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Inuit Heritage Trust's Nunavut Archaeology Guidelines

Introduction

Inuit are the Rights Holders of Nunavut's cultural heritage. The archaeological record is an important part of this heritage and the significance it holds for Indigenous Peoples is widely accepted. Inuit, however, have little access to Nunavut archaeology materials and data and the practice of archaeology in Nunavut continues to dispossess and disconnect Inuit from tangible and intangible parts of Inuit cultural heritage.

Inuit Heritage Trust, Inc. (IHT) was created through the Nunavut Agreement and ratified in 1994 as representing Nunavut Inuit interests in Nunavut's cultural heritage. This document outlines IHT's Archaeology Guidelines for researchers proposing to undertake archaeology in Nunavut.¹ They have grown out of the guidelines and principles developed in 1994 by Inuit during the Ittarnisalirijiit Conference in Iglulik. These Guidelines are designed to advance Inuit governance in Nunavut's cultural heritage as well as strengthen relationships between archaeologists and the communities they work within. They were developed and submitted in 2021 to the Department of Culture and Heritage (CH) as recommendations for revising the Government of Nunavut's (GN) current <u>Guidelines for Applicants and Holders of Nunavut Archaeology Permits</u>. During a meeting between IHT and CH in October 2022 it was decided that the recommendations be published as IHT's Nunavut Archaeology Guidelines. Currently, IHT and CH are working in partnership to update the archaeology permitting process and procedures.

IHT's Nunavut Archaeology Guidelines incorporate the five priority areas of Inuit Tapariit Kanatami's (ITK) <u>National Inuit Strategy on Research</u> (NISR) to increase the benefits of Nunavut archaeology projects for Inuit and move Nunavut archaeology from a process of extraction to one of investment.² They require archaeologists engage with communities beyond the limited duration of the field season and prioritize building capacity among Inuit.³ They enhance the ethical conduct of Nunavut archaeology by addressing Inuit priorities, concerns, and interests and improving Inuit access to archaeological materials and data.

¹ In this document researchers includes permit applicants proposing archaeology work for the purpose of research, education, or as cultural resource management (CRM) prior to development.

² ITK's five priority areas of the NISR include: advance Inuit governance in research, enhance the ethical conduct of research, align funding with Inuit research priorities, ensure Inuit access, ownership, and control over data and information, and build capacity in Inuit Nunangat research (ITK 2018).

³ Article 37.1.1 of the Nunavut Agreement (1993) states that implementation includes "provisions for training..[are].. essential for Inuit to benefit from the Agreement" (p.9). The recommendations identify ways Permit Holders can contribute to this process.



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Background/Context

The GN's Guidelines were published in 2003 and focus on the preservation and protection of archaeological sites and materials.⁴ Since their publication, Indigenous People's Rights to control, maintain, and access Indigenous culture and heritage have been established by commission reports and legal imperatives. This includes the <u>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of</u> <u>Indigenous Peoples</u> (UNDRIP, 2007), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) <u>Calls to</u> <u>Action</u>, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Final Report's <u>Calls</u> to <u>Justice</u>.⁵ In Canada UNDRIP came into force as of June 21st, 2021, and forms the basis of the Canadian Archaeology Association's (CAA) <u>Principles of Ethical Conduct</u>.⁶

Under the GN's Guidelines and Nunavut's current permitting process, most Nunavut Inuit do not have the opportunity to engage with Inuit cultural belongings (artifacts), which after excavation are brought south for research, display, and storage.⁷ This removes the opportunity for the knowledge attached to these cultural belongings to be passed down within communities. These factors, in addition to the absence of a university or territorial repository in Nunavut, have contributed to Nunavut archaeology being dominated by southern researchers who are its primary beneficiaries.⁸ In this time of reconciliation, southern archaeologists and institutions are recognizing the persisting colonial legacy of archaeology and the importance of partnerships with Inuit and Inuit communities. But a coordinated approach is needed at a policy level to ensure sustainable and meaningful benefits for Inuit and to move towards Inuit self-determination in Nunavut Archaeology.

⁴ Based on the Nunavut Archaeological and Paleontological Sites Regulations pursuant to Section 51 of the Nunavut Act the current Regulations were established in 2001.

⁵ Including but not limited to Articles 11.1, 11.2, 12.1, 15.1, 26.3 and 31.1 UNDRIP; Actions 43, 67, and 79 TRC Calls to Action; and Action 2.1 MMIWG Calls to Justice.

⁶ The CAA "recognize that heritage legislations across Canada remains deeply colonial".. [and].. "encourage [s] all members to advocate for and work towards brining existing legislation in line with UNDRIP".

⁷ The term 'cultural belonging' is increasingly used in place of the term artifact by archaeologists working with Indigenous histories to emphasise the connection between items and the communities whose ancestors created them (e.g., See Hollowell and Nicholas 2009. Using Ethnographic Methods to Articulate Community-Based Conceptions of Cultural Heritage Management. *Public Archaeology* 8(2-3):141-160; Schaepe et al. 2019 Archaeology as Therapy, Connecting Belongings, Knowledge, Time, Place, and Well-Being. *Current Anthropology* 58 (4):502-532).

⁸ Without a university in Nunavut, Inuit must go south for post-secondary education, which is hindered by many social, cultural, and economic factors. IHT is currently leading the proposed Nunavut Inuit Heritage Centre Project that will see the return of Nunavut's Cultural Belongings to the territory.



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Requirements for Nunavut Archaeology Permit Applicants

1) Hold knowledge of Inuit Societal Values and take responsibility for ensuring all field crew are made aware of these values.⁹ Understand that incorporating Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) into research means going beyond using Inuit Knowledge as data or information and includes how research is conducted and how decisions are made.^{10,11}

2) Follow the <u>Circumpolar Inuit Protocols for Ethical and Equitable Engagement</u> as well as the protocols and guidelines developed by local, regional, and national levels.¹² Meet, preferably in person, with community organizations (i.e., Hamlet, HTO, CLARC, Heritage societies, schools) and members (i.e., local Elders, Knowledge Holders) during the project development stage, prior to finalizing research questions.¹³ Identify local interests, concerns, and priorities (e.g., holding an archaeology field school, avoiding areas of special significance) and develop a research plan in collaboration with the nearby community (or communities).¹⁴ Gain community feedback well in advance of submitting a permit application, which may be done through introducing proposal plans on the community radio, setting up a table at the local grocery stores to speak with people, or posting on the community Facebook page.¹⁵ Include in the permit application how the project addresses local interests, priorities, and concerns. In the case of CRM/Development projects, communities should be engaged during the Inventory study.

⁹ The Government of Nunavut (GN) recognizes and is guided by eight Inuit Societal Values (Government of Nunavut 2020).

¹⁰Ikaarvik, a youth group developed in Mittimatalik, have outlined <u>45 recommendations for researchers working in Nunavut</u>. They have developed the concept of ScIQ, showing how science and IQ can be combined to benefit both Inuit and scientific researchers (Pederson et al. 2020 ScIQ: an invitation and recommendations to combine science and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit for meaningful engagement of Inuit communities in research. *Arctic Science* 6:326-339).
¹¹ The Canadian Archaeology Association's (CAA) Principles of Ethical Conduct requires its members "Provide"

opportunities for education and training whenever possible for all archaeological staff in their employ on Indigenous rights, history, and treaties, and the legacy of residential schools;"

¹² ICC also published an <u>Ethical and Equitable Engagement Synthesis Report: A collection of Inuit rules, guidelines,</u> <u>protocols, and values for the engagement of Inuit Communities and Indigenous Knowledge from Across Inuit Nunaat</u> in 2021 aimed at identifying how ethical engagement is practiced.

¹³ The current archaeology guidelines state that Permit Applicants "are encouraged to contact the community nearest the location of the proposed field study at the beginning of the project planning process" (P. 9), and the application form states that "applicants must inform and consult with communities about their proposed research". IHT's Archaeology Guidelines require community engagement earlier in the process to maximize community benefits.

¹⁴ Ensure any concerns raised during the engagement process are addressed. Meaningful engagement should not be restricted to community directed or co-directed archaeology research projects.

¹⁵ IHT currently engages communities for feedback on projects after they have been developed and a permit application has been submitted, reviewed, and forwarded by CH. To ensure meaningful engagement, IHT intends to help connect archaeologists with the appropriate community organizations.



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3) Make sure the project is known to the local community. There may be turnover in positions at the Hamlet, HTO, and other community organizations between the project development stage and project start date and it is the responsibility of the permit holder to keep the dialogue open.

4) Include at least one, preferably, two or more, Inuit field assistants in the project from nearby communities who will be mentored in archaeology.¹⁶ At a minimum, permit holders should help prepare local field assistants for field work by supplying archaeological educational materials (e.g., IHT's archaeology guidebooks, and IHT's digital introduction to archaeology – currently under development). If the project includes an archaeology field school for local Inuit students, the permit holder must outline learning objectives and outcomes and how they will be met, and students must be paid for their work on the project. ¹⁷ Include in the permit application how Inuit are involved in the project.

5) Make excavated materials accessible to the community for viewing, prior to leaving the community. Present on project activities to the community and in the case of multiyear projects, permit holders must present the research results from prior years.¹⁸

6) Provide the opportunity for Inuit Elders, Knowledge Holders, youth, and excavated materials (cultural belongings/feature drawings or photos) to come together for 'memory and meaning making'.¹⁹ Facilitate the documentation of Inuit knowledge, including details about regional styles and site use, as well as Inuktut terminology (e.g., for cultural belongings, features, sites). With permission from participants, supply data collected during these workshops to the local schools, Hamlet, HTO, IHT, and CH. Workshops may be held at the end of the field season or arrangements should be made for local Elders and Knowledge Holders to be brought to southern labs or repositories prior to report submission. Local Elders and Knowledge Holders should be

¹⁶ The GN's Guidelines state "communities often express a strong interest in the hiring of local field assistants" (P.9) and the current application form requires "all team members who are Beneficiaries under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement" (P.1) be identified. Clarifying Inuit participation as a minimum requirement for permit approval will reduce the burden on communities having to request local participation by prioritizing it for Permit Applicants.

¹⁷ Inuit are often hired on field projects as field assistants, polar bear monitors, or guides. However, preparing Inuit to take part in archaeology projects is necessary to move beyond token involvement and help shift the current power dynamic. Archaeologists often state they are holding field schools on external funding applications to meet funding objectives; however, students often work as field assistants and are not provided the guidance of a field school. Funding to support field schools, including wages or honoraria for students, should be built into external funding applications. This recommendation is intended to ensure Inuit benefit accordingly.

¹⁸ Article 33.5.7 in the Nunavut Agreement authorizes IHT to have this request attached to permit conditions.
¹⁹ These workshops build on the concept that handling cultural belongings can improve the understanding of collective and individual memory and heritage and are intended to include a small group of people.



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credited for the knowledge they have shared in all reports and research documents.²⁰ Translators should be hired, and honoraria provided to participants.²¹

7) Involve community members in the interpretation of data throughout the research process (not just at the end of the research project). This may include providing educational opportunities in archaeology to members of the local community. For example, hiring a community member as a research assistant who is mentored (in person or virtually) throughout the research process or presenting/co-presenting on the project with Inuit field assistants at local schools (may exclude short or small-scale CRM/Development projects).²²

8) Supply non-technical summary reports, in English and Inuktitut or Inuinnaqtun, to the local community and IHT in addition to CH.²³ Summary reports should include how the project integrated local Inuit interests, how Inuit were involved, and if/how the project differed from what was planned.²⁴

9) Include Inuit knowledge and perspectives as well as regionally appropriate Inuktut terminology for Inuit cultural belongings, and features, as well as Traditional Inuit Place Names in the final report.

10) Provide a digitized record (photographs) of cultural belongings and inventory (artifact catalogue) to CH and IHT along with their final permit report that may be used by IHT and CH to develop educational materials for Nunavut schools and to include in the collections database.²⁵,²⁶

Summary and Conclusion

IHT's Archaeology Guidelines are designed to help move the paternalistic relationship that tends to exist between researchers and Nunavut communities to one that respects Inuit agency and

²⁰ This will require consent forms outlining the purpose of recording traditional knowledge, identifying how it will be used, and confirming whether it is project specific or can be used in other contexts.

²¹ Associated costs should be built into the permit holders budget and external funding applications.

²² Following the guidelines and recommendations for archaeology in Inuit Homelands developed by Inuit during the 1994 Ittarnisalirijiit Katimajiit in Iglulik, *"There should be more control by Inuit throughout all stages of archaeological projects in the Inuit homeland"* (P. 5).

²³ Non-technical summary reports are currently provided to CH. The CH guidelines request technical reports be submitted to "the community nearest the research area" (P. 8), but this is not listed on the permit approval form.
²⁴ IHT is exploring how best to gather feedback from Inuit communities and archaeology project participants that

does not add extra labour.

²⁵ Artifact catalogues are currently submitted to CH and the CMN. Plans for transferring digital photographs of cultural belongings/artifacts from the permit holder to IHT/CH will be built into the Nunavut Inuit Heritage Centre's Digitization Strategy.

²⁶ Large files can be transferred using WeTransfer, or a SharePoint link.



knowledge. They supply a road map for meaningful engagement and will increase the impact and usefulness of Nunavut archaeology for Inuit.

IHT's aim is to re-centre Inuit Societal Values in the practice of Nunavut archaeology, particularly the principle of Piliriqatigiiniq, the concept of developing collaborative relationships and working together for a common purpose. IHT will support permit applicants in implementing IHT's Guidelines by helping to connect archaeologists with local Knowledge Holders, organizations, students, and potential archaeology assistants. IHT will also help prepare Inuit to take part in archaeology projects (e.g., create learning materials and facilitating archaeology workshops). IHT's long-term goal is to collaborate with archaeologists and southern organizations that demonstrate respect for Inuit knowledge and governance and develop community-based projects that address community priorities and concerns in archaeology and provide Nunavut Inuit archaeology learning opportunities.