appreciation for the time and labour they have invested in the search process. Led by the Community Relations Specialist, we will ensure that at least two Indigenous organizations will be reflected in the list of eight (8) possible organizations for donations, quarterly. Additionally, we will endeavour to develop ongoing, long-term relationships with the listed organizations by outreaching every quarter *via* email or in-person engagement to determine how the partnership can be further strengthened. For a list of Indigenous organizations that we have built, and will continue to build relationships with, please reference the section of this document titled, *Reconcili-ACTION Plan Resources: Commitment #4*.

## 4.2 Documentation

Recognizing that many communities celebrate holidays in diverse ways, we have shaped our holiday policy to allow and encourage staff at the firm to select holidays that align more closely with their cultural backgrounds and personal needs. This initiative was inspired by Animkii, a leading Indigenous technology company.

- See the document that inspired it all [HERE](#).
- Our policy can be viewed [HERE](#).

## 4.3 Exploratory

BES Executive Search is committed to following the work of Indigenous-led organizations, artists and individuals—to recognize and celebrate these voices and stories, our marketing department is exploring initiatives using our social media channels. With this in mind, we aim to:

- Find one (1) new idea per quarter with a focus on highlighting Indigenous sovereignty rights work.
- Explore interactive experiences with Indigenous Artists.

- Explore a LIVE series on our channels with interviews with Indigenous Leaders from around Turtle Island for 2025.

## 5 Action

**ACTION** on Indigenous solidarity work through a self-reflective and community engaged process. As part of our commitment to action-taking, we will practice what we have laid out below.

### 5.1 Current and ongoing

The BES Executive Search staff recognize that September 30<sup>th</sup> is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day. We will commit to participating in events organized and presented by members of the Indigenous community to reflect and stand in solidarity with survivors and their kin.

The BES Executive Search staff will endeavour to attend either in- person or through virtual means at least one (1) Indigenous led event per quarter (e.g., gatherings via Indigenous Curatorial Collective, 60's Scoop Lunch and Learn workshops, etc.). We will aim to deepen relationships with Indigenous communities by attending events and engaging in community gatherings. This approach enables us to gain firsthand insights into Indigenous employment needs, stay updated on policies affecting Indigenous communities, and building genuine, lasting connections. A list of possible engagements will be provided by the Community Relations Specialist.

BES Executive Search will continue to establish meaningful partnerships with organizations to guide our volunteering and mobilization efforts.

## 6 Telling Others

**TELLING OTHERS** by modeling to our clients, networks, friends, and families our dedication to centering Indigenous voices and legacies with a focus on broad representation. As part of our external education outreach this year, we have and will continue to commit to what we lay out below.

### 6.1 Current and Ongoing

Through the [Moose Hide Campaign](#), we engage and facilitate conversations on the work necessary to end gender-based violence. BES Executive Search staff wear the Moose Hide pin as a symbol of taking a stand against the ongoing violence on Indigenous communities and undoing the effects of Residential Schools.

The BES Executive Search team will continue to advance Indigenous literature and scholarship on both an internal and external basis to the firm. The intention is to quote or cite the work of at least one (1) Indigenous Elder, knowledge holder, or scholar in every educational and workshop offering.

### 6.2 Exploratory

BES Executive Search one-day conference on best practices in working with Indigenous and racialized communities within the workspace.

BES Executive Search will continue our engagement with external organizations to facilitate virtual and in person speaking engagements with organizations such as:

- Workforce Forward
- Indigenomics

### 6.2.1 Marketing and Education

Collaborations on social media: BES Executive Search will partner with platforms rooted within Indigenous communities, and share the firm's Reconcili-ACTION Plan

Develop a specialized certificate program as part of our EDIA learning module in partnership with an Indigenous scholar that is accessible through the BES client portal, focusing on Indigenous inclusion, equity, and cultural understanding.

Launch a mini-interview series for National Indigenous History Month in June. Throughout the month, we'll feature a conversation with an Indigenous leader or facilitator, providing valuable insights and fostering learning around Indigenous perspectives and practices.

BES Executive Search will release a Spring and Fall BES News Article providing insights on how organizations can integrate Indigenous values, traditions, and principles into their policies.

### 6.2.2 Member Organization Work

BES Executive Search will explore getting certified with organizations such as CCIB.

## 7 Resources

### 7.1 Commitments # 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6

#### **“Learning, Understanding, Exploring, Taking Action, Teaching”**

The section listed below is a reference to some of BES Executive Search's most referenced resources pertaining to Indigenous community organizing, supports, research and sovereignty needs. Please note that this list is non-exhaustive and ever-expanding:

- [Toronto Indigenous Harm Reduction](#)
- [The Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto](#)
- [kinSHIFT](#)
- [Yellowhead Institute](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report 94 Calls to Action](#)
- [First Nations University of Canada, Indigenous Voices on Indigenous Identity 2022](#)
- [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)
- [Indigenous Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA Resources](#)
- [Native Canadian Centre of Toronto](#)
- [National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health](#)

### 7.2 Commitment #4

#### **RECOGNIZING – Honorarium and Funding Commitments**

## 2025

- [2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations](#)  
2 Spirited People of the 1st Nations supports 2-Spirit peoples and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit community members who are at risk of or living with HIV, hepatitis C, and related co-infections; and continue to support community members who are facing the effects of historic and ongoing colonial violence so that they may thrive within their communities and nations. The organization sees a strong, healthy, and self-determining 2-Spirit community in Ontario where 2-Spirit peoples live with pride in their Indigenous heritages, values and roles in their communities. They see 2-Spirit peoples as continuing to celebrate their strengths and supporting community members to live with physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.
- [Urban Native Youth Association \(UNYA\)](#)  
Urban Native Youth Association is the centre of Indigenous youth excellence, supporting youth on their journeys by amplifying and celebrating their voices. Their vision is empowered Indigenous youth leading and inspiring all Nations. UNYA's focus since its inception in 1988 has been to provide meaningful opportunities for Indigenous youth (Aboriginal, Metis, Inuit, First Nations, Status, Non-Status) in the urban setting. Our goal is to be a safe place for Indigenous youth to come and find out about programs and services at UNYA and in the broader community. UNYA strives to support Indigenous youth by providing a diverse continuum of advocacy, preventative and support services that respond to their immediate and long-term needs.

## 2024

- [BC Aboriginal Child Care Society](#)  
The BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) offers a variety of services that provide early childhood education professionals, support service professionals, and Indigenous children and families, access to early learning programs, resources, training, research, and community services that are culturally based.
- [Clan Mother's Healing Village](#)  
Clan Mothers is developing a land-based healing village to provide culturally innovative solutions for women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people in a community living environment, incorporating traditional Indigenous healing and spiritual mentorship, while encouraging individual growth through programming, training and social enterprise.
- [First Nations Child and Family Caring Society](#)  
The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (Caring Society) works to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations youth and their families through education initiatives, public policy campaigns and providing quality resources to support communities. Using a reconciliation framework that addresses contemporary hardships for Indigenous families in ways that uplift all Canadians, the Caring Society champions culturally based equity for First Nations children and their families so that they can grow up safely at home, be healthy, achieve their dreams, celebrate their languages and culture and be proud of who they are.

- [Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#)  
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami serve as a national voice protecting and advancing the rights and interests of Inuit in Canada. Their vision is Canadian Inuit prospering through unity and self-determination.
- [Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health Inc.](#)  
Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health Inc. offer a comprehensive range of mental health services to members of Samson Cree Nation, Louis Bull Tribe, Ermineskin Cree Nation, Montana Cree Nation, and Pigeon Lake First Nations in Alberta and Montana. Their therapists and counsellors provide short-term crisis intervention counselling for individuals facing personal or family challenges; additionally, they offer group counselling for families and extended families. They facilitate self-help groups focusing on Anger Management, Grief Recovery, Domestic Violence, and more. Their team is also available to provide informative lectures to community and school groups on various healthy lifestyle topics.
- [Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre](#)  
The Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre (MDCC) project is a charitable, not-for-profit First Nations organization, mandated by all thirteen Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs. In 2002, the [Mi'kmawey Debert Elders' Advisory Council](#) was convened: this council represents Mi'kmaw communities across Nova Scotia, and are critical in guiding the development and vision of the project. Since this time, the project has been through an extensive planning process including the 2003 Elders' Programmatic Statement (Connecting with Our Past), a 2005 Feasibility Study (includes fundraising feasibility), a 2007 Plan for Visitor Experiences, a 2009 Master Site Plan (includes a sustainable design strategy and security analysis), and a 2010 Functional Programme. Paralleling these individual planning elements are a number of other long-term planning processes including curatorial research at museums in Canada and the United States, environmental and archaeological assessment, and a significant endowment campaign.

## 2023

- [Anishnawbe Health Foundation](#)  
Anishnawbe Health Foundation's mission is to support an environment where the urban Indigenous community can heal spiritually, physically, emotionally and mentally by enhancing capital and program funding, as well as to foster the reclamation, preservation, research and application of traditional healing methods, including the sharing of these with all people.
- [Indspire](#)  
Indspire is a national Indigenous registered charity that invests in the education of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people for the long-term benefit of them, their families and communities, and Canada.
- [Legacy of Hope Foundation](#)  
Legacy of Hope Foundation is a national Indigenous charitable organization with the mandate to educate and create awareness and understanding about the Residential School System, including intergenerational impacts such as the removal of generations of Indigenous children from their families, including the Sixties Scoop, the post-traumatic stress disorders that many First Nations, Inuit,

and Metis continue to experience, all while trying to address racism, foster empathy and inspire action.

- [Miziwe Biik](#)  
Miziwe Biik works with Indigenous community members in the Greater Toronto Area to support them in navigating employment and training services.
- [True North Aid](#)  
True North Aid is dedicated to serving and supporting northern Indigenous communities in Canada through practical humanitarian support. Their mandate is to provide practical humanitarian assistance through initiatives established on eight foundational stones of support. These include self-determination, reconciliation, water, food, health, housing, hope, and education. Their priority is to help ensure the dignity and health of Indigenous people through our action.
- [Water First](#)  
Water First is one of the top charitable organizations in Canada addressing water challenges in Indigenous communities through education, training and meaningful collaboration. Water First is guided by the Indigenous youth and young adults who participate in their programs, their Indigenous staff and board members, local Indigenous community partners, and by members of their Indigenous Advisory Council. Their collaborations are built on respect and meaningful partnerships, with Indigenous youth and community partners at the heart of their work.

## 7.3 BES Executive Search Holiday Plan

### Statutory Holiday Substitute Policy

We would like to extend our gratitude to [Animikii](#), an Indigenous-led, owned, and operated technology company, for implementing a similar policy at their organization and inspiring us with this idea.

In Canada, statutory holidays, often referred to as public or statutory holidays, are days designated by federal or provincial/territorial law as non-working days for employees. Statutory holidays serve to honour cultural and historical events, fostering national unity and identity. Recognizing Canada's diverse cultural and religious landscape, our new policy gives employees the flexibility to substitute their designated paid holidays with alternative days that better align with their personal traditions and beliefs. Please note that this is optional for employees; employees may still observe the designated holidays if you choose not to make any changes.

#### Substituting Statutory Holidays Guidelines

1. Submission Deadline

Statutory Holiday Substitution Requests should be submitted by December 31st each year to apply to the following calendar year. If requests aren't submitted by this deadline, the statutory holidays designated for your province will apply. We thank you for ensuring your requests are submitted on time!

2. New Employees

New Employees have 30 days from their start date to submit their requests for the current calendar year.

3. Holiday Schedule Adherence

To help maintain administrative efficiency, we kindly ask that the chosen holiday schedule be followed as planned. If you substitute another day for a statutory holiday, the statutory holiday will then be treated as a regular workday for you, and you'll be expected to work that particular day.

4. Use of Substitute Days

Substituting statutory holidays can't be used as additional vacation days. If you choose to substitute a statutory holiday, you must observe and honour the alternative holiday accordingly and will need to inform your direct supervisor of what it is you are observing.

5. Substitutable Statutory Holidays

As a firm, we emphasize the importance of taking time off for rest and relaxation, which is best achieved collectively. As a result, statutory holidays that fall within the two-week winter holiday office closure, such as Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day, are not substitutable.

The statutory holidays that are substitutable are as follows:

- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving

This policy is subject to regular review and may be updated to reflect changes in business needs and regulatory requirements.