



# FIRST NATIONS UNIVERSITY OF CANADA

## Media Release

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For immediate release

### **pîkiskwêwin expands with renewed funding from Canadian Heritage**

On March 31, National Indigenous Languages Day, the First Nations University of Canada is pleased to announce that the Government of Canada has renewed its support for pîkiskwêwin: Sharing Indigenous Languages On Radio and Online with another year of funding.

"The pîkiskwêwin project: Sharing Our Languages On Radio and Online makes an important contribution to our goal of expanding Indigenous language revitalization at First Nations University," said FNUniv President Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann.

In 2021, the Department of Canadian Heritage supported a new two-year project at the First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv), which produced podcasts in Saskatchewan's Indigenous languages—Cree, Sauteaux, Dene, Dakota/Lakota/Nakota and Michif.

There are over 100 podcast episodes available on demand at [www.pikiskwewin.ca](http://www.pikiskwewin.ca) and on podcast platforms, including Spotify and YouTube. They are also featured on [www.CFNUradio.ca](http://www.CFNUradio.ca), the streaming radio station run by students at the FNUniv, and across Saskatchewan on the MBC radio network.

"We wanted to not just talk about Indigenous languages, but produce podcasts in the Indigenous languages," said Shannon Avison, executive producer of pîkiskwêwin and associate professor of Indigenous Communication Arts (INCA) at FNUniv. "We have podcasts that are conversations about leadership and parenting in Sauteaux, grief and grieving in Dene, cooking in Michif, prayers in Michif and Nakota, and seasons in Cree."

Starting March 31, a new series of podcasts will be developed and released; however, under the new funding agreement, the new podcasts will be in Indigenous languages from Saskatchewan and across Canada.

(more)

“We’re pleased to take what we learned in Saskatchewan and share it,” said Avison. “We’ve trained language speakers here to produce podcasts on their own—they barely need us any more; but, we’re pleased to support and showcase their new episodes on the pîkiskwêwin site.”

“With support to expand our project nationally, we can expand our network with individuals and organizations that are already doing language training in their regions and in their languages, and help them by adding podcast production to their language revitalization strategies.”

There have been over 8,000 visits to the pîkiskwêwin.ca site since January 2024, according to pîkiskwêwin’s Senior Digital Consultant Alice Nicholls Asikinack. “Most are coming from Canada, with some from the US and Australia.”

“In Canada, there’s nothing like it,” said Nicholls Asikinack. “Having Indigenous language content on an accessible platform means that people can choose where and when they want to listen—on a website or on their favourite podcast platform.”

Belinda Nelson is excited to join the pîkiskwêwin project as a producer. “This is a great resource to learn from,” said Nelson, from Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation. “It’s an amazing project and a new opportunity for me to learn my language and get involved with language revitalization.”

“We are excited to work with pîkiskwêwin,” said Racine Jeff, Radio Manager at Tsilhqot’in National Government. “We established our radio network in 2018 and are expanding into podcasting. Working with the pîkiskwêwin team will expand our production capacity and will take our podcasts to a national audience.”

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