



A First Nations Data Governance Strategy

AFN COVID-19 Virtual Forum 2021

“Transforming the Future: The Role of Data Governance”

Jonathan Dewar, CEO



First Nations Information Governance Centre

- Rooted in the mid-1990s work to develop the Regional Health Survey and the OCAP® principles
- First Nations non-profit, incorporated in August 2010 with a special mandate from the Assembly of First Nations Chiefs in Assembly (#48–2009)
- Guided by principles, research ethics, and a cultural framework developed by First Nations, for First Nations
- Nations come together through regional processes; regions come together to do national-level work

About FNIGC

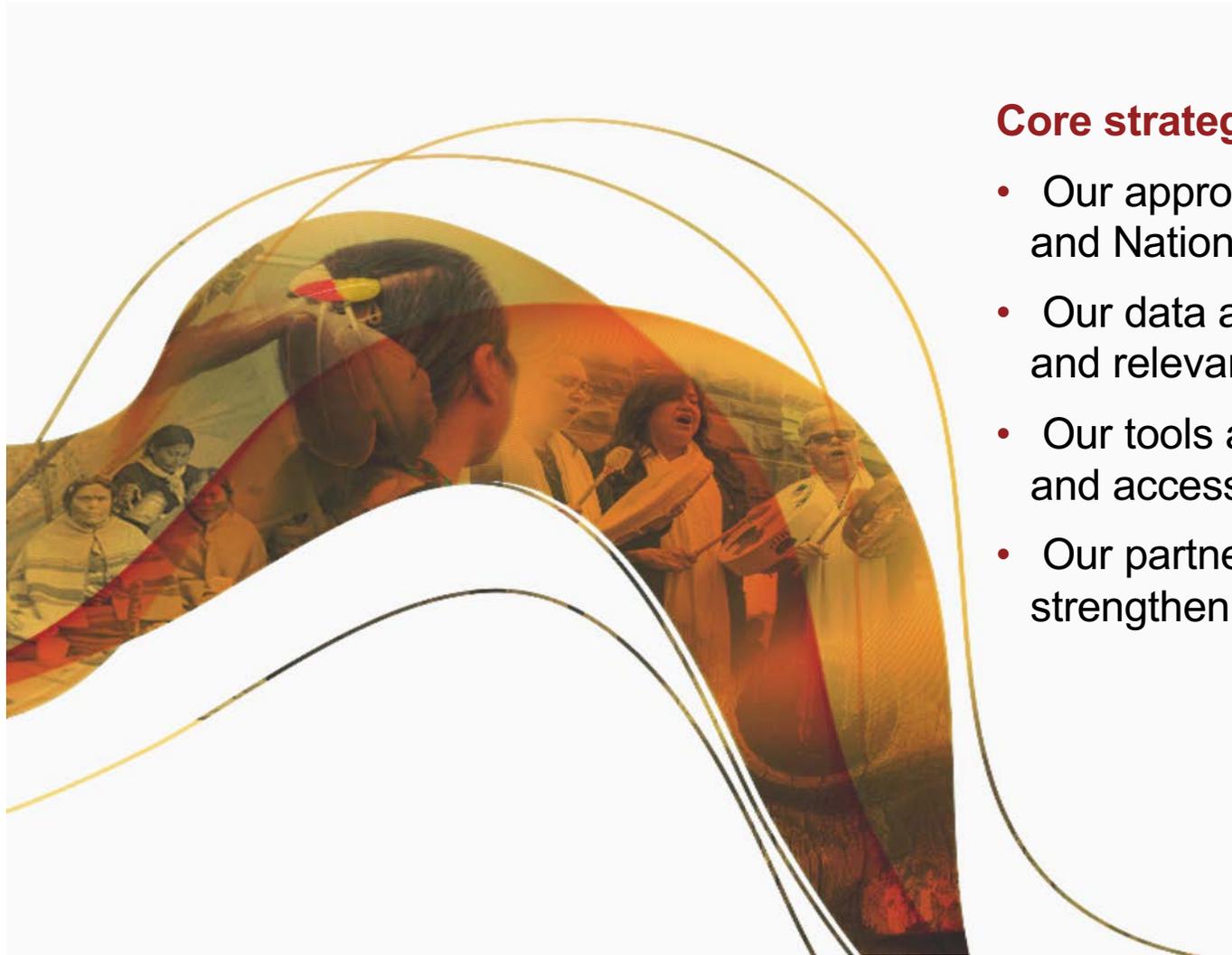


Vision

FNIGC envisions that every First Nation will achieve data sovereignty in alignment with its distinct worldview.

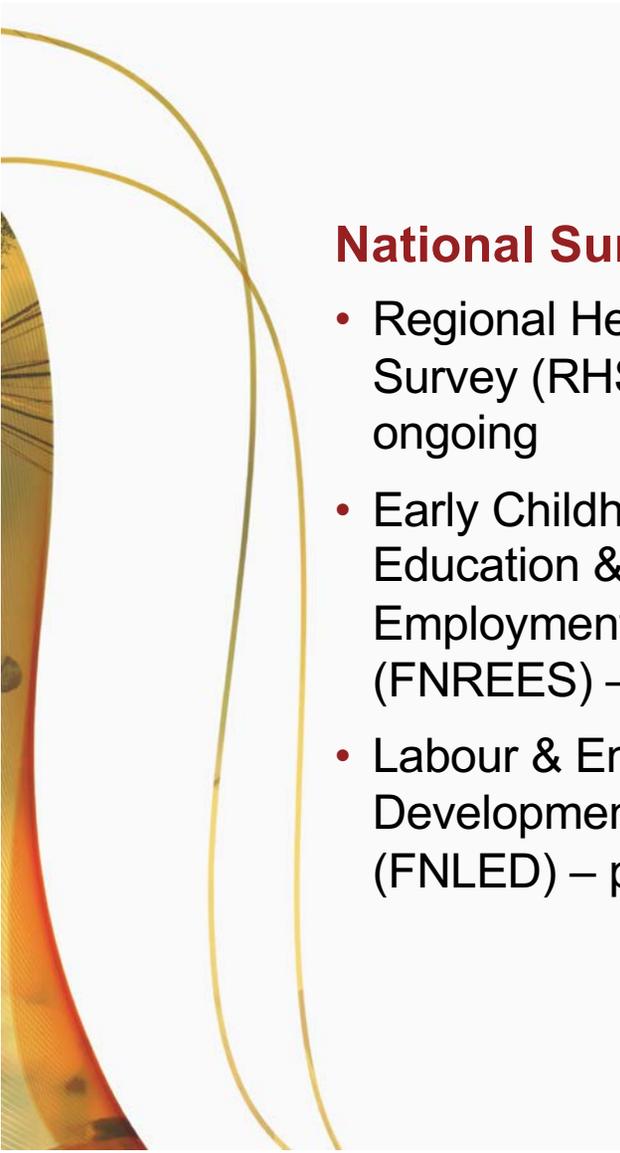
Mission

With First Nations, we assert data sovereignty and support the development of information governance and management at the community level through regional and national partnerships. We adhere to free, prior and informed consent, respect nation-to-nation relationships, and recognize the distinct customs of nations.



Core strategic objectives:

- Our approach is community-driven and Nation-based.
- Our data are inclusive, meaningful, and relevant to First Nations.
- Our tools are effective, adaptable, and accessible.
- Our partnerships connect regions to strengthen data sovereignty.



National Surveys

- Regional Health Survey (RHS) – ongoing
- Early Childhood, Education & Employment Survey (FNREES) – 2016
- Labour & Employment Development Survey (FNLED) – present

Research

- Research that aligns with FNIGC strategic direction and established principles and priorities
- Research on data sovereignty and information governance

Education, Training, & Capacity

- First Nations data sovereignty
- Information governance & management
- OCAP®
- First Nations Data Governance Strategy

First Nations Principles of OCAP®



- Ownership, Control, Access and Possession
- Collection, protection, use, and sharing of First Nations data
- Benefits community while minimizing harm
- Self-determination, and preservation and development of culture



Data Governance and COVID-19

- Throughout the pandemic, we have seen that the completeness, availability, and timeliness of national and regional COVID-19 data on First Nations (regardless of where they live) is an ongoing concern.
- These issues have collectively impacted the ability of First Nations to respond to the pandemic and plan for the safety of their Nations and communities in a timely manner, and has highlighted the importance of First Nations data governance, digital infrastructure, and information.



Data Governance and COVID-19

- First Nations governance over data ensures First Nations have access to their own information, thereby providing opportunity for them to ask relevant questions and ultimately make informed, evidence-based decisions, which can be used to build appropriate interventions.
- Ultimately, governance over First Nations COVID-19 data and other relevant data provides for First Nations control in combatting outbreaks in their own communities – it puts First Nations in control of the outcome.



Data Governance and COVID-19

- The implementation of a ***First Nations Data Governance Strategy***, honoring First Nations inherent and Treaty rights and supporting data sovereignty, is an enabler for First Nations to access the data they need, thereby strengthening their positioning in response to the current pandemic and against all other future emergencies.
- The development of governance mechanisms that support Federal/Provincial/Territorial/First Nations relationships brings opportunity to change the systems that perpetuate inequity faced by First Nations. First Nations capacity must be increased to ensure that they have an equal voice at these tables.



Data Governance and COVID-19

- The development of capacities, inclusive of technological, infrastructure, and human resources, presents opportunity for First Nations to manage and utilize data to meet their needs, thereby enabling self-determination and mitigating dependency on the FPT systems.
- Building First Nations data governance capacity - locally, regionally and nationally - is a necessary element for the success of this work.



Data Governance and COVID-19

- It is important to note that some of FNIGC's Regional Partners have been successful in brokering data-centric relationships with their provincial/federal counterparts or external provincial third-party data stewards.
- However, there is still a tremendous amount of work (as well as sustainable and predictable investments) needed to support these Regions in their efforts to bridge gaps, not to mention the relationships, infrastructure, and capacity that is needed by the remaining Regions that have yet to access their data.

A FIRST NATIONS DATA GOVERNANCE STRATEGY – DIRECTION FROM FIRST NATIONS

AFN Resolution #57/2016 - Funding for Regional Information Governance Centres

Recognize Indigenous data sovereignty as a cornerstone of Nation rebuilding and direct the federal government to fund the following:

- **Engagement on data governance** between First Nations leadership within each region.
- The establishment of a First Nation **data governance champion in each region**, identified by First Nations regions themselves.
- The development of fully functional **regional First Nations information government centres**.
- Coordination of First Nations regions, data governance champions and national partners to **establish a national First Nations data governance strategy**.



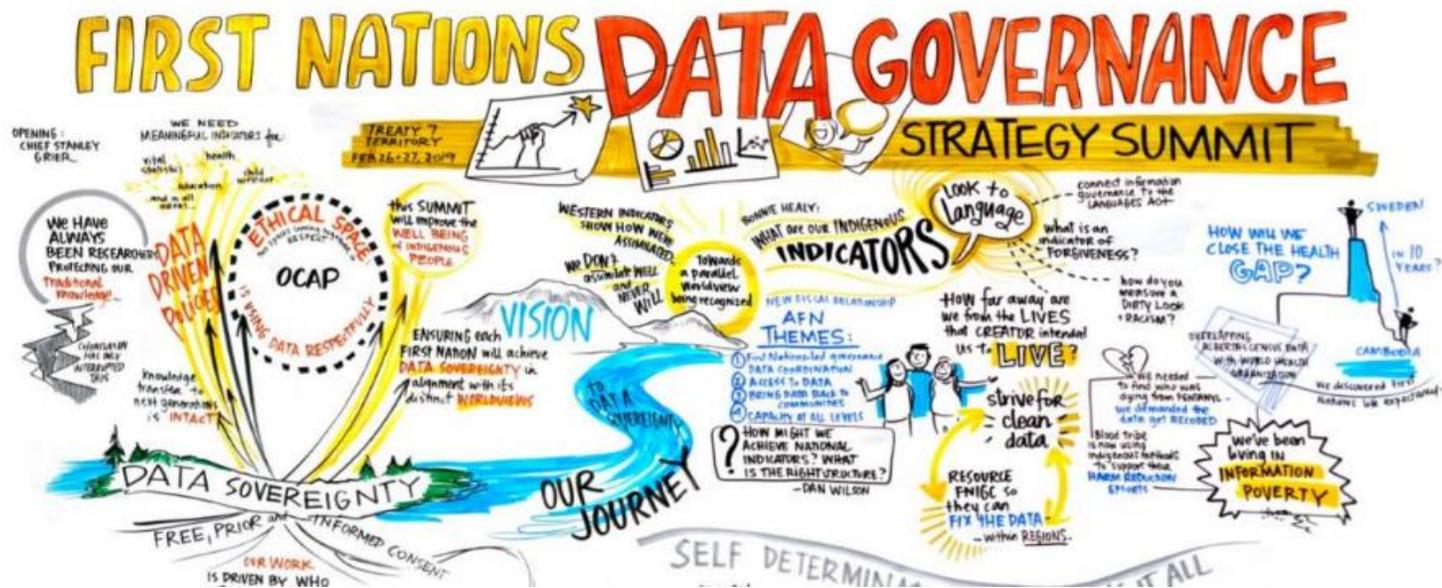
Budget 2018

\$2.5 million to FNIGC and its partners to:

- Design a *National Data Governance Strategy*
- Coordinate the establishment of *Regional Information Governance Centres (RIGC)*

SUMMIT 2019

Following through on direction received



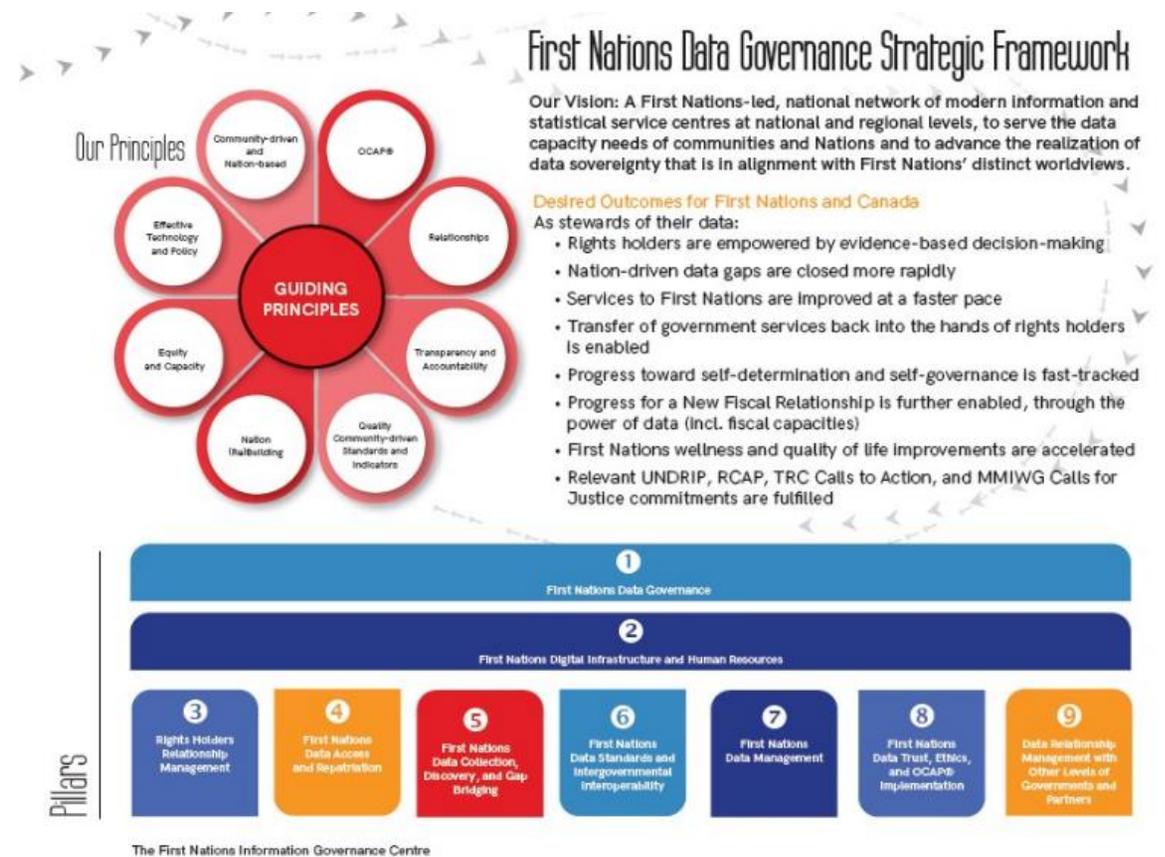
A First Nations Data Governance Strategy

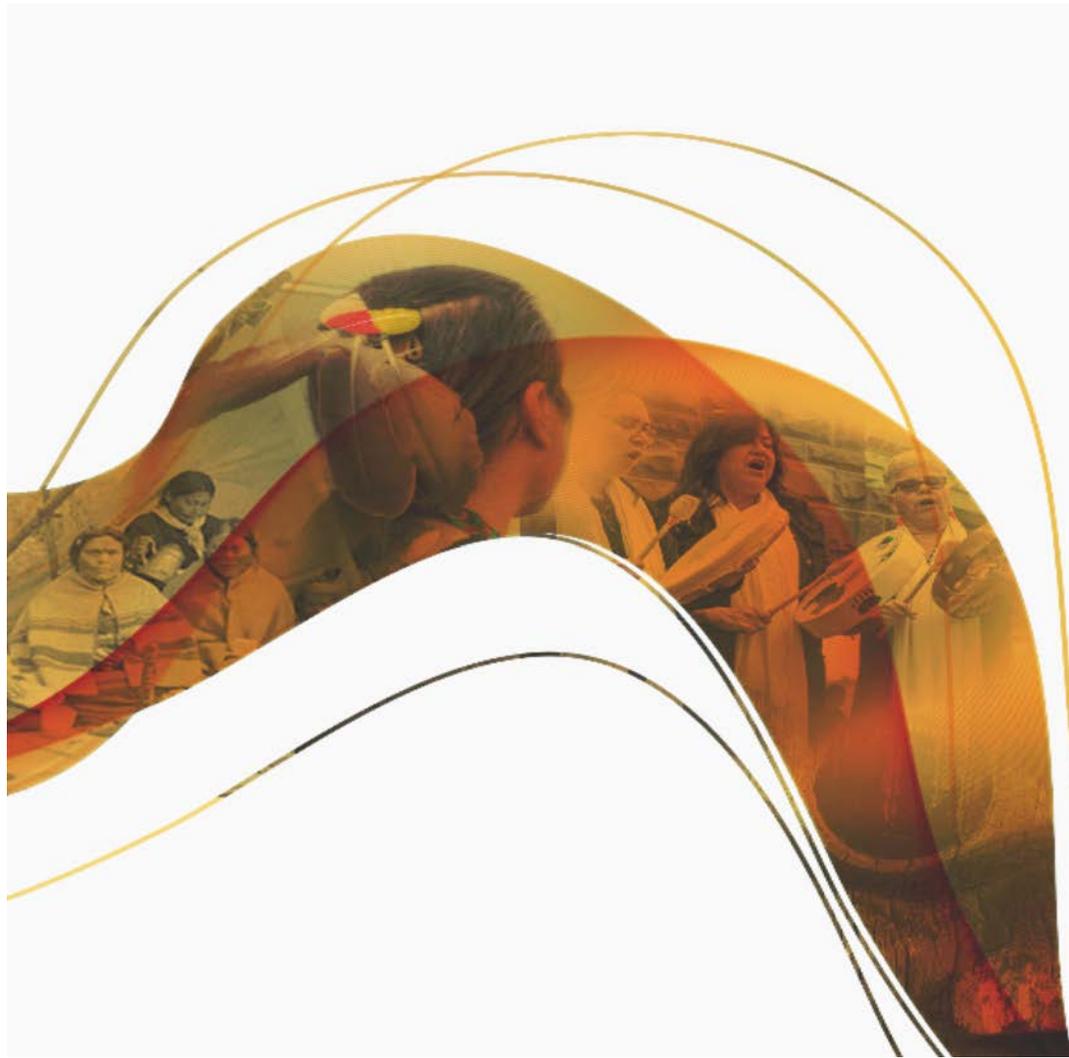
Officially tabled with ISC
March 31, 2020

Anchored in a robust strategic framework which provides:

- A clear vision for achieving tangible outcomes that meet both First Nations' and Canada's needs;
- A set of First Nations' guiding principles; and
- Nine strategic pillars where capacities must be built

Provides a concrete paths towards data sovereignty





Priority Recommendations:

- SECURING BRIDGE FUNDING FOR PRE-IMPLEMENTATION WORK IN 2020-21
(SECURED – UNDERWAY)
- ESTABLISHING FIRST NATIONS DATA CHAMPIONS AT THE REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVELS
(ANTICIPATED 2021-22)

FEDERAL BUDGET 2021 ANNOUNCEMENT

April 19, 2021

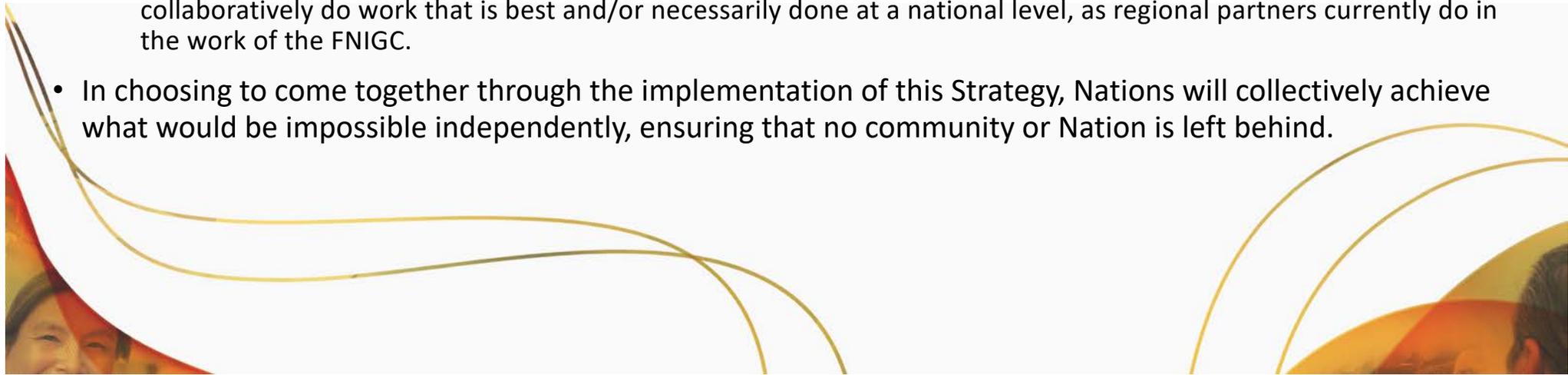
Support for Indigenous-led Data Strategies

Budget 2021 proposes to invest **\$73.5 million over three years**, starting in 2021-22, to continue work towards the development and implementation of a **First Nations Data Governance Strategy**



What is the Strategy about?

- The Strategy offers a path for First Nations to achieve data sovereignty, the cornerstone of Nation re-building.
- The Strategy is anchored in *community-driven* and *Nation-based* collaborative principles.
- It is about Nations in each region choosing to come together to create a fully functional information governance centre in their respective region to oversee and advance the comprehensive suite of data stewardship, statistical, and analytical services they need to control and unleash the power of all their data.
 - These regional information governance centres will also continue to come together to collectively and collaboratively do work that is best and/or necessarily done at a national level, as regional partners currently do in the work of the FNIGC.
- In choosing to come together through the implementation of this Strategy, Nations will collectively achieve what would be impossible independently, ensuring that no community or Nation is left behind.





How will it work?

- We will begin by establishing *Data Champion Teams* in every region and at the national level.
- At the very beginning, these teams will act as project offices, each equipped with the resources needed to ensure they can implement the Strategy.
- A first key priority for a region's Data Champion Team will be to engage with Nations in the region, through the appropriate regional process(es), with the goal to establish a new and independent information governance body in the region.
- Supported by their Data Champion Teams, these new governance bodies will then oversee the establishment of fully functional Information Governance Centers in each respective region with all the core functions required to support the data priority needs of First Nations, directed by First Nations.

How will it work?

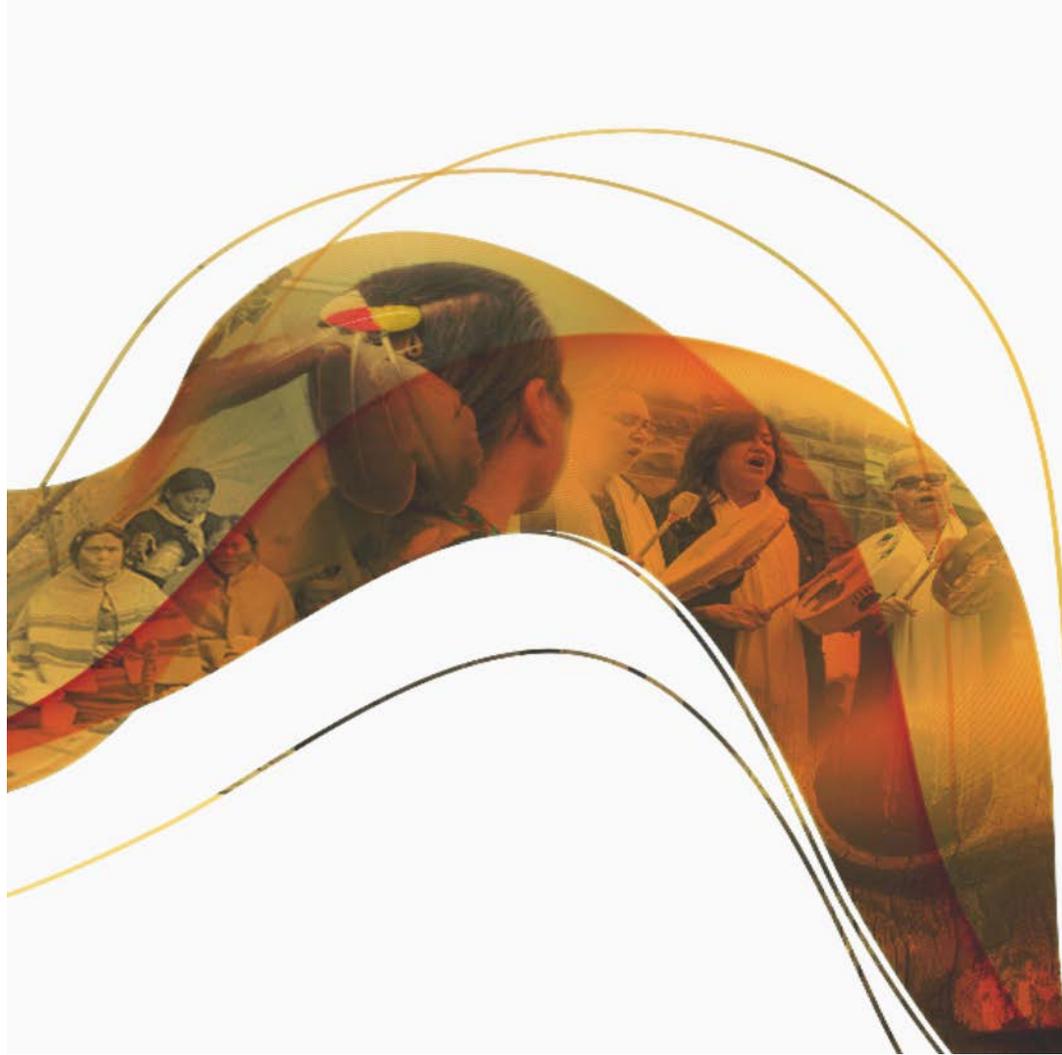
- **Once established, regional centres will have two focuses:**

- Serving the unique information needs of the Nations in the region at a variety of levels; and
- As members of a network of regional centers, carrying out collaborative, collective work that is best and/or necessarily done at a national level.

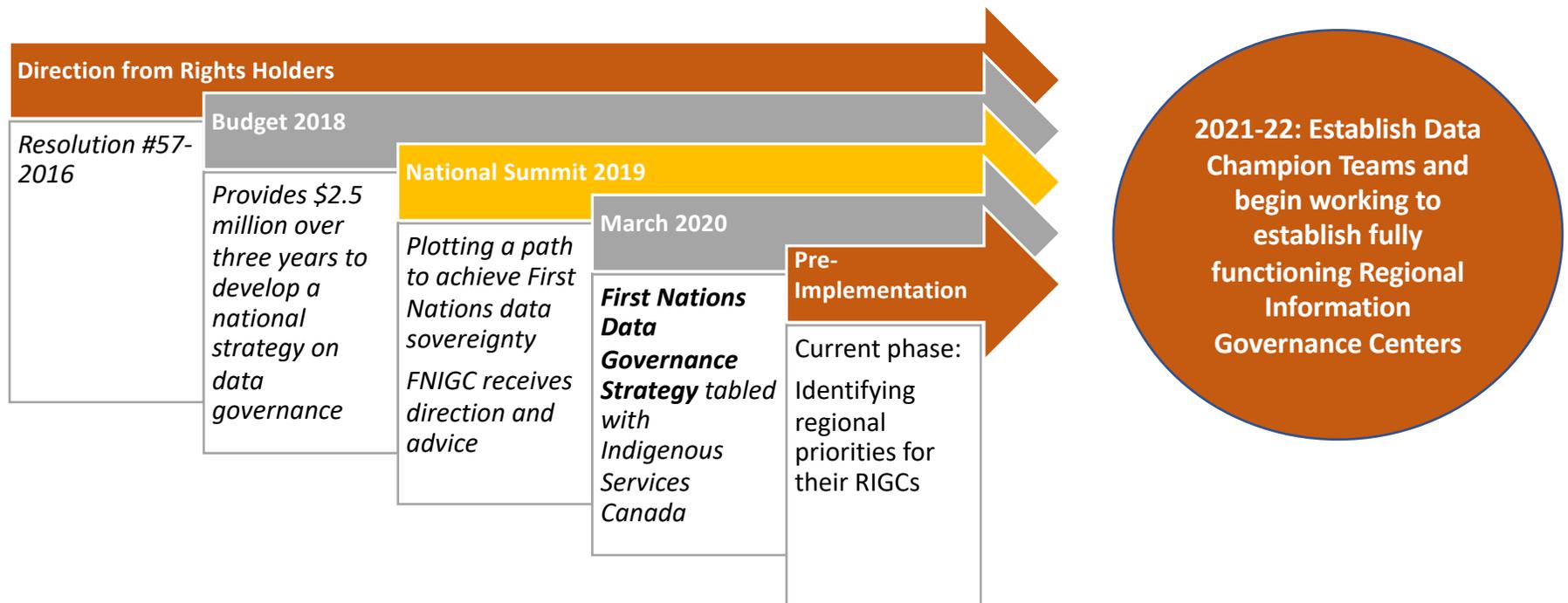


When will all this happen?

- Building institutions from the ground up will take years and will evolve over time.
- To be successful, implementation will have to be carefully planned, with manageable steps.
- Milestones will be set in order to move from one phase to the next.
- This approach will create the space and time needed within regions to plan, experiment, learn, adapt, and scale efforts appropriately.
- Regions will advance at their own pace based on their unique priorities and capacity building requirements.



Key Progress to Date



Thank you

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