



CANADIAN BUSINESS SCHOOL  
**INDIGENOUS**  
ENGAGEMENT REPORT  
**2025**



**IGNITING KNOWLEDGE, ACTION AND MEANINGFUL OUTCOMES  
IN STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS, INDIGENIZED CURRICULUM  
AND RESEARCH COLLABORATION**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thankyou to our corporate sponsor and partner, the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC). Their support has enabled Luminary's work to advance Indigenous innovation, knowledge mobilization, and inclusive economic growth across Canada, including the research and findings presented in this report.



Luminary gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada, through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Strategic Science Fund (SSF), building stronger pathways for Indigenous research, innovation, and economic growth.



*The views and findings expressed in this report are those of Luminary and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada or RBC.*



# Introduction

## Creating the First National Picture of Indigenous Engagement in Canadian Business Schools

Canada has entered a pivotal moment in its reconciliation journey. Business schools—at universities, colleges, polytechnics, and Indigenous-controlled institutions—play a defining role in preparing the next generation of business talent, shaping economic systems, and influencing research and innovation. Yet until now, there has been **no clear national picture** of how these institutions are engaging with Indigenous peoples, businesses, and communities.

During Luminary’s Strategy co-creation process in 2021, involving more than 150 Luminary Charter Partners, academic leaders identified a persistent and systemic problem: **the lack of baseline information, benchmarks, and shared knowledge about Indigenous engagement within the business school community**. Schools were working in isolation, often without a sense of what others were doing, what progress looked like, or what resources existed. A mind-mapping exercise documented over 50 pressure points and needs, reinforcing the need for a comprehensive approach.

To address this gap, Luminary—working with a national Business School Working Group—launched the **first-ever Indigenous Engagement Scan** of Canadian business and management schools. This initiative represents a landmark effort to “take stock” of engagement practices, strategies, curriculum, partnerships, and research activity across the sector. It builds the first national baseline and provides a new benchmark for advancing reconciliation within business education.

### Why this engagement scan matters

The Terms of Reference articulated a clear set of needs and benefits that shaped this work:

- No prior benchmark existed. Canada lacked a national profile of Indigenous programming, pedagogy, partnerships, and student pathways within business schools, in contrast to more advanced work seen in law, health, and social sciences.
- The engagement scan would provide first-time visibility on how schools have engaged, are engaging, or would like to engage with Indigenous peoples, businesses, and communities.
- New information would enable the design of cost-effective, scalable solutions—shared curriculum supports, tools for faculty, and collaborative research models.
- Business schools could avoid duplication, accelerate learning, and benefit from economies of scale in knowledge mobilization, pedagogy development, and partnership-building.



- The scan would establish a baseline for progress, allowing Luminary and business schools to track advancements over five years, supported by \$4.1M in funding through Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's Strategic Science Fund (SSF).

## **What we learned—and why it matters for Luminary's strategy**

The findings in this report provide the first clear understanding of where business schools stand today: their strengths, challenges, promising practices, and areas requiring support. This knowledge is already shaping Luminary's program strategy.

The Terms of Reference anticipated that new knowledge would allow Luminary to:

- identify common issues and opportunities;
- develop new engagement resources and models;
- build collaboration networks;
- increase Indigenous student and research talent;
- and support schools in designing Indigenization strategies.

The survey results strongly validated these expectations.

With this baseline in place, Luminary is now taking concrete action to support business schools as they advance their reconciliation and Indigenization priorities.

## **How Luminary Is Responding: From Insights to Action**

The engagement scan identified clear needs related to knowledge mobilization, capacity-building, curriculum support, and research collaboration. Luminary is responding through targeted programming that transforms survey insights into accessible, scalable solutions for the business school community.

### **1. Addressing Knowledge Gaps: Luminary's Monthly Webinar Series**

Many schools expressed uncertainty about where to begin, how to build Indigenous partnerships, and how to design strategy and business knowledge.

Luminary has launched a monthly webinar series to share insights, knowledge and promising practices, creating a continuous learning environment for faculty, deans, administrators, and the indigenous business community.

### **2. Supporting Strategy Development: Individualized Reports & Ignite Engagement Sessions**

Business schools who completed the survey receive a customized Institutional Engagement Report, highlighting their specific strengths, gaps, and opportunities.

To support action planning, Luminary offers Ignite Engagement Sessions—one-hour Zoom consultations to help schools:

- interpret their results,

- identify priorities,
- explore partnerships, and
- outline next steps in Indigenous engagement strategy.

This approach supports schools “where they are in their reconciliation journey,” acknowledging that business schools are diverse and at different stages in their indigenous engagement strategy.

### **3. Advancing Knowledge Mobilization & Research Collaboration: The 2026 Indigenous Innovation Summit**

Building on survey findings related to research capacity and collaboration, Luminary will host the **Second Annual Indigenous Innovation Summit** in Montréal, September 22–24, 2026.

The Summit will:

- convene academic leaders, Indigenous businesses, researchers, and innovators;
- share new knowledge assets emerging from the SSF project;
- catalyze new collaboration networks; and
- co-design solutions to shared challenges identified in the engagement scan.

This international event becomes a central mobilizer of the engagement scan results, turning knowledge into collective action.

## **From Baseline to Transformation: An Invitation to Join Luminary**

The survey findings give us, for the first time, a **national baseline** of Indigenous engagement in Canada’s business schools. This is a foundational step toward strengthening Indigenous business education, building talent pipelines, and expanding Indigenous-led research and innovation.

### **Invitation to Join Luminary’s Charter for Change Partner Program**

With this engagement scan, Canada now has its first national baseline of Indigenous engagement across business schools. This new picture gives us the clarity needed to deepen relationships, strengthen curriculum and pedagogy, expand research collaborations, and build Indigenous business and research talent.

By becoming a Charter for Change Partner, it signals your commitment to fostering and advancing the Indigenous innovation agenda and to continue benchmarking our collective progress towards meaningful change and outcomes.



Luminary was created to help bridge the long-standing gap between business schools, research institutions, and Indigenous communities. With the support of the Strategic Science Fund, RBC, Charter Partners and future funding partners, we are now expanding our offerings to help business schools advance their reconciliation and Indigenous efforts even more meaningfully.

The **Luminary Charter for Change Partners Program** is the primary way for schools, faculties, and individual academics to stay connected, access new tools and supports, and participate in national collaboration efforts informed directly by the survey results. As Luminary develops new programs, knowledge networks, and co-designed tools, partners will be the first to benefit.

## **Luminary Charter for Change Partner Program: Canada's First National Academic Leaders Network**

This engagement scan marks the beginning of a collective journey. Business schools across the country are at different stages, but the desire to advance Indigenous engagement is clear and growing. By becoming a Charter for Change Partner, your institution becomes part of a national effort to build an Indigenous innovation ecosystem that connects talent, knowledge, research, and community partnerships.

We will support you to turn these engagement scan findings into action: to build stronger programs, expand Indigenous business education, accelerate research and innovation, and support the next generation of Indigenous business leaders. Together, we can grow the capabilities of business schools, create new opportunities for Indigenous communities, and drive reconciliation and economic transformation across Canada.

## **Charter for Change: Advancing Indigenous Engagement Strategies & Impact**

Charter Partnership is complimentary and provides your institution and faculty with:

- Access to tailored knowledge networks created in response to the engagement scan's findings.
- Curriculum and pedagogy resources co-developed with Indigenous scholars, practitioners, and business leaders.
- Research collaboration pathways connecting academics with Indigenous businesses, organizations, and innovation priorities.
- Priority participation in webinars, forums, and workshops designed to address the needs identified in the survey.
- Discounts for major events including the 2026 Indigenous Innovation Summit in Montréal.
- Institutional recognition and reporting tools that support your Indigenous and reconciliation strategies.



These programs and services reflect what the business school community told us they need: practical tools, shared learning, and cost-effective ways to build capacity and move their Indigenization strategies forward.

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# Executive Summary

This is the first survey of its kind in the world to benchmark the engagement strategies, practices and programs among University, College and Polytechnic business schools. The findings and insights from this benchmarking exercise will inform on Luminary's mission to convene, coordinate, and facilitate a network of academic community leaders including business schools, agriculture schools and other faculties to engage with the Indigenous business and economic community to grow new knowledge networks, talent and multi-disciplinary research collaborations to increase economic innovation and wellbeing outcomes in Canada and abroad.

The executive summary provides some key highlights in three key areas: 1. Indigenous Engagement Strategies and Diversity Metrics; 2. Student Support & Indigenizing Curriculum & Pedagogy; 3. Indigenous Partnerships and Indigenous research.

## 1. Indigenous Engagement Strategies & Diversity Metrics

### Strategies in Post-Secondary Institutions & Business School

- Progress in developing Indigenous strategies is widespread among post-secondary institutions but uneven in business schools, with many integrating their strategies into broader inclusion strategies rather than Indigenous specific ones.
- Over three-quarters of post-secondary institutions have responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, but less than half of business schools have done so.
- Participation of Indigenous people/leaders in business schools' governance is common, but focused on advisory roles, rather than decision-making.

### Tracking Indigenous EDI in Institutions and Business Schools:

- A high percentage of institutions track Indigenous representation among students, faculty, and staff; Business schools showed more limited tracking, with many unsure if they monitor these metrics.
- Business schools were more likely to track metrics in Western Canada than in Eastern Canada.
- Business schools associated with universities monitored Indigenous diversity more commonly than those associated with colleges.
- Indigenous students constitute a small proportion in both institutions and business schools with Western Canada reporting higher concentrations of Indigenous students.



## 2. Student Support & Indigenizing Curriculum & Pedagogy

- Most business schools offer scholarships and academic support, but fewer provide programs for student development like mentorship and community engagement.
- Two-thirds of business schools integrate support within general student services, while only about one-third have dedicated Indigenous-specific programs.
- Most of the business schools that offer dedicated Indigenous-specific programs are associated with universities.

### Indigenizing Curriculum and Pedagogy

- Business schools are evenly split on offering Indigenous courses, with a notable number incorporating at least one such course.
- Most schools provide a limited number of Indigenous courses, and few had some required Indigenous course curriculum. The curriculum focused on Indigenous business, management, entrepreneurship, and governance at the undergraduate level but more connections with the Indigenous economic and business leaders is needed.
- Half of business schools integrated some Indigenous content within core courses.
- Indigenous faculty are often leading in developing and teaching these courses but there are resource constraints and pressures.

## 3. Indigenous Partnerships and Indigenous research

- Indigenous research is more common among university-affiliated business schools compared to those at colleges, with a modest number of projects reported across schools.
- Key research areas include management and community-based studies, with applied business and policy research present, but business development, sector specific research and Indigenous specific economic priorities is notably lacking.
- Some business schools have formed partnerships with Indigenous organizations and communities, primarily focusing on educational support and integrating Indigenous content into curricula but few have developed partnerships with Indigenous businesses, economic development corporations and organizations..
- There is a growing interest among schools to improve their partnership strategies, although the practice is not yet widespread and business development resources are less emphasized.



## Future Survey Direction

There are approximately 130 business schools including University, College and Polytechnic institutions. Although 67 business schools (50%) started the survey, 48 completed it. The survey will be conducted again in the spring 2026 and all business schools will be invited to participate in the 2nd Annual Business School.

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# 1. Benchmarking Indigenous Engagement among Canadian Business Schools

Luminary, a division of Indigenous Works, brought together 150 Luminary Charter Partners from the academic, Indigenous business and NGO communities in 2020/2021 to co-develop Luminary's Indigenous Strategy. In 2023, Luminary created a Business School Engagement Working Group composed of business schools, academic leaders, non-government organizations and other interested stakeholders to guide the design and development of the first ever national business school Indigenous engagement scan to garner a better understanding of practices, programs strategies and challenges. Engagement in this context can include, but not be limited to, practices, strategies, partnerships, funding, policy and any other kinds of Indigenous activities. Indigenous engagement encompasses all business school initiatives aimed at assisting and integrating Indigenous methods of knowing, being, and doing to better understand them.

In 2024, Luminary was awarded a five-year Strategic Science Fund award from Innovation, Science and Economic Development, to advance the Indigenous research and innovation agenda with Canadian business schools and Indigenous businesses. With the new SSF support, RBC funding support and a SSHRC contribution from the "Collaboration for Reconciliation in Action" research project hosted by the Sprott School of Business, Luminary set out to finalize the survey instrument, complete ethics review and beta test the process with Deans in 2024, prior to implementing the business school engagement survey in 2025.

Malatest was selected to support the Luminary Working Group to develop the comprehensive engagement scan of businesses that will provide first-time insights and a benchmark on engagement strategies and practices.

## 1.1 Study objectives

The main objective is to understand the current and future state of Indigenous engagement in business schools, which will help to inform the best strategies to grow the knowledge and capacity of people and programs within business schools.

### Specific objectives of the scan:

- Identify common issues, challenges and opportunities that will focus Luminary's attention on how best to develop engagement solutions, tools and programs.
- Produce new knowledge to be shared with business schools.
- Suggest new strategies and engagement activities to grow the knowledge and capacity of people and programs among business schools.
- Create a series of benchmarks to show the progress and accomplishments of the business school community over the next five years.

## 1.2 Designing a benchmarking tool

The engagement scan instrument was designed to establish a baseline of Indigenous engagement at Canadian business schools and to track changes over time. This approach will allow for the collection of data at multiple points, providing insights into trends and developments. Given the desire to track Indigenous engagement longitudinally, it was important to develop a robust questionnaire.

The design of the questionnaire followed an iterative, multi-stage approach. Athabasca University shared knowledge it gleaned from its Environmental Scan Research Project which was a web-based review of business school websites. Initially, a draft version of the questionnaire was created based on a previous study conducted at Toronto Metropolitan University. From that starting point, the instrument was expanded and adapted following expert consultations. Several drafts were revised by the Luminary team, then three rounds of reviews by the Luminary Working Group, and finally tested in a pilot study with a handful of business school Deans to identify any issues and gather feedback. Based on the pilot study results, the questionnaire was revised and refined through several iterations. Each stage involved careful evaluation and adjustments to ensure clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the questions.

The questionnaire was structured to distinguish between the broader post-secondary institution and the business school within it. It was anticipated that some Indigenous engagement would be done across the whole institution, while other engagement would be specific to the business school. This benchmarking initiative aimed to capture both elements, while providing extra focus on engagement at the business school. Within the questionnaire, separate modules were developed addressing Indigenous diversity metrics, Indigenous strategy and governance. At the institutional level, the questionnaire gathered information on overall metrics, Indigenous strategies, responses to the Calls to Action, and governance structures related to Indigenous engagement. At the business school level, it also collected that same data but focused specifically on their independent business school Indigenous-related metrics and strategies, as well as supports and programs, Indigenous courses, research projects, and partnerships.

Because these topics often involve different areas of expertise, a single respondent was unlikely to be able to answer all questions at both the post-secondary institution and business school levels. To facilitate comprehensive data collection, the questionnaire was designed so that multiple individuals within each institution and business school—such as deans, faculty members, and research coordinators—could complete the sections most relevant to their roles.



### 1.3 Engaging business schools

The questionnaire was administered through a dedicated online portal. This portal was designed to be user-friendly and accessible, allowing participants to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. The portal also included features such as a modular format, flexible completion, data validation and quality checks when needed.

An invitation was issued to 124 institutions, including 58 colleges and 66 universities. Data collection was conducted from March to June 2025, with reminders sent every two weeks. The collected data were processed using statistical software (SPSS)<sup>1</sup> and then analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Ultimately, the data from 48 institutions were considered viable for reporting, including 30 business schools within universities and 18 business schools within colleges (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Summary of surveys conducted**

Type of institutions	Completed
Universities	30
Colleges	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>

Where possible, the analysis will consider the region. To facilitate this, institutions were classified into two groups: East (Ontario to the Atlantic, n=24) and West (Manitoba to the Pacific, n=24), based on their geographical location (No schools in the Territories participated. See Appendix 1 for participation by province).

### 1.4 Limitations

This study has some limitations related to the subjects of study, the length of the questionnaire and the depth of the information requested. First, institutional responsiveness posed a challenge. Business schools were slow to respond. Several of them initiated the survey but did not complete it, despite multiple follow-up attempts. Participating institutions might differ systematically from those that did not respond. For instance, participating institutions with more advanced Indigenous engagement may have been more likely to participate. Considering these factors, 48 institutions were ultimately included in the analysis. However, 12 of them provided incomplete information, having completed at least one of the scan modules. These partial responses were retained to preserve the breadth of available data. As a result, some sections present findings with fewer than 48 data points.

<sup>1</sup> [www.ibm.com/products/spss-statistics](https://www.ibm.com/products/spss-statistics)



Second, the knowledge level of respondents varied, particularly concerning the metrics module. Many participants stopped or skipped the metrics module, especially the questions requesting detailed quantitative information. This suggests that some questions required expertise, time, or data not readily available to all respondents, or that the person with that data was difficult to reach. As a result, these data were provided by a smaller subset of business schools, and those that provided the data may have only been able to provide an estimate.

Finally, the order and length of modules may have contributed to the above points. The scan was data-intensive and required some internal coordination not only within business schools but also between them and their affiliated institutions.

## **2. Indigenous Diversity Metrics**

Indigenous diversity data was collected both at the institutional and business school levels, with more advanced monitoring practices implemented at the broader institutional level. Institutions report tracking Indigenous representation among students, faculty, and staff. Business schools engage in more limited tracking, with many either not monitoring Indigenous metrics or being unsure if such tracking takes place.

Overall, Indigenous students remain a small minority within both institutions and business schools. A few business schools stand out for having a higher representation of Indigenous students. Regional patterns are evident, with business schools in Western Canada showing higher Indigenous representation across all levels of study than business schools in Eastern Canada.

University-based business schools are generally more active in monitoring Indigenous diversity than those located in colleges. However, colleges are more likely to have a larger number of Indigenous faculty and staff compared to universities.



## 2.1 Tracking Indigenous Diversity

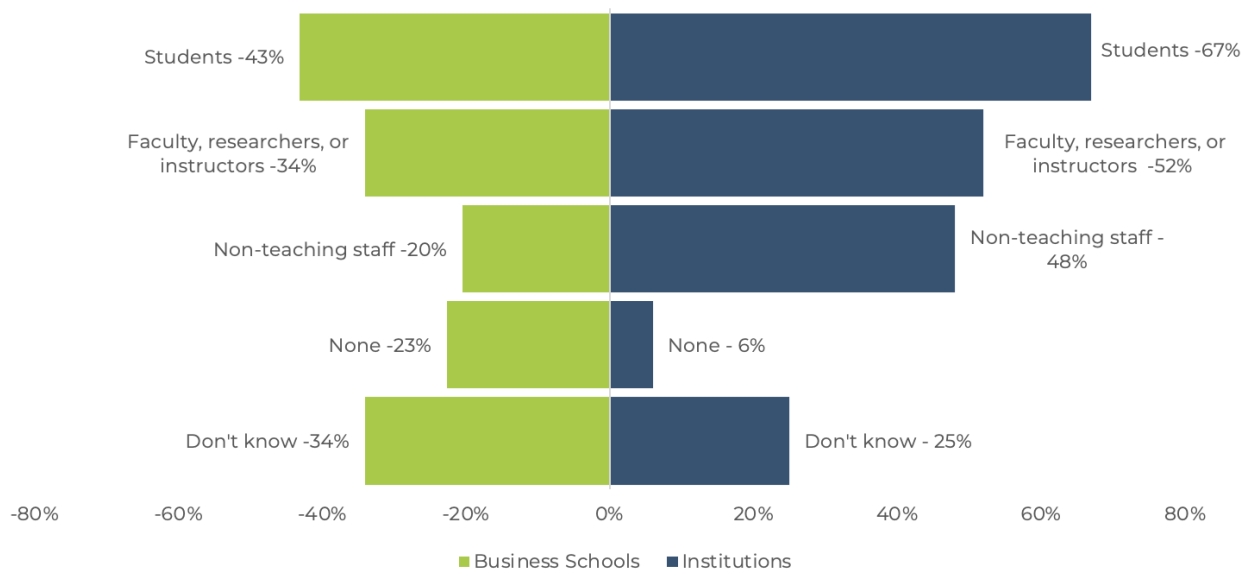
Most institutions and business schools track the self-reported Indigenous status of students, faculty and staff.

### 2.1.1 Current metric tracking

Among post-secondary institutions, most monitored students' metrics (67%), followed by those that track faculty metrics (52%) and staff metrics (48%). However, a sizable proportion of respondents were uncertain if their institution tracks these metrics (25%). See figure 1, right.

A smaller percentage of business schools reported tracking metrics than institutions, with a significant portion indicating that they did not track them (23%) or are uncertain (34%). However, a sizable percentage of schools tracked student metrics (43%), while fewer schools tracked faculty metrics (34%) or staff metrics (20%). See figure 1, left.

**Figure 1: Indigenous diversity metrics tracking**

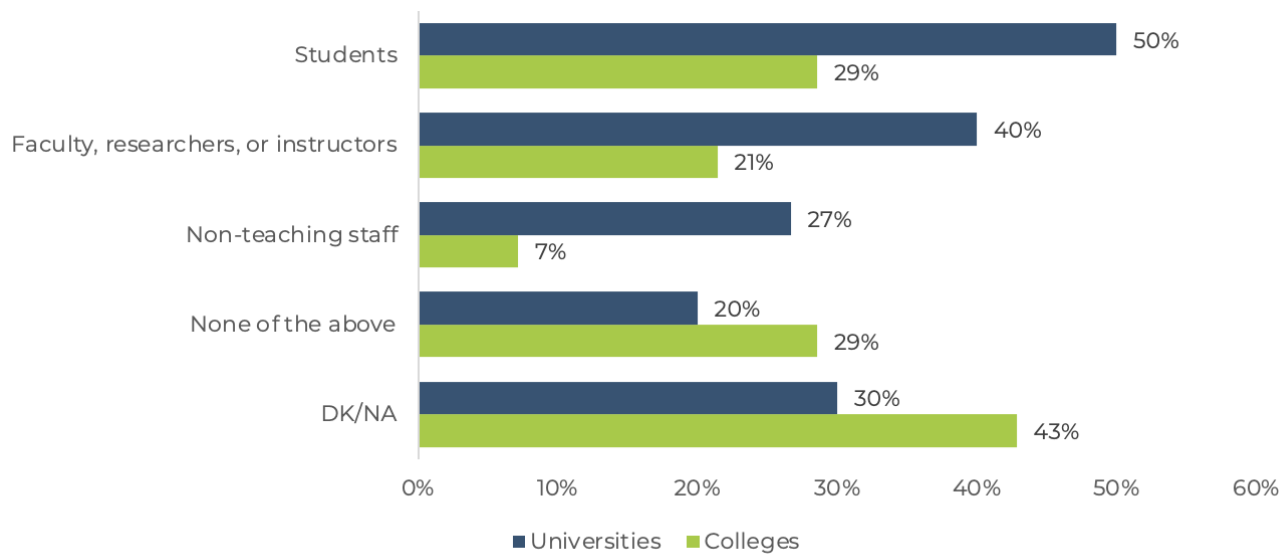


**Note 1:** n institutions = 48; n business schools = 44

**Note 2:** Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

Business schools located in universities were more likely to track Indigenous metrics than colleges. For instance, 50% of universities tracked the proportion of students who are Indigenous, compared to 29% of colleges. Notably, almost one-third (29%) of colleges reported that they do not track these metrics, and an additional 43% were unsure whether they do. See figure 2.

**Figure 2: Tracking metrics in business schools by type of institution**



**Note1: n=44**  
**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

**2.1.2 Plans to track metrics**

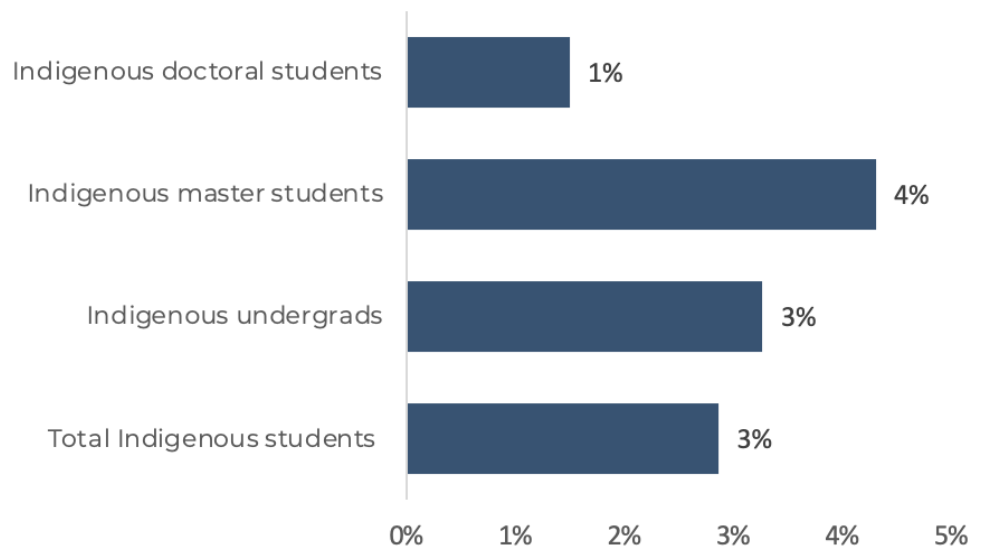
Of the three broader institutions that did not track metrics, two had plans to implement tracking in the future. In contrast, a larger number of business schools did not track metrics (10). Among these, a significant portion (4) indicated they had no plans to begin tracking. However, six will focus on students, while one plans to include faculty and staff.

**2.2 Indigenous enrollment at Institutions and business schools**

In institutions and business schools, Indigenous students comprised a small proportion of the overall student body<sup>2</sup>. In business schools, Indigenous students represented 3% of total student enrollment. See figure 3.

2 For reference, “Indigenous new entrants in postsecondary education represented approximately 5% of students newly admitted to the five main postsecondary institutions in the 2021/2022 academic year”. For more information: Highlights on Indigenous new entrants to postsecondary education

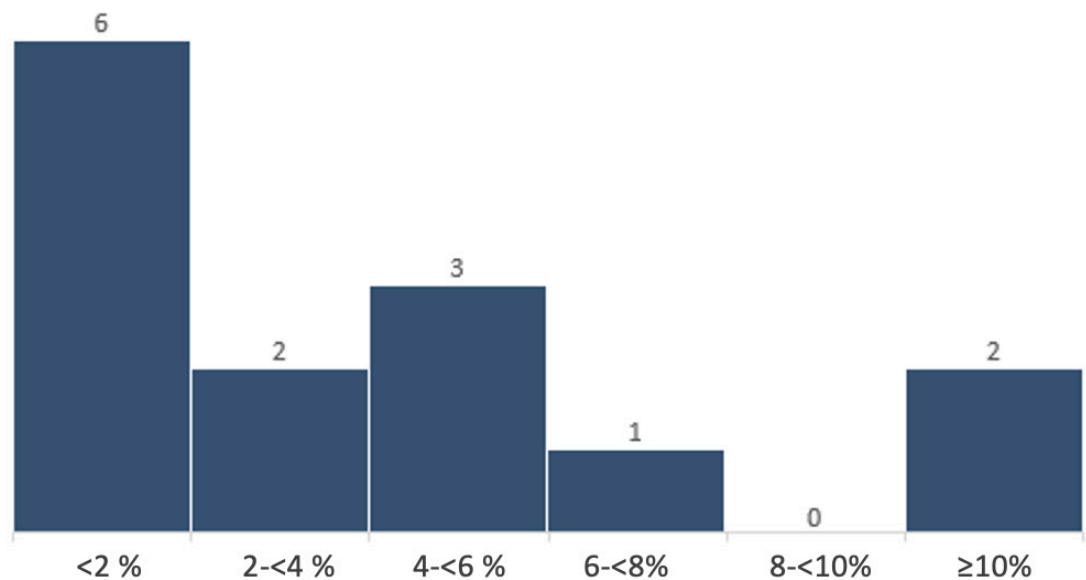
**Figure 3: Proportion of Indigenous students in business schools**



**Note: Proportions are calculated over the sum of all students per category reported by business schools.**

Among many business schools that tracked this data, 6 business schools indicated that less than 2% of their students were Indigenous. Some business schools reported having a higher concentration of Indigenous students than the general population, including two schools whose enrollment is 10% or more Indigenous. See figure 4.

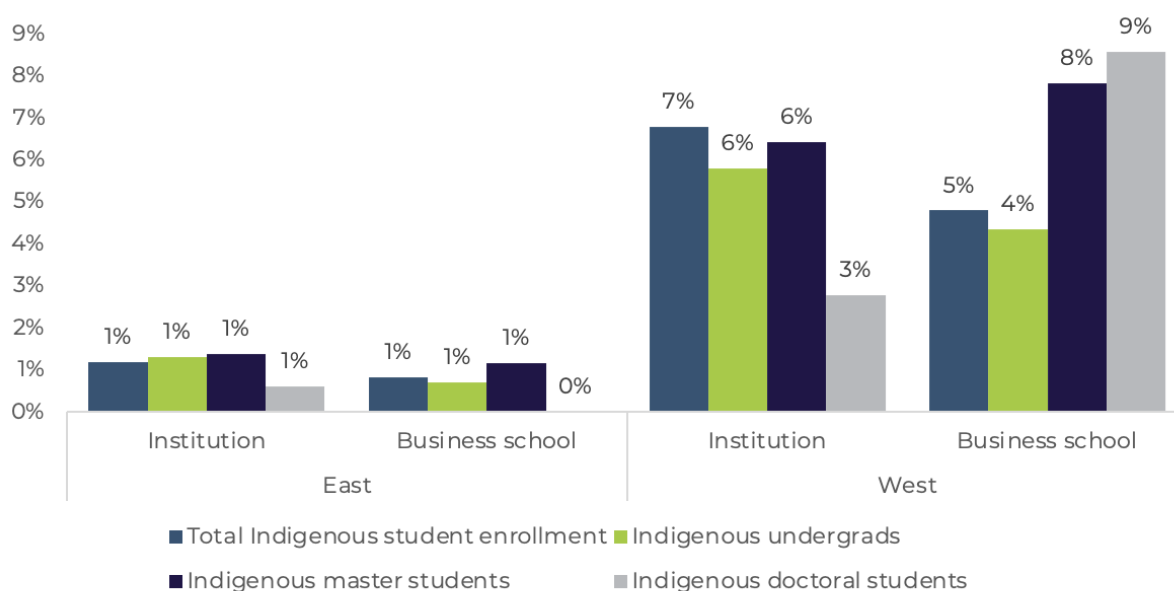
**Figure 4: Proportions of Indigenous students**



**Note: n=15**

Perhaps not surprisingly, there were regional differences in Indigenous student enrollment across broader institutions and business schools. Business schools in Western Canada had a higher average proportion of Indigenous students, having higher proportions of Indigenous total student enrollment, undergraduates, and master's. In contrast, in the East, Indigenous representation was consistently lower, hovering around 1% across these categories. Despite limited reporting on graduate enrollments, particularly at the master's and doctoral levels, where numbers remain small, Indigenous engagement within business schools tended to rise with academic level. This apparent trend, however, should be read carefully due to incomplete institutional responses. See figure 5.

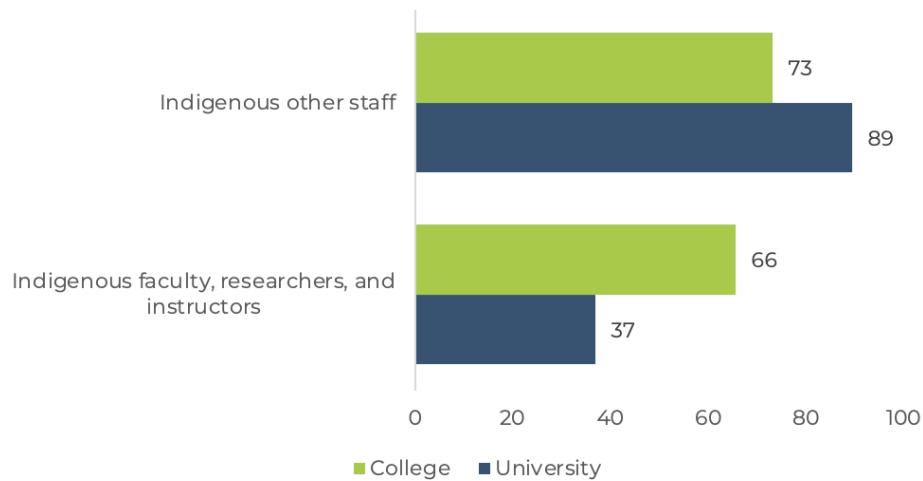
**Figure 5: Proportion of Indigenous students by region in institutions and business schools.**



Across reporting institutions, the mean number of Indigenous faculty, researchers, and instructors was 42 (n=11).<sup>3</sup> For Indigenous non-teaching staff, the mean was higher, at 86 (n=5). A noteworthy distinction emerged between colleges and universities. While universities typically employ more faculty overall, colleges reported almost twice the number of Indigenous faculty, researchers, and instructors compared to universities (37 versus 66, respectively). See figure 6.

<sup>3</sup> The scan requested institutions to report the number of Indigenous faculty, researchers, instructors, and non-teaching staff, but not the total number of personnel in each category. As a result, the report presents only the raw counts of Indigenous individuals rather than proportions or comparisons.

**Figure 6: Mean Indigenous faculty, researchers and instructors, and Indigenous staff in institutions by type**



At the business school level, 11 institutions reported data on Indigenous faculty, with an average of two faculty members per school. Only four business schools provided information on non-teaching staff, and two of them reported having none.

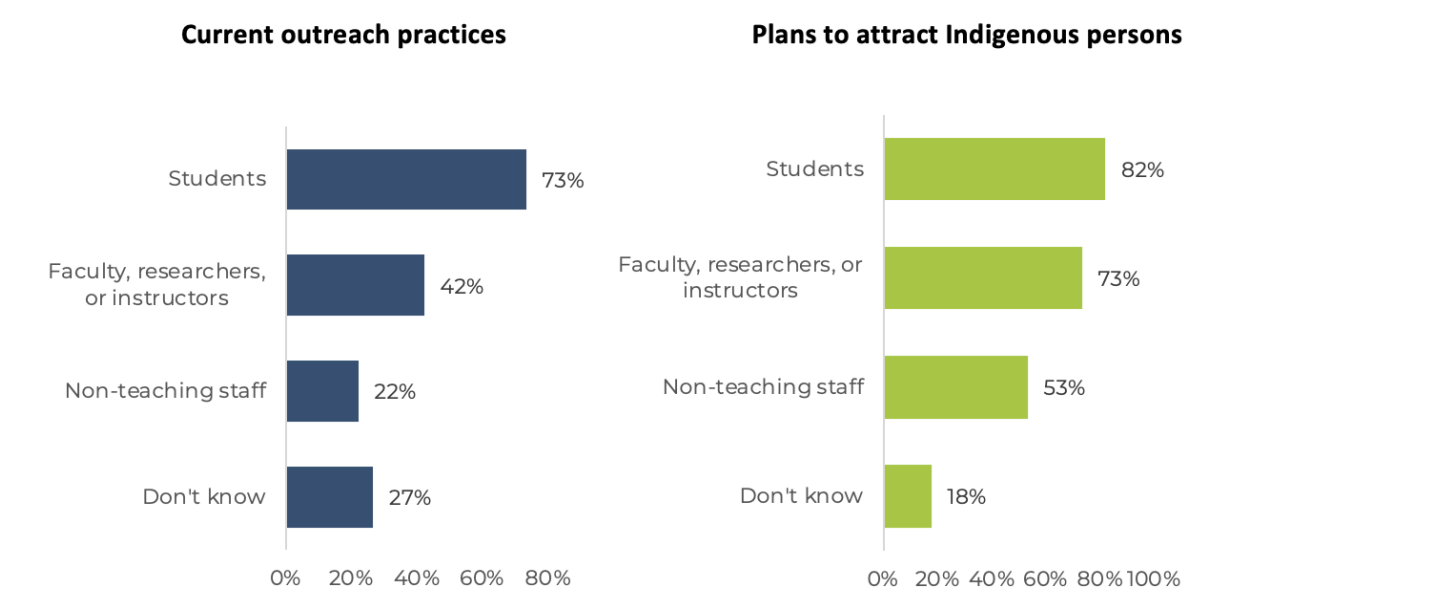
### **2.3 Attracting Indigenous students, faculty and staff**

At the level of broader institutions, 73% of institutions reported having outreach practices and strategies aimed at attracting Indigenous students; they were less likely to have similar initiatives for faculty (42%) and for staff (22%).

Most institutions expressed their plans to attract more Indigenous students over the next three years (82%), although some reported uncertainty (18%). They also indicated intentions to recruit more faculty (73%) and staff (53%). See figure 7.



**Figure 7: Institutional comparison between plans to attract Indigenous persons and current outreach practices**

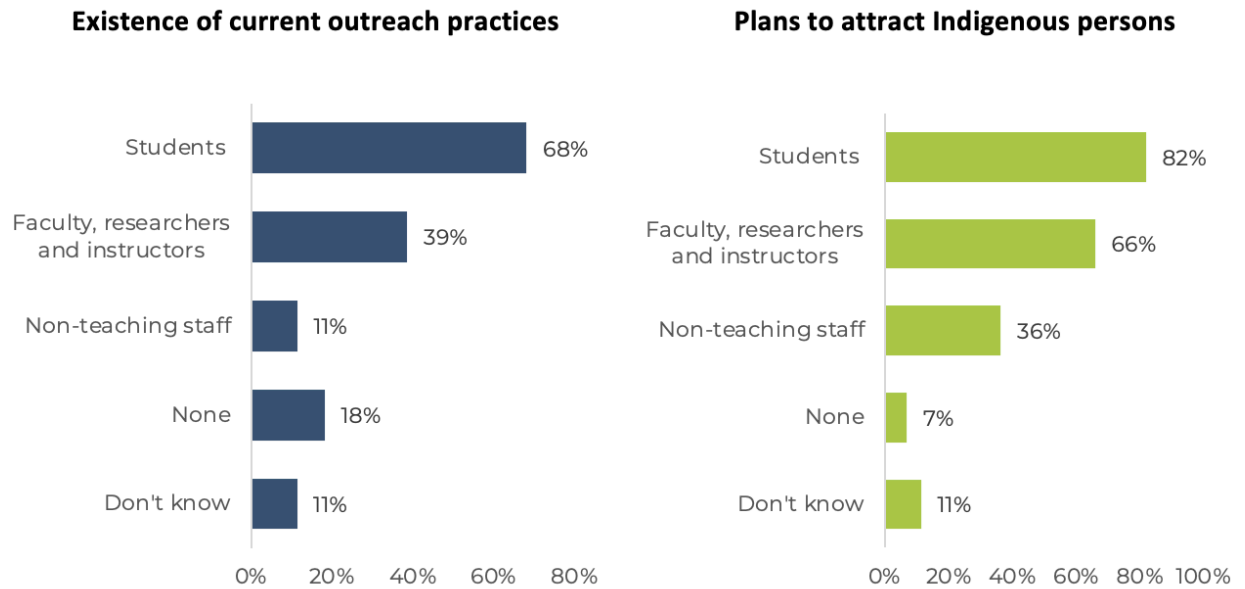


**Note1: n=45**  
**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

At the level of business schools, 68% reported having outreach practices and strategies aimed at attracting Indigenous students. However, outreach efforts were notably less common for faculty (39%) and staff (11%), while 18% of schools indicated that they had no outreach strategies in place.

Looking ahead, most business schools planned to attract more Indigenous students over the next three years (82%), although a smaller share expressed uncertainty (11%) about their future plans. Similarly, many institutions signaled an intention to increase recruitment of Indigenous faculty (66%) and staff (36%). See figure 8.

**Figure 8: Business schools' comparison between plans to attract Indigenous persons and current outreach practices**



**Note 1: n=44**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

### **3. Indigenous Strategy, Governance, and Response to Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action**

Overall, progress in developing Indigenous strategies is widespread but uneven in both Institutions and business schools. At the level of institutions, most have implemented an Indigenous strategy. More than a third of institutions have both standalone and integrated approaches. Over three-quarters indicated they have formally responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, though some uncertainty remained in what that means in practice. Colleges are more likely than universities to embed Indigenous strategies within broader frameworks, whereas universities are more likely than colleges to adopt combined approaches. Regionally, western institutions report that they are more likely to have formal responses to the Calls to Action than eastern ones.

At the level of business schools, engagement with Indigenous strategies remains limited, with most efforts integrated into broader institutional plans rather than standalone initiatives. Business schools in universities are more likely than colleges in both strategy development and Call to Action responses.

These results highlight both progress and critical gaps in how business schools are engaging with Indigenous strategies and reconciliation. While there is evidence of awareness and formal responses to the Calls to Action, less than half of business schools have integrated Indigenous strategies into their frameworks, and many remain without clear plans. Governance structures tend to position Indigenous peoples in advisory rather than decision-making roles, and representation is concentrated among academic and professional actors, with limited involvement from community-based leaders. Budget allocations also reveal a fragmented approach, with priority given to honorariums and services rather than systemic changes in curriculum, or staffing. Overall, while awareness and initial steps are present, a deeper institutional commitment and integration is needed to achieve meaningful and sustained engagement with Indigenous peoples within business schools.

#### **3.1. Incidence of an Indigenous strategy**

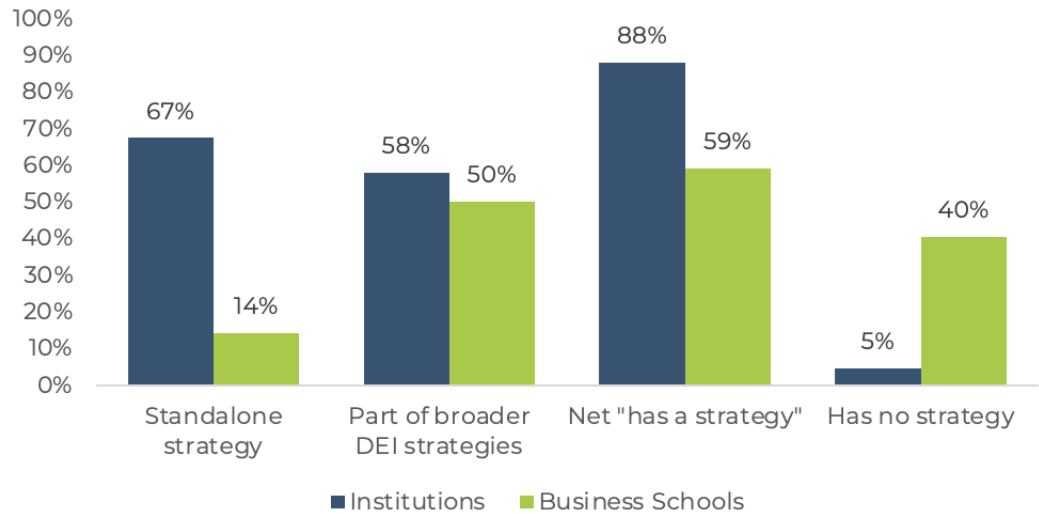
##### **3.1.1 Current Indigenous strategies**

Overall, most institutions (88%) could point to an Indigenous strategy. These strategies could be either a specific standalone Indigenous strategy (67%) or included as part of broader inclusion strategies (58%). It should be noted that the survey was unable to gather qualitative information such as the efficacy of the strategy, how it was developed or the costs associated with strategy development. This deeper examination of strategy can now be conducted with the respondents who have strategies in place.



Business schools are less likely to have an Indigenous strategy. Just over half (59%) could point to an Indigenous strategy, more commonly as part of broader inclusion strategies (50%). Only 14% of business schools had a standalone Indigenous strategy. See figure 9.

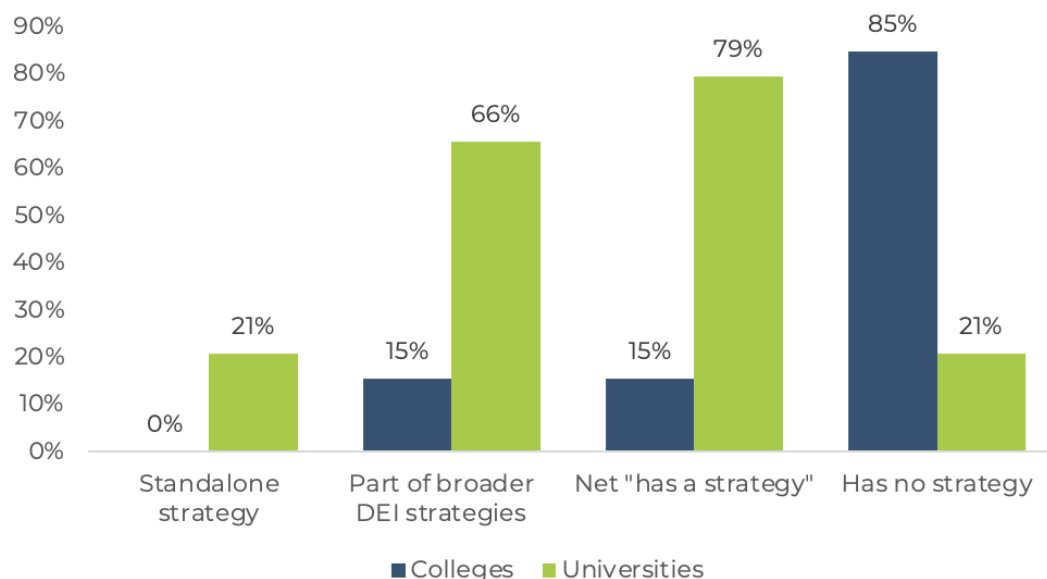
**Figure 9: Indigenous Strategy<sup>4</sup>**



Continuing with business schools, those located in universities were more likely to have implemented Indigenous strategies. Most business schools associated with universities could point to an Indigenous strategy (79%), including 21% that had a standalone strategy. By contrast, only 15% of business schools associated with colleges could point to an Indigenous strategy. No business schools associated with colleges had a standalone strategy. See figure 10.

<sup>4</sup> For visualization purposes, responses indicating a standalone Indigenous initiative and those reporting both standalone and integrated institutional approaches were combined to illustrate the proportion of institutions and business schools with any dedicated Indigenous initiative. This combined category was contrasted with another that included institutions with a strategy embedded in their broader DEI strategy, as well as those indicating “both (standalone and integrated institutional strategy).” The figure also displayed the total of the original “yes” responses alongside those indicating they had no strategy.

**Figure 10: Indigenous strategy by type of institution**



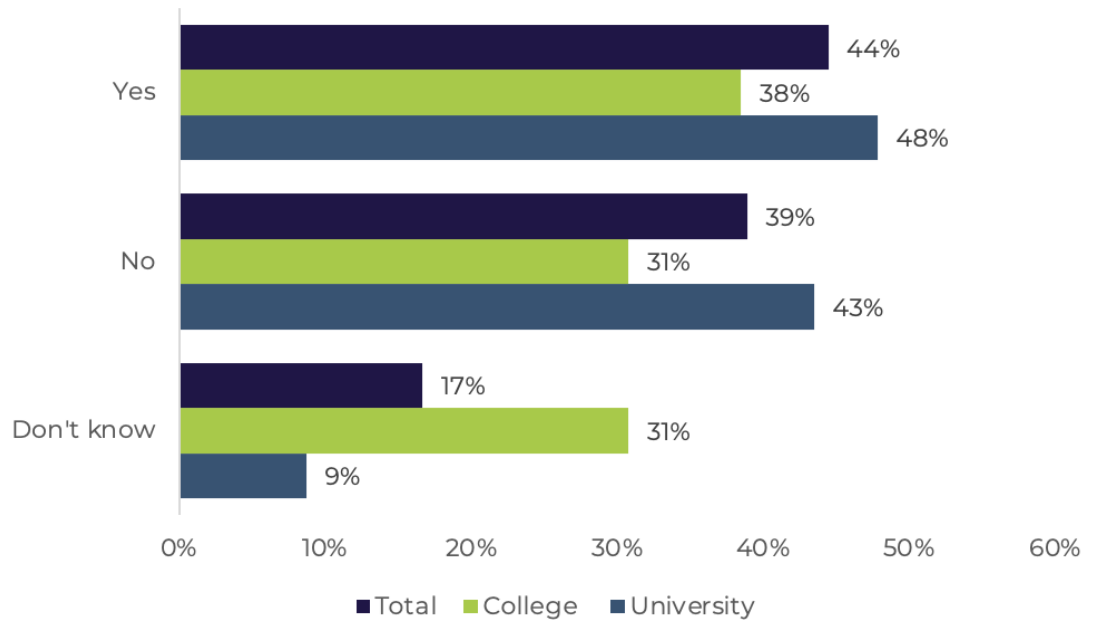
**Note: n=42**

### 3.1.2 Future of Indigenous strategies

Moving onto the future of Indigenous strategies, of those institutions without a standalone strategy, 73% were either currently developing one or planning to develop one.

Not only were business schools less likely to have Indigenous strategies, but fewer business schools are implementing them. Of those that did not have an Indigenous strategy in place, under half (44%) were either currently developing or planning a strategy. College-based business schools indicated greater uncertainty and were less likely to be developing a strategy than the university-based ones. See figure 11.

**Figure 11: Plans to develop a strategy by type of institution**



**Note: n=36**

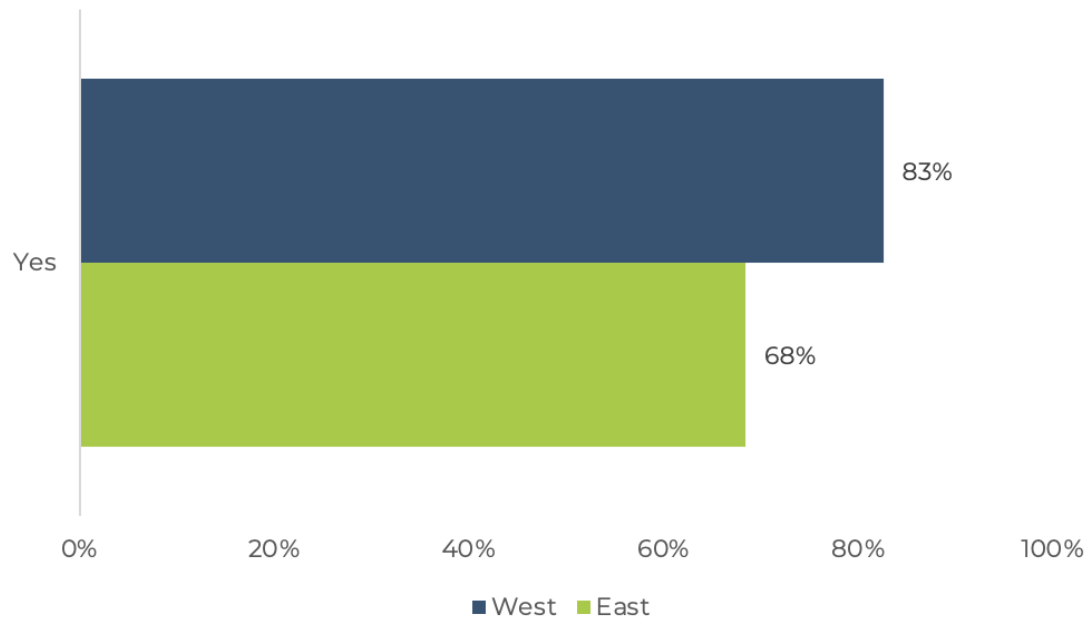
### **3.2. Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action**

At the level of institutions, a strong majority (76%) indicated their institution has formally responded to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Notably, some differences were present by region. Institutions in the West (83%) were more likely to have a formal response to the Calls to Action compared to the East (68%). See figure 12.



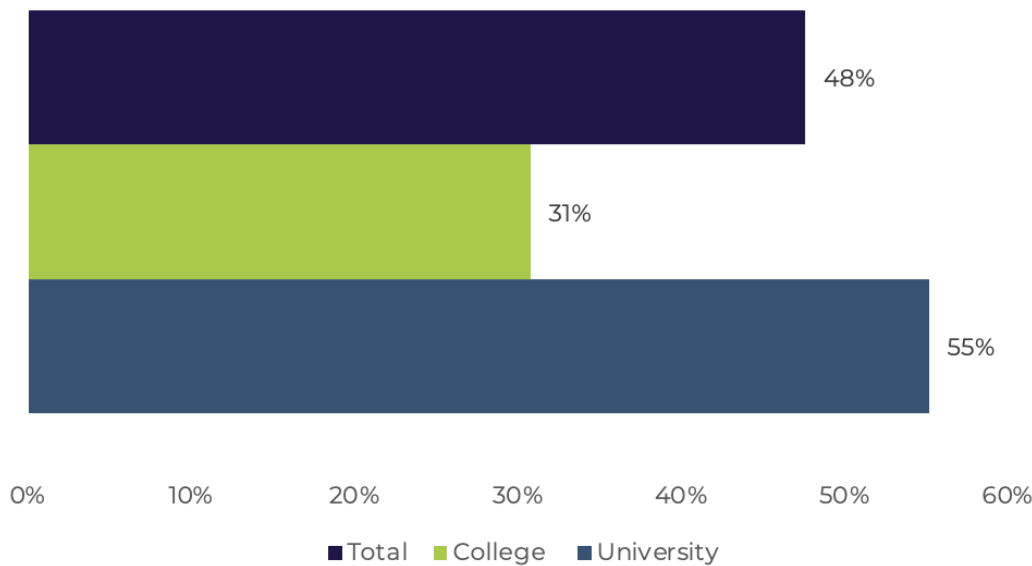
Figure 12: Institutional response by region



Note: n=48

Now, at the level of business schools, almost half of them (48%) reported having a formal response to the Calls to Action, while 43% did not. Business schools located in universities were much more likely to have responded and to be unsure. See figure 13.

Figure 13: Responding to Calls to Action among business schools by type of institution

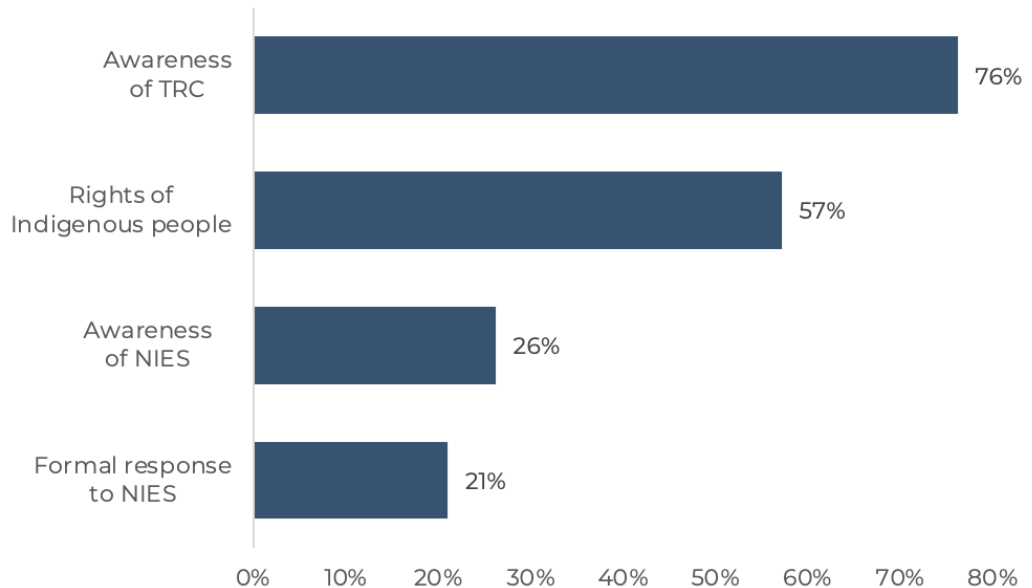


Note: N=42

Among business schools, most respondents agreed with the assertion that their business school was aware of the Calls to Action at their business schools, with 76% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Awareness of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act was relatively strong, with 57% agreeing or strongly agreeing.

Awareness of the National Indigenous Economic Strategy was relatively low (26%), and nearly as many institutions reported having a formal response to it (21%).

**Figure 14: Level of business school “strong agreement” and “agreement” of formal Indigenous declarations and commissions**



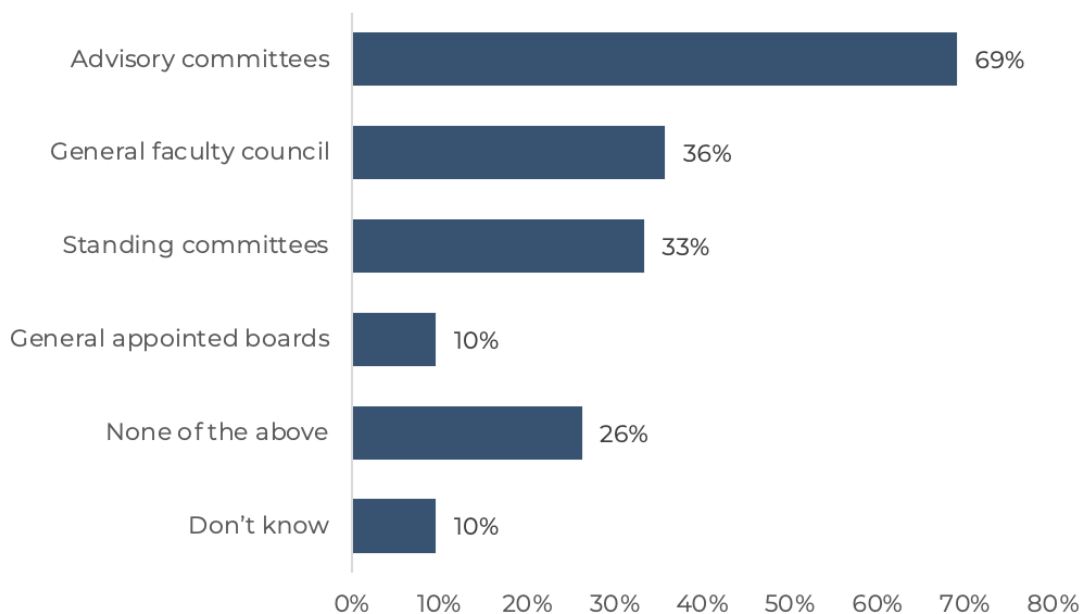
**Note: n=42**

### 3.3 Governance structures

At the level of business schools, most include Indigenous persons in their governance structures. Approximately 26% indicated that none of the listed structures applied, while 10% were unsure. The most common governance structures that include Indigenous peoples were advisory committees (60%), followed by general faculty councils (36%) and standing committees (33%).

Few business schools included Indigenous representation on general appointed boards (10%), and none reported inclusion on governing boards. Thus, Indigenous engagement in governance was more often in an advisory role rather than a decision-making one. See figure 15.

**Figure 15: Indigenous participation in governance structures**

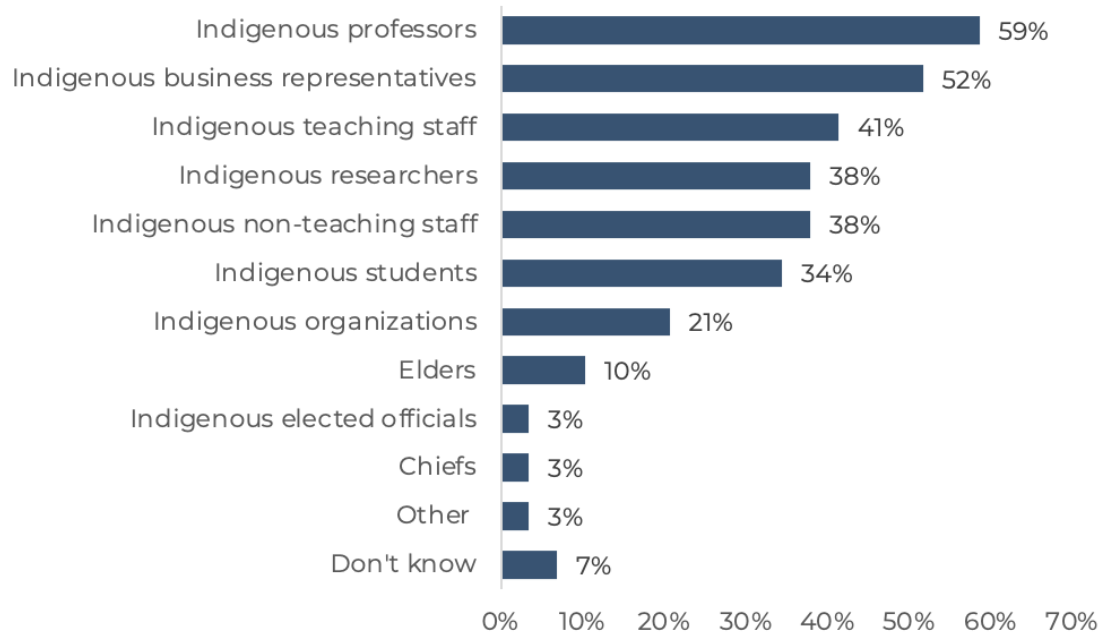


**Note1: n=42**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

Regarding the types of representatives in governance structures, representation was commonly professionals and academics. The most frequently included representatives were Indigenous professors (59%) and Indigenous business representatives (52% of schools reporting that their governance included this group). Moderate levels of representation were reported for teaching staff (41%), researchers (38%), non-teaching staff (38%), and students (35%). Traditional or community-based leaders were less common. Few schools reported having elders (10%), elected officials (3%) and chiefs (3%) in governance roles. See figure 16.

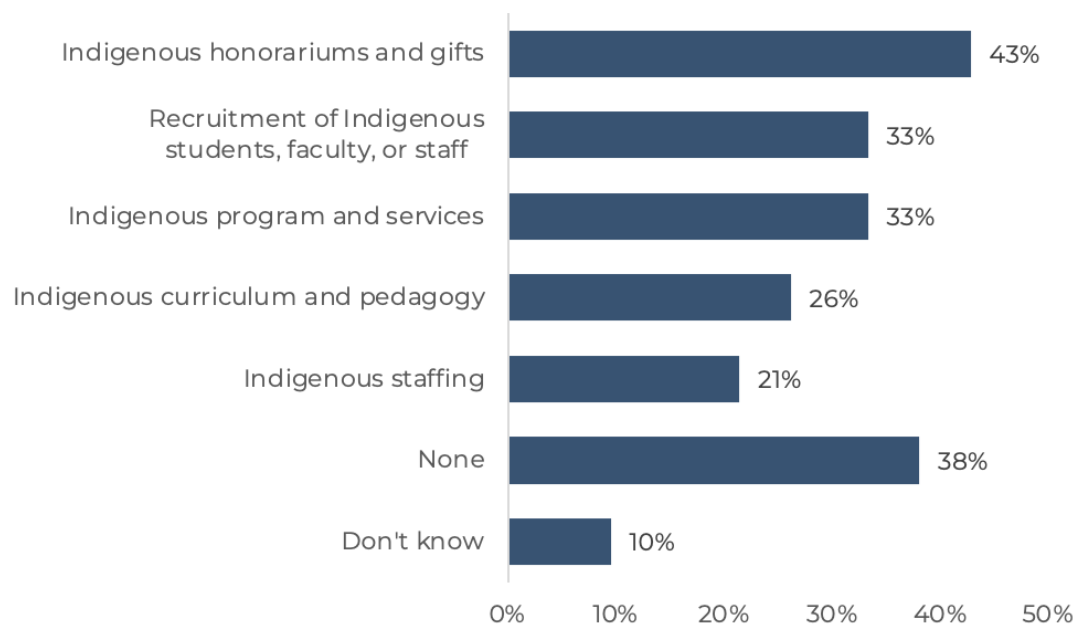
**Figure 16: Types of representatives in governance structures**



**Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

While some targeted resources existed, a notable proportion (38%) reported no dedicated budget for Indigenous-related initiatives. Budgets that did exist were commonly categorized as honorariums and gifts (43%), programs and services (33%), and recruitment (33%). Fewer schools dedicated funding to resources such as curriculum and pedagogy (26%) or staffing (21%). See figure 17.

**Figure 17: Business schools dedicated budgets**



**Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

## 4. Indigenous Support Programs and Services

Indigenous-specific support programs and services in business schools are intended to help Indigenous students overcome their distinctive challenges and needs, as well as boost their empowerment and opportunities. The most common approach is to embed supports within general student services, with two-thirds of business schools taking this route, while only about one-third offer dedicated Indigenous-specific programs. Moreover, the presence of Indigenous-specific programming is concentrated in university-based business schools.

Of the forty-eight schools that responded, only seven (1 in 7) reported having an Indigenous-led student group, leaving most Indigenous students without formal peer-based support networks or advocacy channels within their schools. The majority of institutions either reported no plans to establish such groups or were uncertain about future directions. Based on this low engagement indicator, one can postulate that the schools who did not participate are not likely to have student support programs. It should also be noted that the survey was not able to capture information on the efficacy of the support programs. This will require further investigation.

While most business schools provide scholarships, bursaries, and academic support, fewer offer programs that foster broader student development and connection, such as mentorship, orientation, or community engagement.

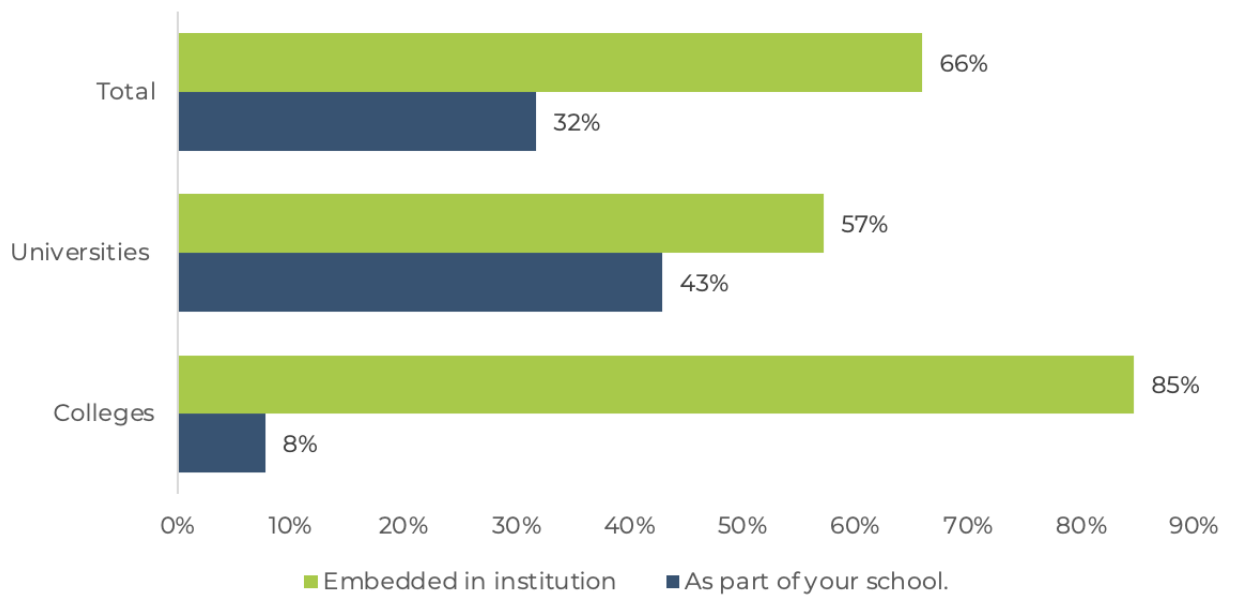
### 4.1 Incidence of programs and services

While Indigenous support programs and services were commonly available to business school students, they were typically integrated into the institution's broader student services rather than being a part of their business school programming.

The majority of business schools (66%) reported offering support for Indigenous students as part of their Institution's broader services. About one-third (32%) had dedicated Indigenous-specific programs or services within their business school. All but one were located in universities. None reported offering no support at all. See figure 18.



**Figure 18: Indigenous support program and services by type of institution**



**Note: n=41**

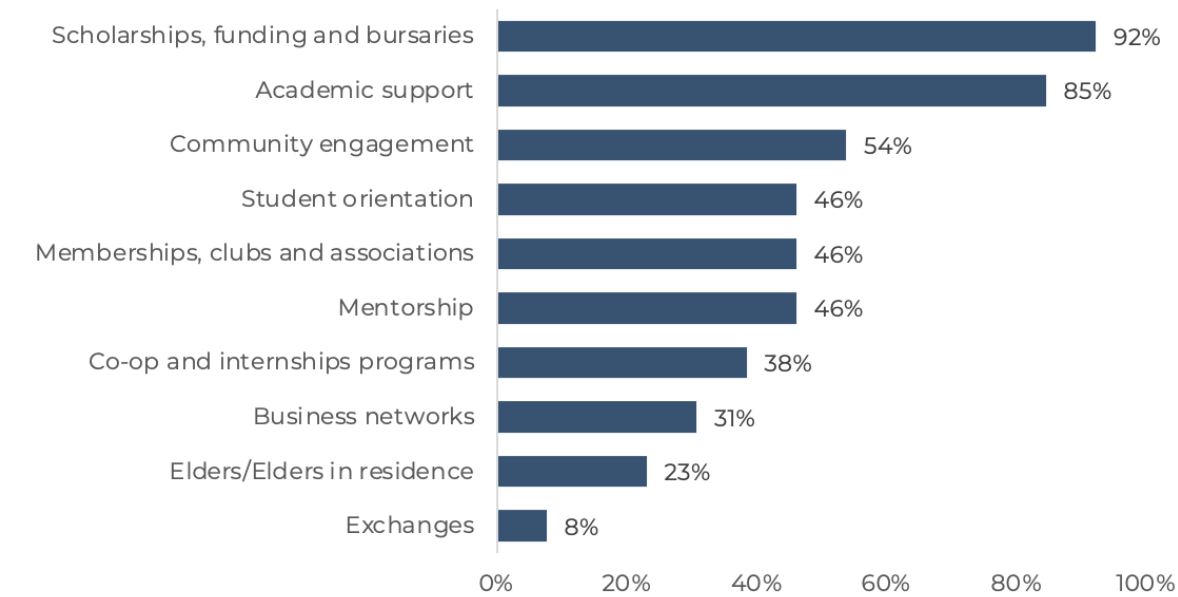
**Only seven business schools (18%) reported having an Indigenous-led student group, six of them universities. Of those without an Indigenous student group, most business schools did not have plans to create one (64%, and an additional 28% are unsure).**

## **4.2 Types of programs**

Financial or academic support was the most mentioned Indigenous-specific program or service offered. Almost all business schools that had Indigenous programs offered scholarships, funding or bursaries (92%) and academic support (85%). Many business schools also provided community engagement (54%), mentorship (46%), membership, clubs and associations (46%), and student orientation (46%). See figure 19.



**Figure 19: Type of program or service offered**

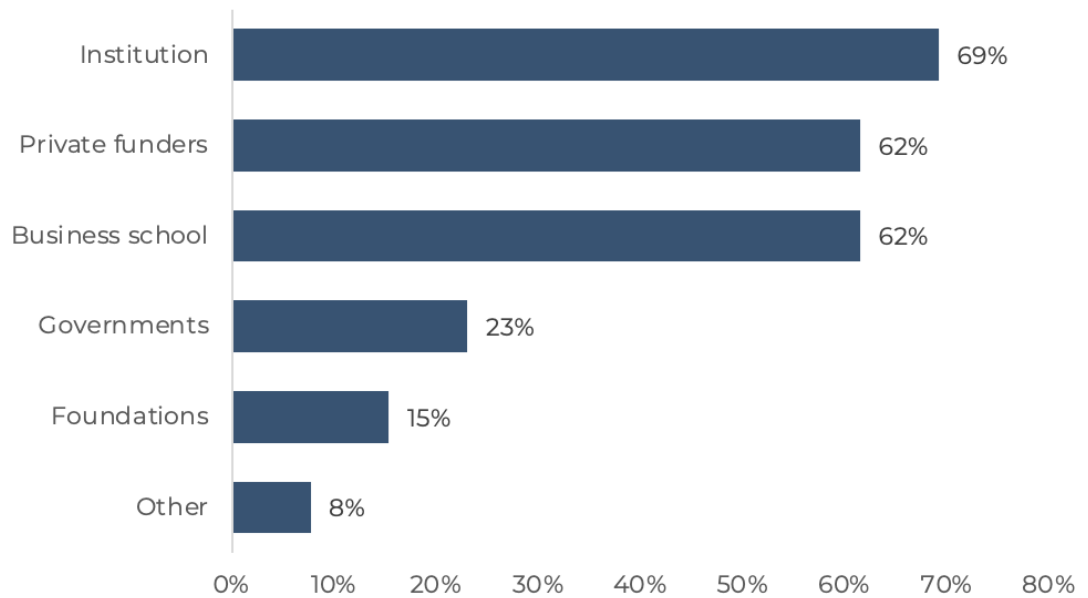


**Note1: n=13**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

The majority of funding for Indigenous schools originated from the same institution that housed the business school (69% of business schools indicated this source of funding), followed by private funders (62%) and contributions from the business school itself (62%). External government funds (23%) or foundations (15%) were available but are less common. See figure 20.

**Figure 20: Funding for Indigenous support programs or services**

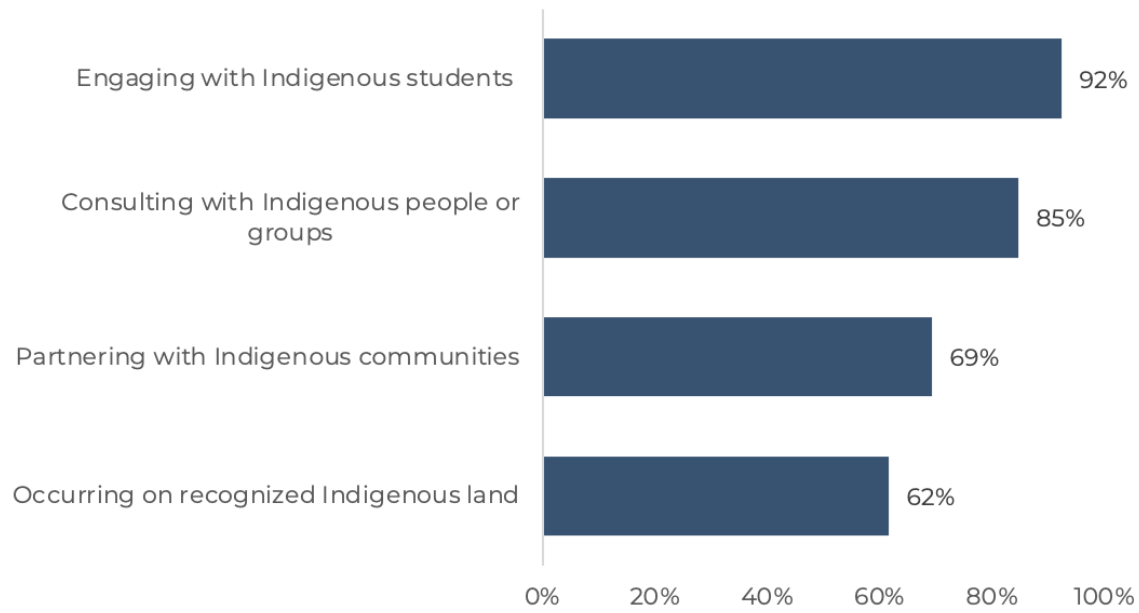


**Note1: n=13**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

All schools that provided Indigenous-specific support or programs reported some form of engagement before the implementation of their Indigenous programs or services. The most common pre-implementation was engaging with Indigenous students (92%) and consulting with Indigenous peoples or groups (85%). See figure 21.

**Figure 21: Involvement of Indigenous people in the school program or services**



**Notel: n=13**  
**Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

## 5. Indigenous Courses and Content

Business schools are split between offering Indigenous courses and not offering them.

Indigenous courses in business schools are those courses that focus on Indigenous knowledge, culture, languages, and contemporary issues from an Indigenous perspective. A significant number of business schools have begun to incorporate these courses, with many including at least one Indigenous course. Schools affiliated with universities tend to offer more Indigenous courses compared to those affiliated with colleges. Geographically, institutions in the West are more likely to provide these courses than those in the East. However, the majority of schools offer a limited number of Indigenous-focused courses, with only a few exceeding five courses, and a select few offering more than twenty.

Indigenous courses are predominantly required as part of business programs. The courses primarily focus on themes such as Indigenous business and management, entrepreneurship, and governance, with a majority being offered in-person at the undergraduate level. Indigenous faculty play a significant role in developing and teaching these courses, utilizing various teaching methods, including case studies and group work, to enhance the learning experience.

The integration of Indigenous content within core courses is also notable, with a substantial portion of schools including Indigenous themes in their curriculum. These courses are the ones that integrate Indigenous content into fundamental areas of business and management education. The most common challenge faced by schools that do not offer Indigenous content is a lack of personal knowledge among faculty.

### 5.1. Incidence of Indigenous courses and course content

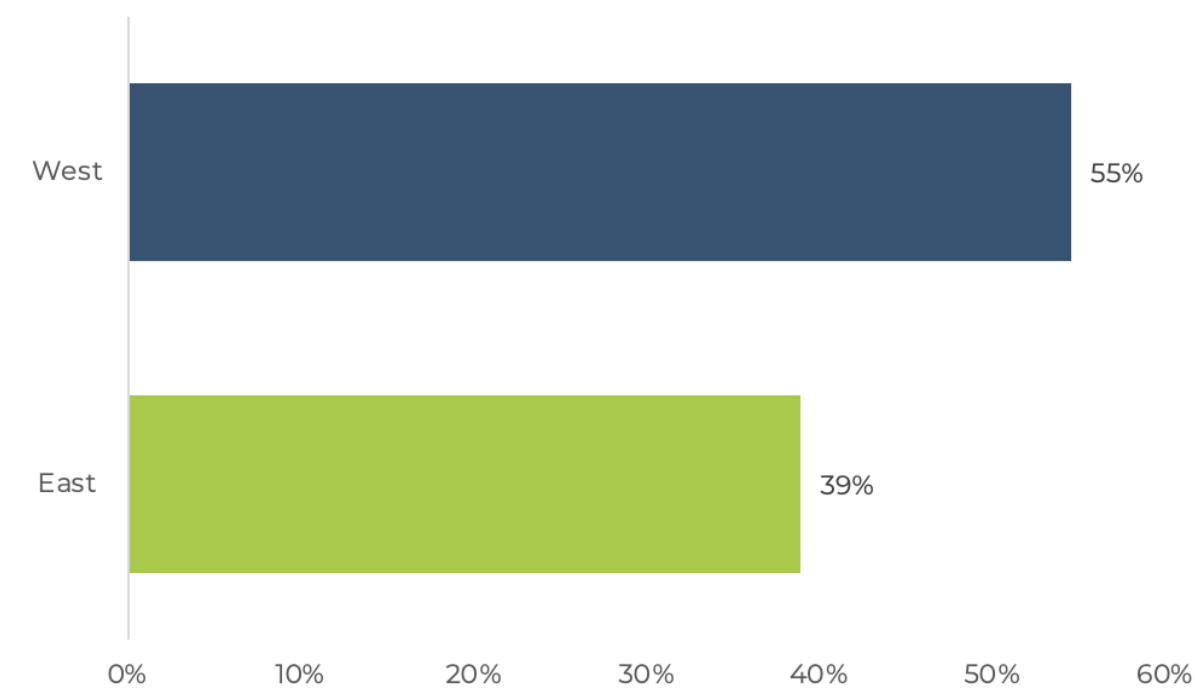
Respondents provided information on the Indigenous content in the courses they offer, including the names, frequency, leadership, funding, and delivery of those courses. To ensure the task of respondents was reasonable, the questionnaire asked respondents to provide information on up to 5 courses.

#### 5.1.1. Indigenous courses

Indigenous courses are those that focus on Indigenous knowledge, culture, languages or contemporary issues from an Indigenous perspective. Almost half of the business schools reported offering at least one Indigenous course within the last three years, while the same percentage indicated they did not provide such courses (48%). Business schools associated with universities were more likely to offer Indigenous courses than business schools associated with colleges.

Schools in the West were more likely to report offering Indigenous courses (55%), compared to those in the East (39%). See figure 22.

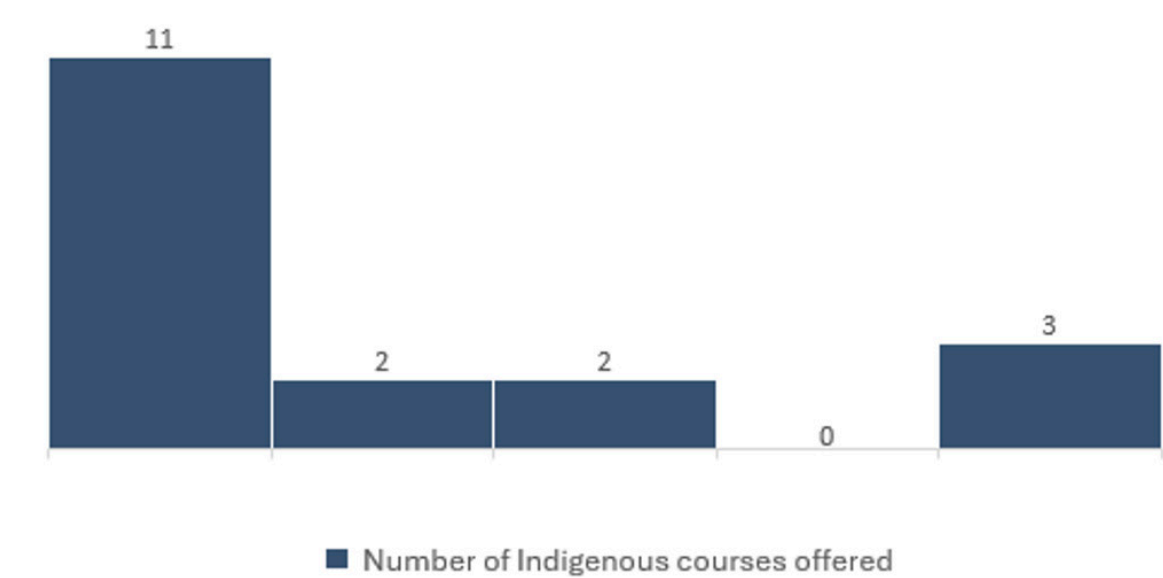
Figure 22: Regional differences in Indigenous courses offered



Note: n=40

Most of the 48 schools offered a small number of Indigenous-focused courses, between 1 and 5. Few schools offered more: only 7 schools offered more than 5. Among them, a small group (3 schools) stood out by offering more than 20 Indigenous-focused courses.

Figure 23: Indigenous courses

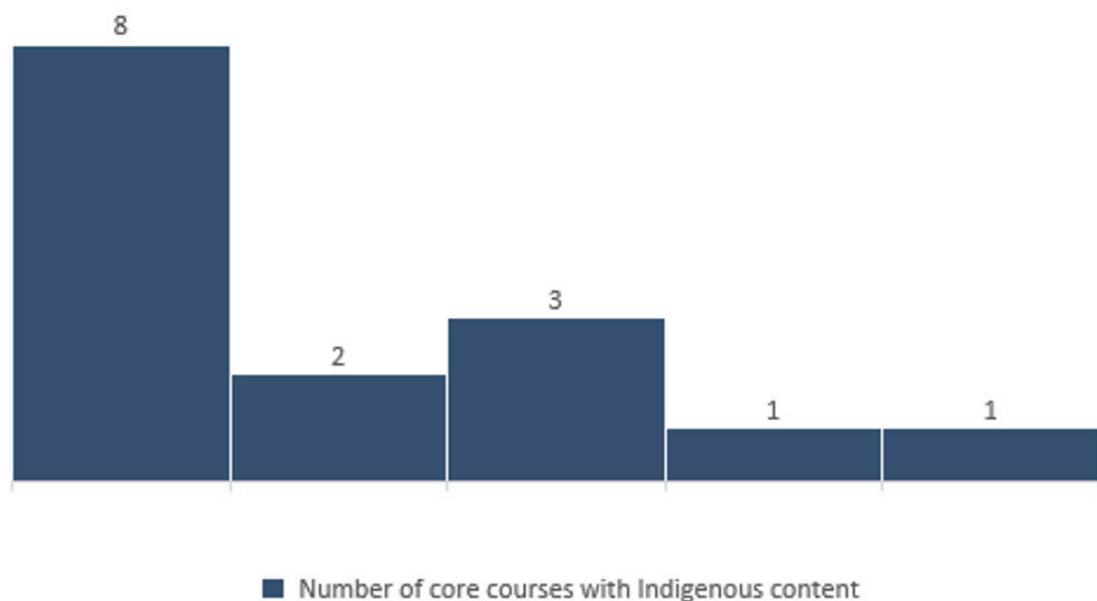


Note: n=18

### 5.1.2. Indigenous content in core courses

Half of business schools offered core courses with Indigenous content (53%). Eight business schools reported having one core course that included Indigenous content, which was the most common response. Two business schools indicated they offered two such courses, while three reported offering three. One business school reported having five core courses with Indigenous content. See Figure 24.

**Figure 24: Core courses with Indigenous courses**



**Note:** n=15

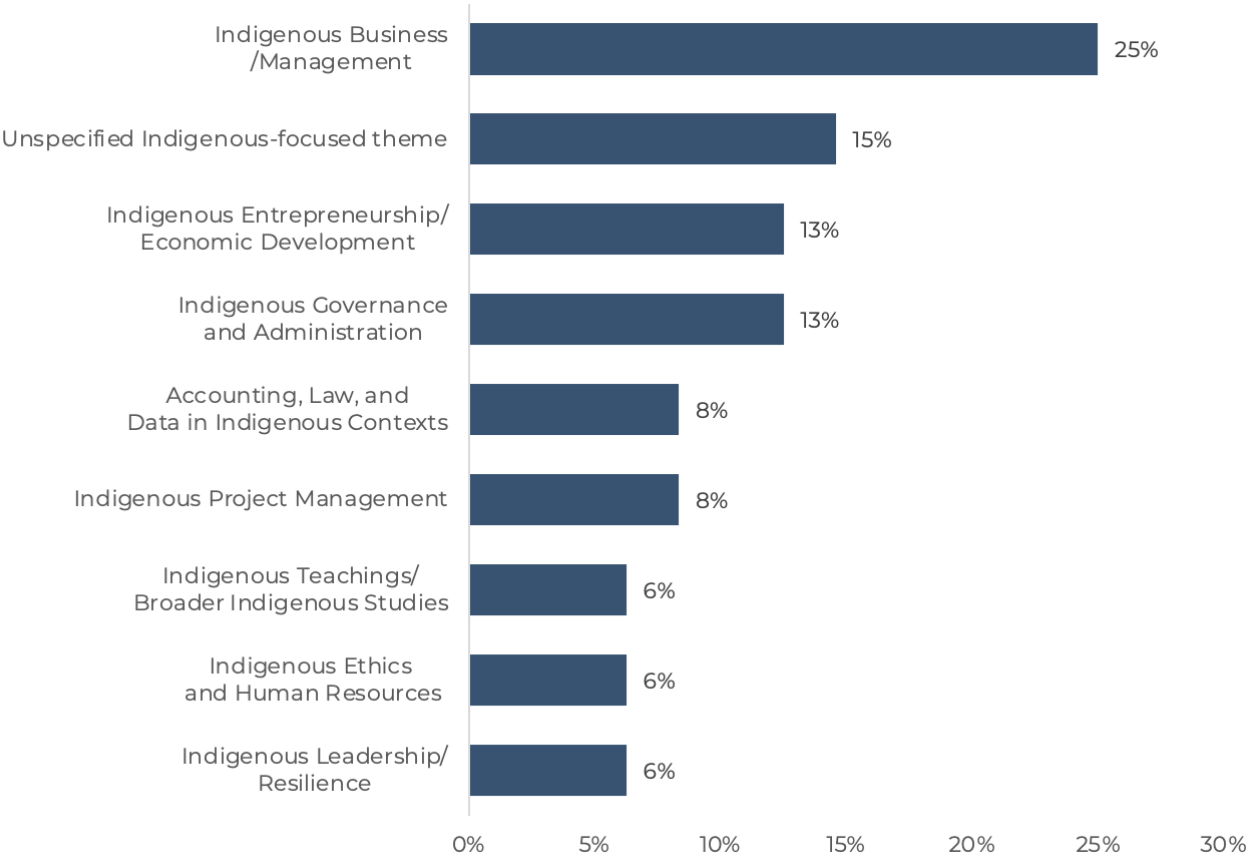
For those that did not provide Indigenous content within core courses, the most common challenge reported was “personal knowledge gaps” (70%).

### 5.2. Nature and level of integration of Indigenous courses

Among the Indigenous courses profiled by respondents, most courses (70% of the courses profiled) were required parts of the curricula (79%).

From the 48 Indigenous courses reported, the most common topics covered included Indigenous business and management (25% of the courses profiled), entrepreneurship (13%), and governance (13%).

Figure 25: Themes covered in courses

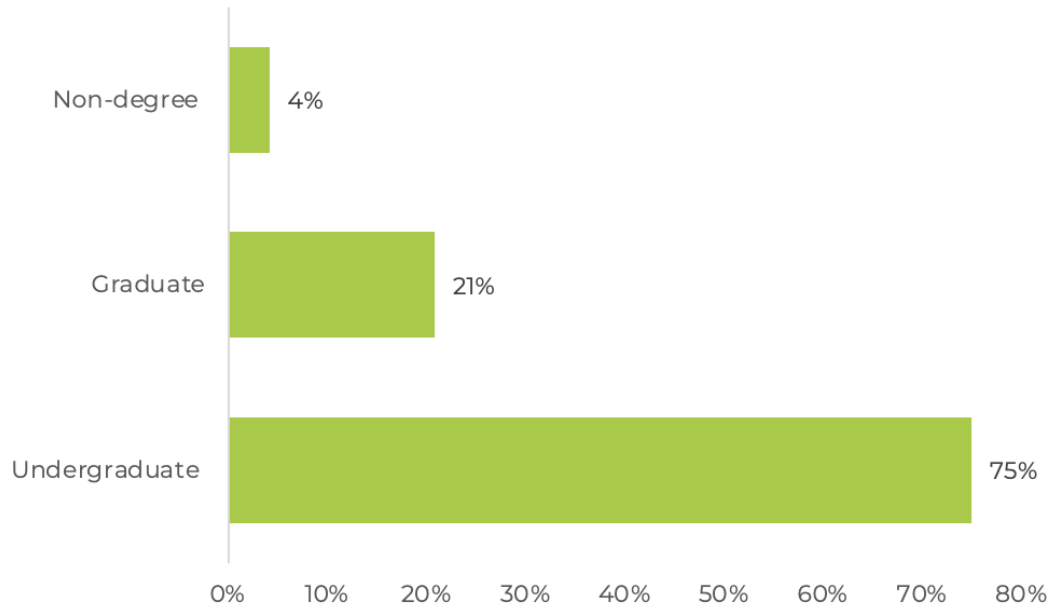


**Note1:**n=48 courses  
**Note2:** respondents registered some names of the courses without specifying Indigenous focused themes.  
**Note3:** Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

Indigenous courses are more likely to be offered at the undergraduate level (75% of the courses profiled) than at the graduate level (21%). A small number of courses are offered for non-degree programs (4%). See figure 26.



**Figure 26: Level of Indigenous courses**



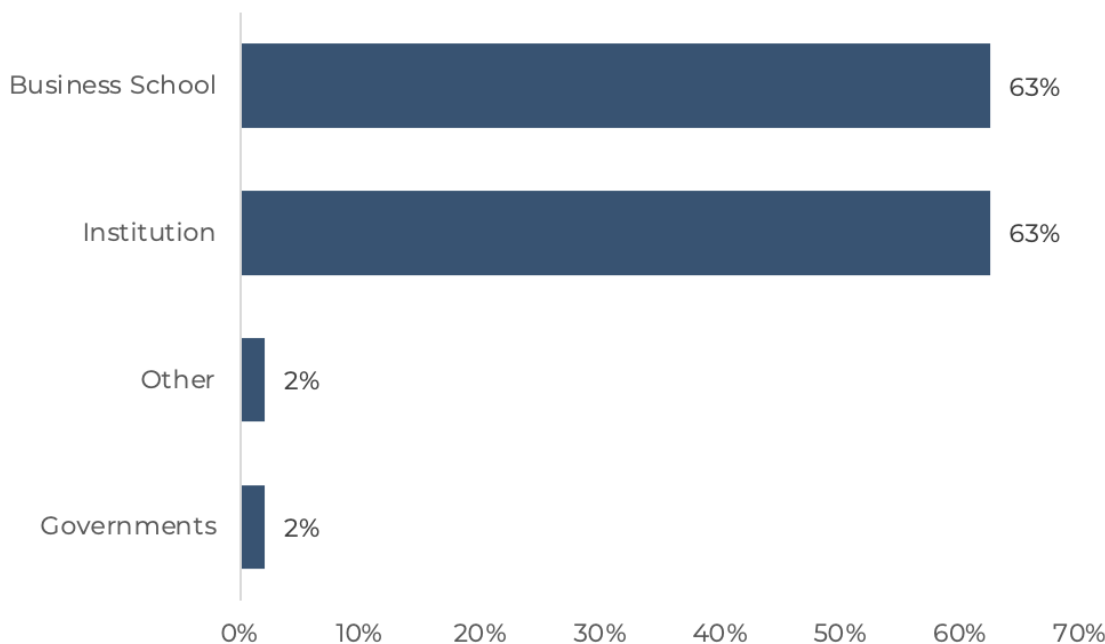
**Note: n=48 courses**

These courses are more likely to be delivered in-person (50% of the courses profiled) than online (40%) or in a hybrid format (10%).

Funding for these Indigenous courses originated mainly from two sources: the broader institution (63% of courses profiled) and the same business school (63%). See figure 27:



**Figure 27: Funding for the Indigenous courses**

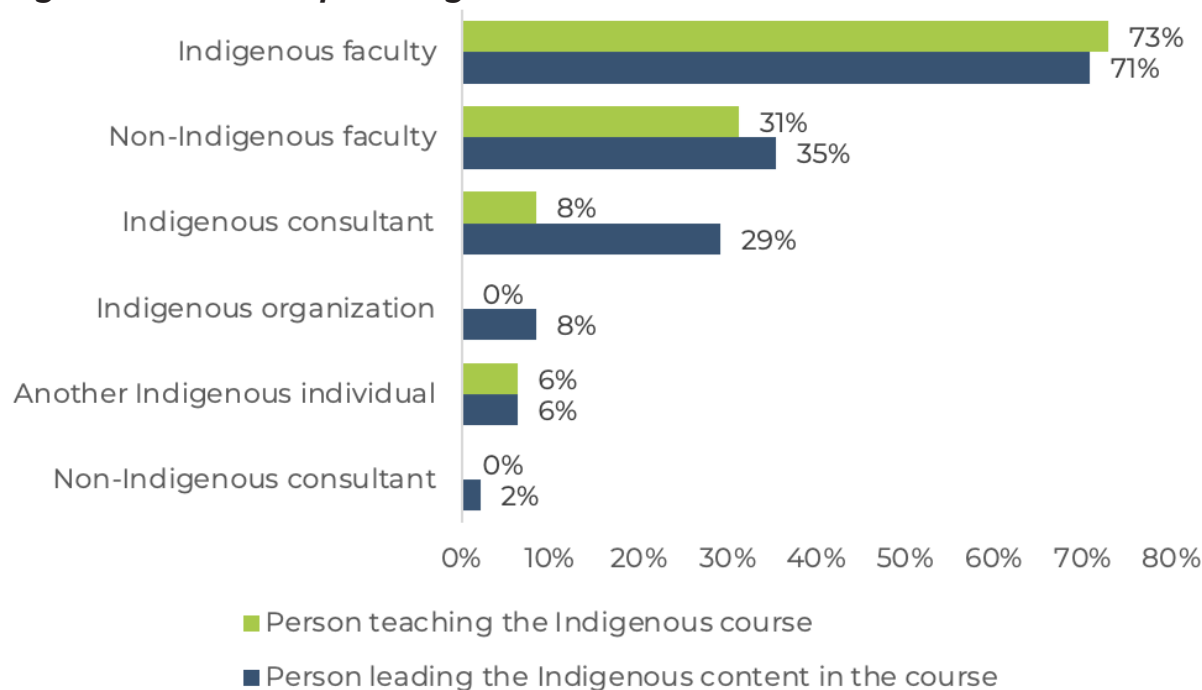


**Note1: n=48 courses**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

The development of the content was led by Indigenous faculty (71% of courses profiled), followed by non-Indigenous faculty (35%). Similarly, the courses were taught primarily by Indigenous faculty (73%) followed by non-Indigenous faculty (31%). See figure 28.

**Figure 28: Leadership in Indigenous courses**

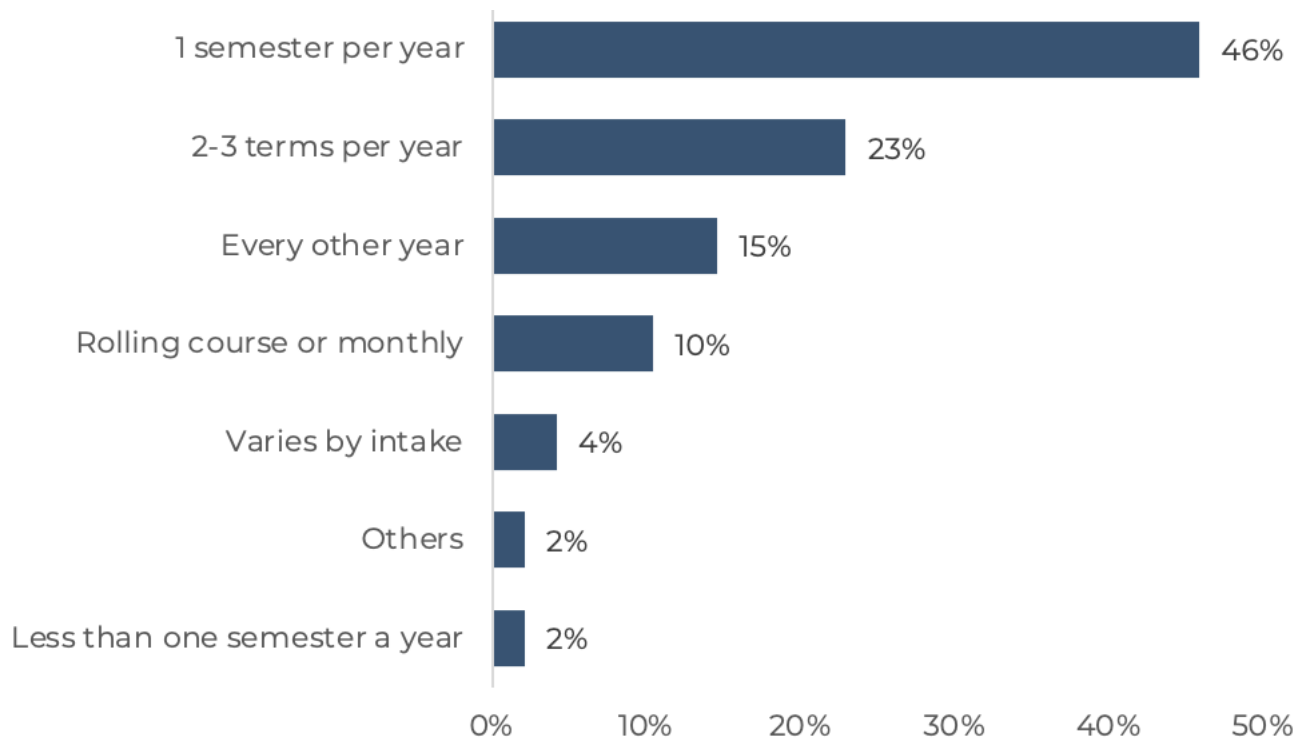


**Note1: n=48 courses**

**Note2: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

Courses were offered mostly once a year (46%), followed by 2 to 3 terms per year (23%). See figure 29.

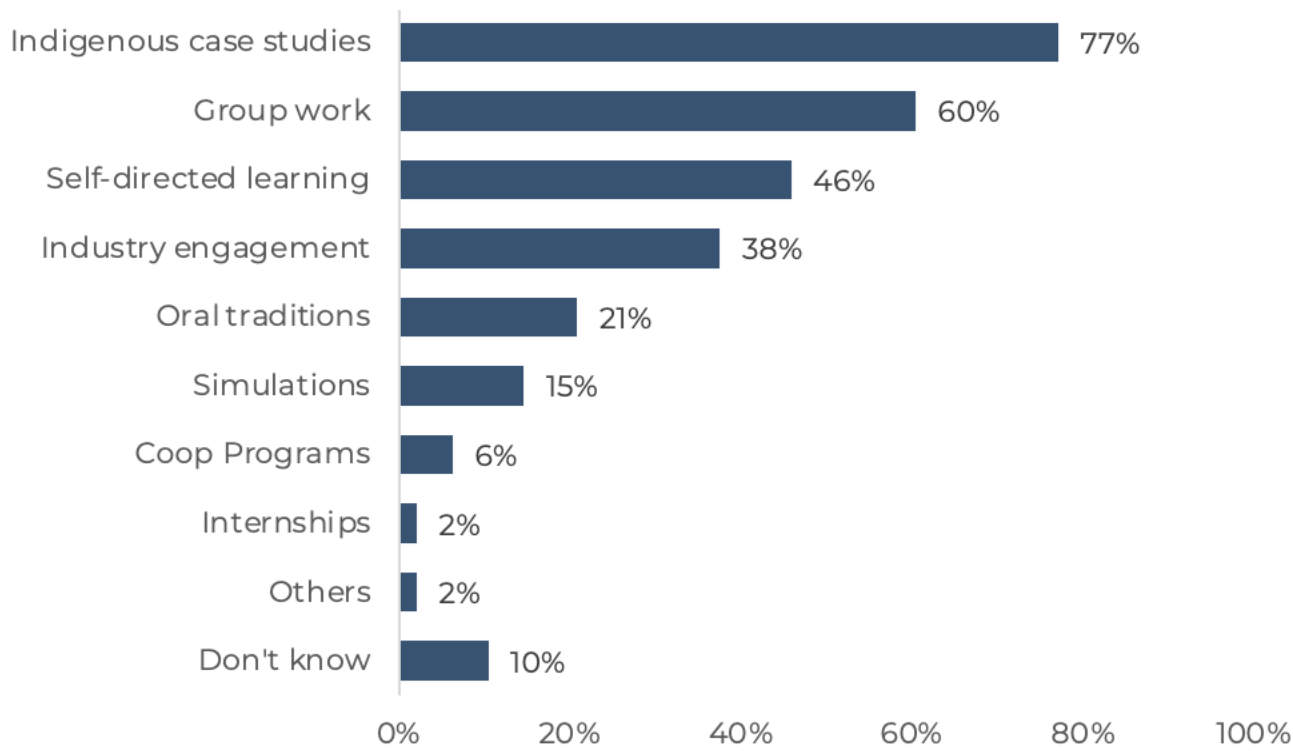
**Figure 29: Frequency of Indigenous courses**



**Note: n=48 courses**

Regarding the teaching methods, the most common were Indigenous case studies (77% of courses profiled), followed by group work (60%), and self-directed learning (46%). See figure 30.

**Figure 30: Teaching methods**



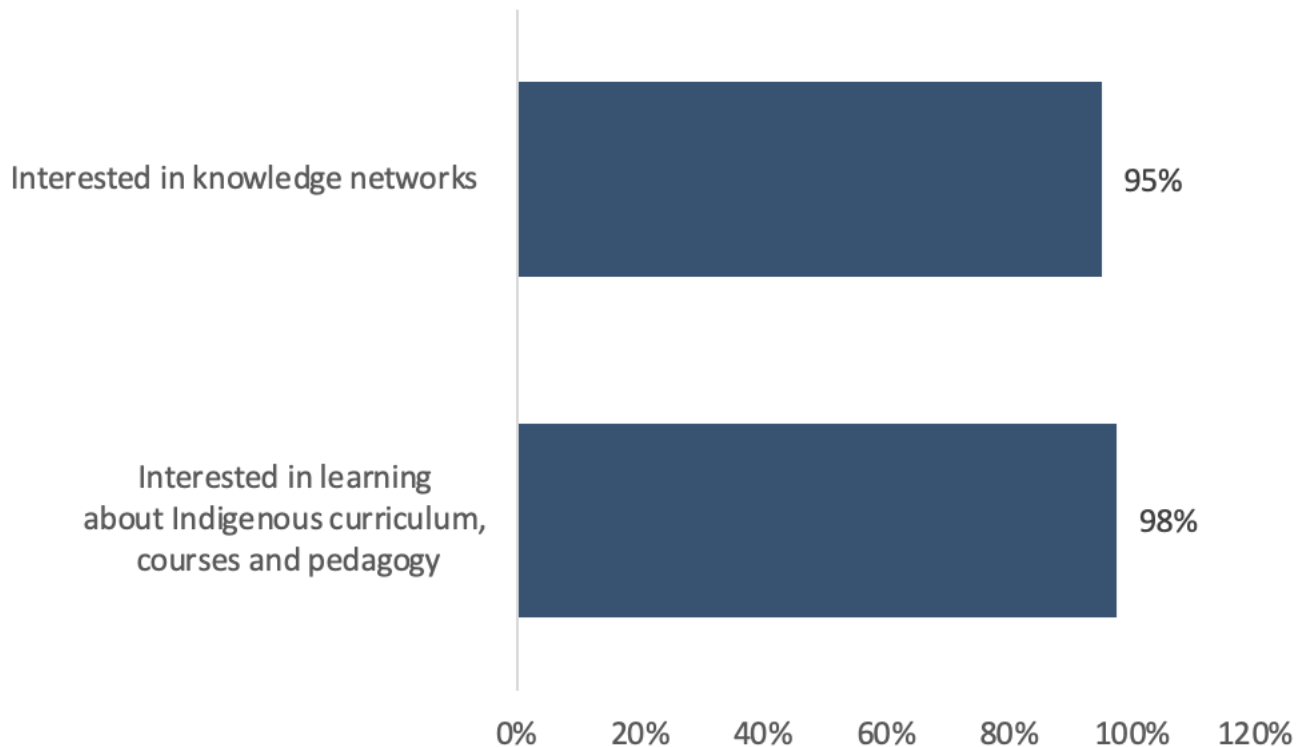
**Note: n=48 courses**

**Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**

### 5.3 Interest in learning about curriculum

Nearly all business schools expressed a strong interest in expanding their understanding of Indigenous curriculum and courses. Specifically, almost all agreed (73% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing) that their business school was interested in learning more about Indigenous curriculum, courses, and pedagogy. Similarly, interest in participating in knowledge networks was also high; nearly all schools agreed (70% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing). See figure 31.

**Figure 31: Agreement with interest in Indigenous curriculum and knowledge networks**



Note: n=40

## 6. Indigenous Research Projects

A significant number of business schools are engaged in Indigenous research; those affiliated with universities are more likely to conduct such projects than those affiliated with colleges. The Indigenous research projects undertaken by these schools can be categorized into two types: Indigenous-focused projects, which address Indigenous issues directly, and non-Indigenous projects that incorporate Indigenous components without making them the primary focus. On average, schools are engaged in a modest number of both types of research projects, with only a few institutions having a significant number of Indigenous research projects.

The areas of focus for research predominantly include management and community-based research, with applied business and policy research also occurring to a lesser extent. Business development research is notably underrepresented, indicating a potential area for growth that could enhance Indigenous entrepreneurship and contribute to broader economic inclusion efforts. The involvement of Indigenous researchers is significant, and schools have initiated some partnerships with external Indigenous institutions and organizations to boost their research initiatives. However, only one research project cited an Indigenous entrepreneur as a partner and only 4 Indigenous Economic Development Corporations were cited as partners. This would suggest there is an 'engagement gap' with the Indigenous business community consisting of approximately 100,000 Indigenous entrepreneurs and approximately 500 Indigenous Economic Development Corporations in Canada.

Research projects are disseminated through various channels, although a portion remain unpublished, possibly due to their ongoing status. Research Agency funding is a crucial source for these research projects, government funded research agencies support being the most common, followed by funding from the schools themselves and their respective institutions.

### 6.1 Incidence of Indigenous research in business schools

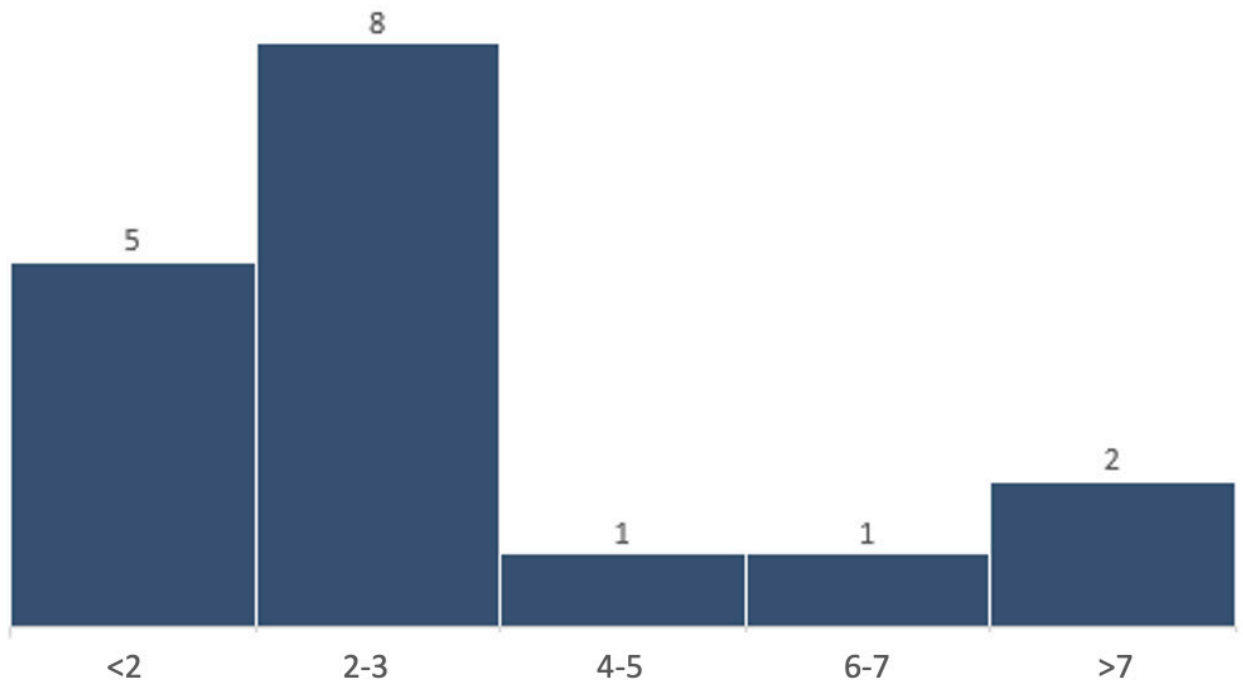
More than half of business schools (68%) have engaged in some form of indigenous research. Business schools located in universities were more likely to conduct Indigenous research.

Business schools reported two different types of research projects. One type was Indigenous-focused research projects, which included one or more Indigenous issues among their objectives. On average, business schools reported having four Indigenous focused research projects. Only two institutions reported more than seven prior or ongoing research projects. See figure 32.

A second type was non-Indigenous projects with an Indigenous component. These projects did not have an Indigenous issue among their objectives but explicitly considered Indigenous issues within them. Among the institutions that reported having such projects, business schools reported an average of three non-Indigenous research projects with an Indigenous component. Of the 11 schools that reported these projects, nine reported four or fewer prior or ongoing research projects with an Indigenous component.



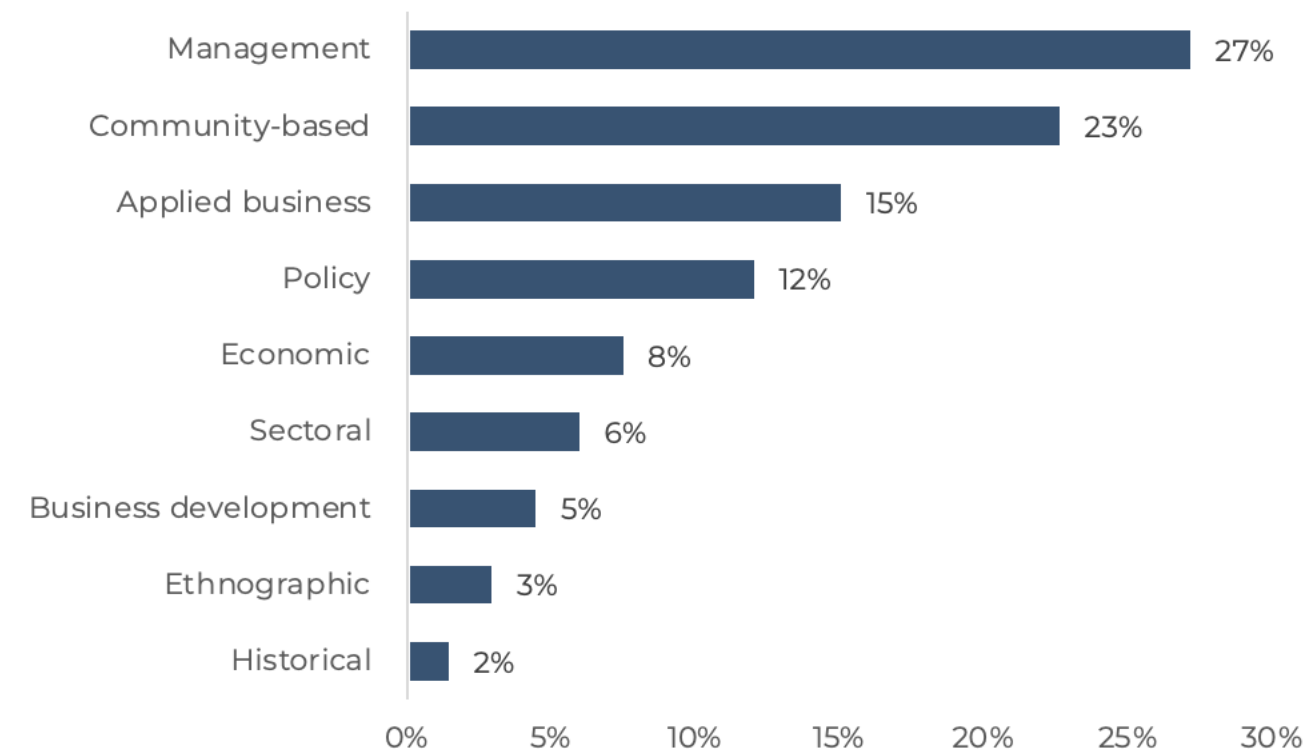
**Figure 32: Distribution of Indigenous-focused research projects**



## **6.2 Nature of Indigenous research in business schools**

Among the Indigenous research conducted across schools, the most common subject areas were management research (27% of the projects profiled) and community-based research (23%). Applied business research accounts for 15% of projects, while 12% are classified as policy research. By contrast, business development research remains underrepresented, comprising 5% of the reported research projects. This distribution highlights areas of emerging strength as well as opportunities for further development for Indigenous individuals and communities, such as business development and a broader range of sector specific research, that in particular could foster Indigenous business growth, innovation and entrepreneurship, which are a central part of reconciliation and economic inclusion efforts. See figure 33.

**Figure 33: Types of research projects profiled**



**Note: n=38 projects profiled**

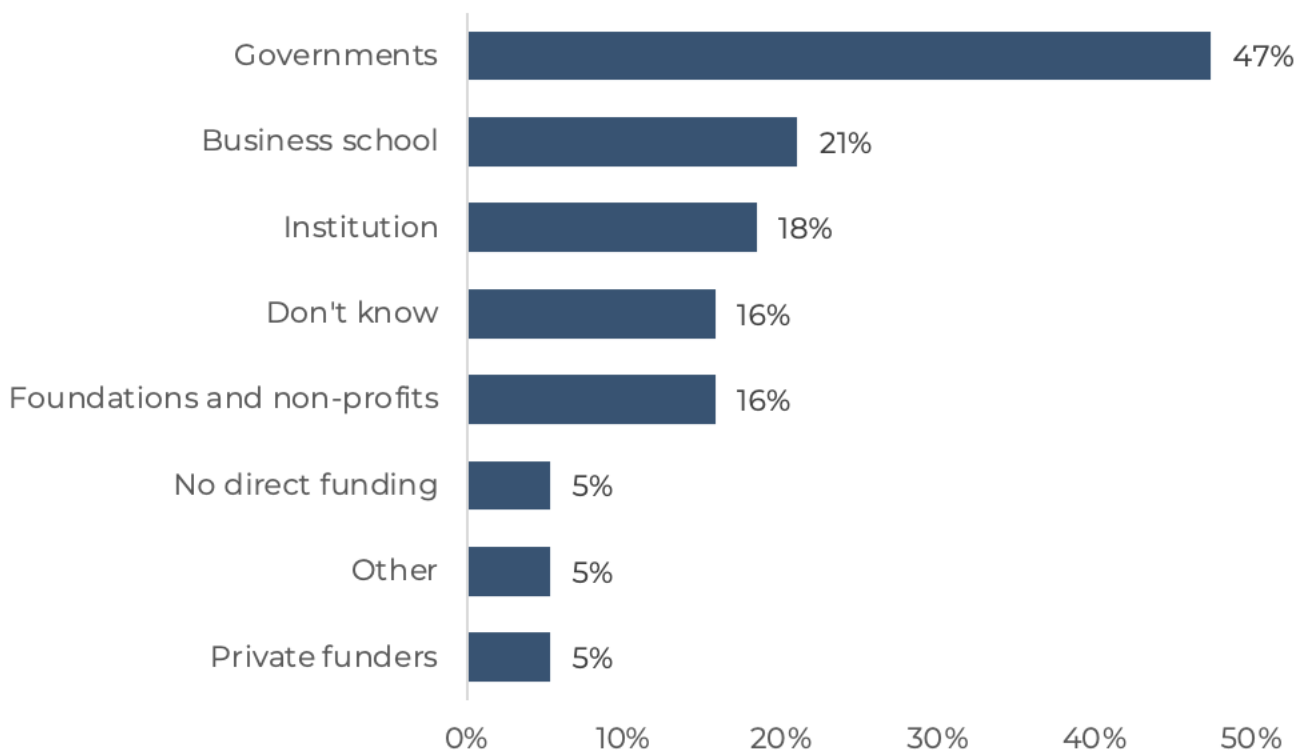
### 6.3 Conducting Indigenous research in business schools

Most of the Indigenous research conducted in schools involved Indigenous researchers (60% of projects profiled). Notably, for 27% of the project profiled, respondents were unable to answer this question. Furthermore, a significant number of schools have collaborated or partnered with outside institutions or researchers (82% of projects profiled involved outside institutions or researchers).

Most of the reported projects have been published, presented, or disseminated in some form (55% of projects profiled). However, 18% have yet to be disseminated, with a majority of these being ongoing projects. For approximately a quarter of the reported projects, the status of their dissemination remains uncertain.

In terms of sources of funding, public funding played a central role. Almost half of the Indigenous research projects were funded by governments (47% of projects profiled), followed by funds from the same business school (21%) or their institution (18%). See figure 34.

**Figure 34: Origin of funds for Indigenous research**



**Note: n=38 projects profiled**

**Note: Percentages do not sum to 100% as respondents could select more than one option.**



## 7. Indigenous Partnerships

Many schools have partnered with Indigenous economic organizations, businesses, or communities, although this practice is not yet widespread. There is a strong interest among schools to enhance their partnership strategies. The partnerships that have been formed primarily focus on educational and curriculum support, aiming to inform and develop Indigenous content within educational programs. A smaller portion of these partnerships are dedicated to business and economic development resources.

### 7.1 Incidence of partnerships

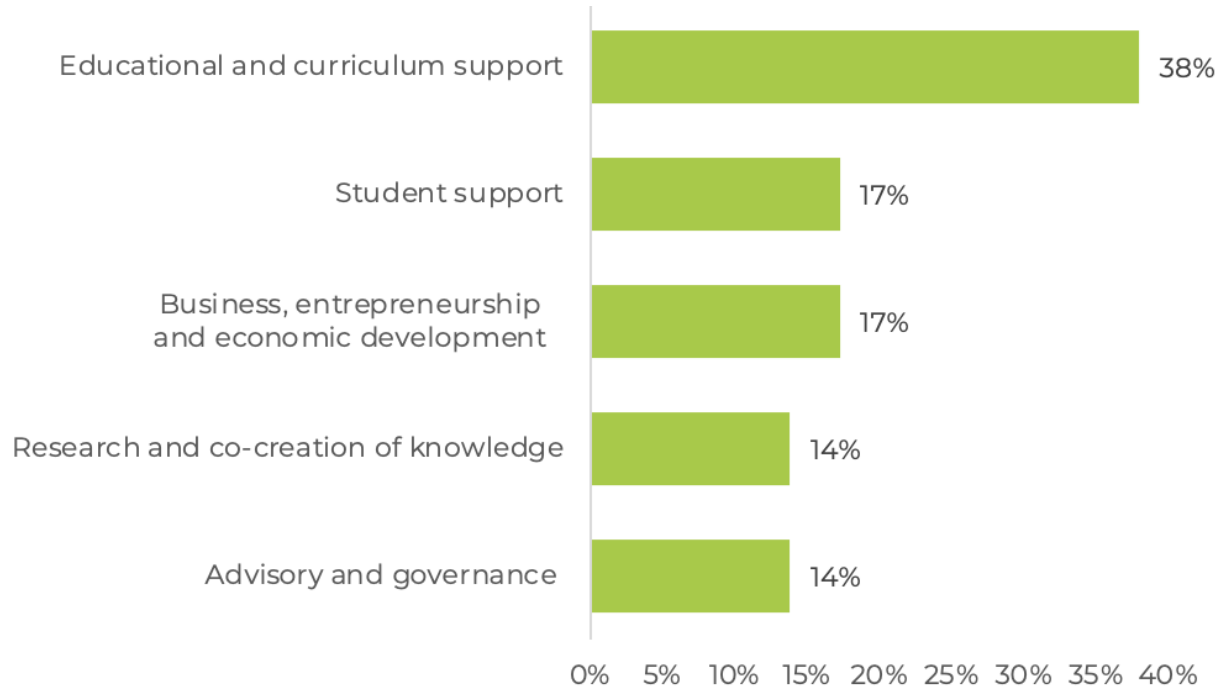
Business schools commonly partnered with Indigenous economic organizations, businesses, or communities. The majority of schools (60%) reported having partnerships related to Indigenous engagement. As noted earlier, there were a number of Indigenous agencies, service organizations and community groups but there is a lack of Indigenous businesses and economic development corporations. Looking ahead, interest in strengthening this area is strong: most schools desire to learn more about partnership strategies. And perhaps, more could be done not only to develop these partnerships but with whom they are partnering. As noted earlier, some business schools have developed research partnerships with some Indigenous agencies, service organizations and community groups. Few research partnerships involved Indigenous entrepreneurs and economic development corporations.



## 7.2 Types of partnerships

Among the 48 business schools engaged, 12 had partnered, reporting 29 partnerships. Out of the total partnerships reported, 38% supported educational and curriculum development. Fewer partnerships focused on creating or expanding resources related to business, entrepreneurship, and economic development.

**Figure 35: Types of partnerships**



**Note: n=29 partnerships**

**From the total partnerships reported, 66% were formal, while 34% were informal.**

## Appendix

The following tables provide an overview of the institutions that participated in the Indigenous scan. They summarize respondents according to geographic distribution and institutional characteristics. The first table presents the number of respondents by province, while the second breaks them down by region and province. The third table categorizes respondents by region and type of institution, offering insight into the diversity of participating institutions across Canada.

**Table 1: Summary of respondents by province**

Province	n	%
Alberta	9	18.8%
British Columbia	12	25%
New Brunswick	2	4.2%
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2.1%
Nova Scotia	3	6.3%
Ontario	14	29.2%
Prince Edward Island	2	4.2%
Quebec	2	4.2%
Saskatchewan	3	6.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: Summary of respondents by region and provinces**

Western Province	n	Eastern Province	n
Alberta	9	New Brunswick	2
British Columbia	12	Newfoundland and Labrador	1
Saskatchewan	3	Nova Scotia	3
Manitoba	0	Ontario	14
		Prince Edward Island	2
		Quebec	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>



**Table 3: Summary of respondents by region and type of institution**

Region	Universities		Colleges	
	n	%	n	%
West	13	43%	11	61%
East	17	57%	7	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

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