

To: University of Windsor Campus Community Members  
From: Rachel, McRae, Controller, Finance  
Date: January 24, 2022; Updated October 3, 2024  
Re: **University of Windsor Indigenous Elders Honorarium Guidelines**

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This guidelines is intended to cover honoraria for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders and Knowledge Holders only. It is not intended to be used for repetitive payments, part-time employment or independent contractor relationships. Please contact the Controller, Finance for information on whether the relationship could be deemed employment or contract. These guidelines do not apply to University of Windsor employees (faculty, staff or student staff). All requests for employee honorariums are to be made through the Payroll department.

It is imperative for those requesting Elder services to understand the true value of the ask. Each time you request the presence of an Elder at your event, whether it is to provide an opening, translate a document, etc. you are asking them to share a part of themselves with you and your audience. It is important to consider the emotional, physical, and spiritual impact such an ask may have. As well, it is important to consider whether there will be preparation required prior to the event that the Elder will be responsible for.

**Monetary Compensation:**

The following guidelines for honorariums apply:

- I. Half day (up to 3 hours): \$200
- II. Full day (up to 7 hours): \$450
- III. Special event/ceremony (may be longer than 3 hours of time at the event, but would require pre-event preparation and post-event debrief): \$450
- IV. Any extraordinary circumstances that may require deviation from these guidelines must be submitted to the Actine Vice-President, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

**The customary protocol of offering tobacco:**

The traditional tobacco should be wrapped and tied in a small bundle (piece of fabric) – this is referred to as a Tobacco Tie. When offering tobacco, use your left hand to place the tobacco in front of them and state your request. The Elder will indicate acceptance of your request by picking up or taking the tobacco from your hand. For others, after the service has been provided, it is customary to provide an honorarium plus coverage of travel or accommodation costs to show your appreciation for this person's time and the teachings that were shared. Parking fees and meals may also be provided for those who must travel a distance. For more information on offering tobacco, including where to obtain tobacco, please visit [CRC Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee](#)

**Gifts for Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors:**

These gifts were traditionally a means of support that would be used to feed, clothe, and provide shelter for ones-self and one's family. While historically gifts of food or other essentials were provided for their help, today an honorarium is acceptable. A meaningful gift of appreciation may be given in addition to an honorarium dependent on the type of work and time commitment that has been fulfilled.

Payments requested to be made Indigenous Elders should provide sufficient lead time to Accounts Payable to ensure payment can be available at the time of the event. Lead time for cheque payments requires at minimum 7 business days to process and cash payments require at minimum 15 business days to prepare. It is recommended to process payments by cheque whenever possible as this is the most secure method of payment.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to present the payment in cash at an event. For information on cash payments for paying Elders, please visit [Honorarium Payments to Indigenous Elders procedure](#) on the Finance > Accounts Payable website.

For payments to Elders of \$450 or more, the participant's name, home mailing address and Social Insurance Number (SIN) will also be required. Please note that T4A's will be generated for all individuals receiving payments of \$500 or more in any one calendar year. It may be possible that an Elder be paid an honorarium for more than one event within a calendar year, and therefore, it is best practice to obtain this information for each payment made to an Elder where possible.

**Travel and Accommodation:**

There is no set amount that you should provide, the current rate per the University of Windsor's Travel Policy is per diem \$87.00/day plus coverage of travel and accommodation costs (if applicable). We encourage giving what people or groups can afford being mindful of the ask being made of the Elder/Knowledge Keeper/Community member. Travel and accommodation costs are generally per the [University of Windsor Travel Policy](#). It is important to be mindful of policies and procedures of Indigenous communities and organizations that may differ from these rates.

**Equity:**

We ask you to recognize that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisors are acknowledged at the very least, the same level as visiting scholars and academics, therefore the honoraria should be the same or comparable.

**Customary Fees:** It is also important to determine if the visiting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Elders, Knowledge Keeper or Cultural Advisors has an expectation regarding the amount of honorarium and if so to honour that as their customary fee.