



## Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences Revue canadienne des sciences de l'administration

*Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences - Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*

Call for Papers for the Special Issue:

### **How are Indigenous businesses shaping sustainable futures?**

#### **Special Issue Editors:**

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#### **Introduction**

Indigenous Peoples are the original stewards of their territories, each characterised by a unique and rich history, culture, and knowledge system which has sustained them and their territories since time immemorial (Peredo et al., 2004; United Nations, 2015). Today, more than 470 million Indigenous Persons worldwide (International Labour Organization, 2019) continue to uphold their culture, traditions, and traditional knowledge, offering unique solutions to several of the grand challenges we now face. Despite the profound disruptions caused by colonization, including displacement and systemic barriers limiting access to economic institutions, Indigenous communities have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and innovation to not only persist, but to thrive.

Early literature often centred on the challenges and barriers faced by Indigenous economies, highlighting that “Indigenous populations throughout the world suffer from chronic poverty, lower education” (Peredo et al., 2004, p. 1), or that “Indigenous people are struggling” (Anderson et al., 2006, p. 45). More recently, research has shifted to understand the powerful resurgence of Indigenous businesses, illustrating how traditional knowledge, community values, tenacity, and innovative practices can create alternative forms of entrepreneurship and management (e.g., Wuttunee & Wien, 2024). This growth is reflected in the emergence of Indigenous entrepreneurship as a vibrant academic discipline, changing how we understand Indigenous economic systems (Dana, 2015).

Today, entrepreneurship literature reflects the many success stories of Indigenous entrepreneurs (e.g., Henry et al., 2017, 2018), describing how these entrepreneurs thrive well beyond the expectations of their local markets (Angulo-Ruiz, 2020; Angulo-Ruiz et al., 2020). These entrepreneurial efforts have brought not only economic success, but

have also been “generators of change and pursuit of freedom from perceived constraints (Pergelova, et al., 2022, p. 481). Building on the foundational work in this field, there are numerous opportunities to expand our understanding of entrepreneurial success and how Indigenous entrepreneurs may thrive in colonial, contemporary markets.

Indigenous entrepreneurship research fits more broadly within Indigenous management and organisation studies research – a field that has rapidly grown over the past decade. A recent systematic review descriptively found that this emerging field was growing in size – 776 articles published over the past 90 years (1932-2021) – and diversity, with articles being published in 253 journals (Salmon et al., 2023). Salmon et al. (2023) identify several calls for research emphasizing that “strength-based research is severely lacking within the field of Indigenous (management and organization studies) research, with deficit-based approaches remaining most common” (Salmon et al., 2023, p. 471).

In alignment with this call, we encourage studies that document both the “wisdom and hope” of Indigenous entrepreneurs and their businesses, while not overlooking the “painful elements of social realities” within Indigenous nations (Tuck, 2009, p. 416). To balance these tensions, Tuck (2009) proposes a *desire-based framework* as an antidote to damage-centred research, explaining that “an antidote stops and counteracts the effects of a poison, and the poison I am referring to here is not the supposed damage of Native communities, urban communities, or other disenfranchised communities but the frameworks that position these communities as damaged” (p. 416). This is an epistemological shift that does not mean “a call to paint everything as peachy, as fine, as over” (2009, p. 419), but to interrogate the frameworks and assumptions that guide the implementation and analysis of our research. A recent example of this approach is the work of Angulo-Ruiz, Gladu, Legendre and Skudra (2024) who identify the importance of Indigenous innovation as a pathway to overcome financial constraints to create Indigenous business wealth. With this wealth, Indigenous entrepreneurs can affect the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their communities.

Traditional territory, and one’s relationship to that space is crucial for many Indigenous Peoples, as their relationship with territory can be understood as being “both spiritual and material, not only one of livelihood, but of community and indeed of the continuity of their cultures and societies” (Wuttunee, 2004, p.14-15). This understanding reflects the duality and interconnectedness between the physical and the spiritual<sup>1</sup> world, with all things being comprised of “a physical being and a spiritual being”, and that, as Elder Albert Marshall says, “no one being is greater than the next, that we are part and parcel of the whole, we are equal, and that each one of us has a responsibility to the balance of the system” (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 332). A valuable theoretical development that allows for this duality and complexity is Two-Eyed Seeing, grounded within Mik’maq ways of knowing and being. In describing Two-Eyed Seeing, Elder Albert Marshall indicates “that it refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing, and from the other eye with the strengths of Western knowledges and ways of knowing, and to using both these eyes together, for the benefit

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<sup>1</sup> Spirituality “is not simply worship of a higher being or holding certain ceremonies. The spirituality of a people is wrapped up in their language and their songs, their stories and their dances, in how they live and interact with each other, and who or what they honour” (Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq [CMM], 2007, p. 49 as cited by Hatcher et al., 2009, p. 145).

of all” (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 335). A similar theoretical development called ‘He Awa Whiria’ – a braided rivers approach – holds “that a blending of Indigenous and Western bodies of knowledge creates an approach that is potentially more powerful than either knowledge stream is able to produce unilaterally” (Macfarlane & Macfarlane, 2019, p. 52; Macfarlane et al., 2015). More than simply a metaphor, these two developments emphasize knowledge co-creation across different worldviews. This is vital today, as Elder Murdena Marshall emphasizes that Indigenous knowledge<sup>2</sup> “was never meant to be static and stay in the past; rather, it must be brought into the present so that everything becomes meaningful in our lives and in our communities” (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 335-336).

Finally, Jean Paul Gladu indicates that “(w)e’re tired of managing poverty – managing poverty is not a fun job. We want to manage wealth ... and wealth, really, comes back to the land” (Nerberg, 2023). By creating wealth, Indigenous entrepreneurs and their businesses can achieve what Jean Paul Gladu (2016) has referred to as ‘Economic Reconciliation’ and have the potential to impact the social, economic and environmental agenda of their communities.

## Scope and Contributions

To advance Indigenous business research, we expect authors to build on already published theoretical developments (e.g., Anderson et al., 2006; Dana, 1995, 1997, 2015; Light & Dana, 2013; Peredo & Chrisman, 2006; Peredo et al., 2004), to possibly blend Indigenous and Western bodies of knowledge (e.g., Salmon, 2024), and provide empirical evidence of Indigenous success that can serve as an example to motivate and inform others. Empirical evidence might be based on qualitative data (e.g., Kovach, 2009; Price & Hartt, 2023), quantitative data (e.g., Salmon, 2024; Walter & Andersen, 2013), or mixed methods. We expect authors to provide evidence for new and efficacious competing discourses (e.g., Walter & Andersen, 2013). We also expect that research has been respectfully planned and executed and has the approval from the Research Ethics Board (or similar) of at least one of the authors’ universities.

Here are some examples of potential contributions, but you are not limited to them:

- Comparative studies of Indigenous business, (e.g. from at least two different parts of the world, places within a country or places across nations / countries).
- Comparative studies of Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses and their entrepreneurs (e.g., Dana, 1995, 1996; Light & Dana, 2013; Redpath & Nielsen, 1997; Angulo-Ruiz & Muralidharan, 2023).
- Intersectionality of Indigenous entrepreneurs with other entrepreneur’s characteristics and how that affects the success of their enterprises (Pergelova et al., 2022).
  - o How are Indigenous youth participating in Indigenous business?
  - o How are urban Indigenous entrepreneurs thriving in contemporary markets?

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<sup>2</sup> “Knowledge is not a tool but rather it is a spirit. It transforms the holder. It also reminds us that we have responsibilities to the spirit of that knowledge. We must pass it on” (Hatcher et al., 2009, p. 146)

- Exploration of how Indigenous businesses build organizational capabilities, and the effects of these capabilities.
  - o What marketing strategies do Indigenous businesses utilize to be successful in the marketplace?
  - o What are the organizational structure models that Indigenous businesses have developed?
- Understanding the dynamics between Indigenous businesses and Indigenous consumers, including the everyday life of Indigenous persons in contemporary markets (e.g., Walter & Anderson, 2013; Lewis et al., 2024).
- Exploration of Indigenous financing, exploring different approaches to financing Indigenous business startup costs and operations, and the effect of these approaches. (e.g., Angulo-Ruiz et al., 2020, 2024; Pergelova et al., 2022; De Gruyter et al., 2024)
- Exploration of Indigenous innovation, exploring Indigenous systems of innovation and its effects.
  - o How do Indigenous businesses approach investment in research and development, what effects does this have?
  - o What are Indigenous businesses doing to develop technologies and benefit from them? (e.g., MacDonald et al., 2021)
- Exploration of Indigenous conceptions of business, and how they are integrated in current businesses, and the effects of these choices.
  - o Indigenous entrepreneurs have traded for thousands of years; how are they trading now? How are they building and managing supply chains?
  - o What is the role of Indigenous culture in the development, maintenance and growth of Indigenous enterprises?
- Exploration of how Indigenous business is impacted, or impacts its surrounding environment
  - o What are the effects of Indigenous businesses on the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of their communities? (e.g., Parhankangas & Colbourne, 2022).
  - o What are the dynamics between legal orders/aspects and Indigenous business? (e.g., Huckell et al., 2024).
  - o How are business schools contributing to the development of Indigenous businesses? (e.g., Deephouse et al., 2024).
  - o How can we imagine new possibilities for business education to be more inclusive and encourage greater Indigenous entrepreneurship? (e.g., Doucette et al., 2021; Hrenyk & Salmon, 2024; Price et al., 2022)

### **Submission Process**

To be considered for this special issue, submissions must fit with the aims, scope, rigor and contribution of the *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences - Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*.

Authors should submit their manuscripts through the Wiley Submission System at <https://wiley.atyponrex.com/journal/CJAS>.

Please make sure to select the special issue ‘*How are Indigenous businesses shaping sustainable futures?*’ within the submission portal so that it is received by the SI editors and does not go into the general stream of submissions.

### **Proposed timeline**

- Opening date for submissions on the Wiley Submission System: Thursday, January 2, 2025

Submitted papers will be published on a rolling basis (i.e., as soon as papers are accepted)

- Submission Deadline: December 1, 2025
- Review Process: January 2025 – December 2025
- Final Decisions and Revisions: February 2025 – March 2026
- Publication: Early View as soon as the paper is accepted

Special issue editors plan to attend the 2025 Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) Conference in Waterloo, Canada. An information session might be organised during the ASAC Conference.

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