



Maatookiiying Gaa-miinigoowiziying (Sharing our Gifts): Indigenous Learning Bundles

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Abstract

Maatookiiying gaa-miinigoowiziying (Sharing our Gifts) is a digital curriculum resource project designed to support Western and Affiliate instructors in culturally and ethically responsive ways to include local Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and voices in their undergraduate and graduate level courses. Inspired by Carleton University's Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundles, Maatookiiying gaa-miinigoowiziying offers a selection of Indigenous-led learning bundles (equivalent to one lesson) that center on Indigenous topics or themes, while **privileging Indigenous conceptions, theories, ways of knowing, and epistemologies**.

Encapsulated within the project's Anishnabemowin (Ojibwe language) name, Maatookiiying gaa-miinigoowiziying (Sharing our Gifts), **each learning bundle is a gift** from Indigenous lead collaborators to Western instructors and imbued with ethical responsibilities for working with and sharing Indigenous collective knowledges. These responsibilities include the completion of an orientation, the provision of feedback (instructor and student), and a commitment to ongoing and collaborative learning.

Learning Bundles

In Indigenous societies, **bundles are considered important vessels for containing and passing on Indigenous knowledges**. Drawing inspiration from the notion of a bundle, the project team refers to the digital resources curated in this project as academic learning bundles. The name signifies the **ethical care** that informs the ways bundles are collaboratively collected and shared with learners.

Each bundle centers the holistic, land-based and embodied nature of Indigenous knowledges, focusing on Indigenous topics or themes with specific learning outcomes. All bundles include a **recorded visit with local Indigenous knowledge holders** that were facilitated by an Indigenous scholar. They also include teaching prompts, instructional strategies, academic readings and recommended assignments, assessments and resources.

Lead Collaborators & their bundle(s)

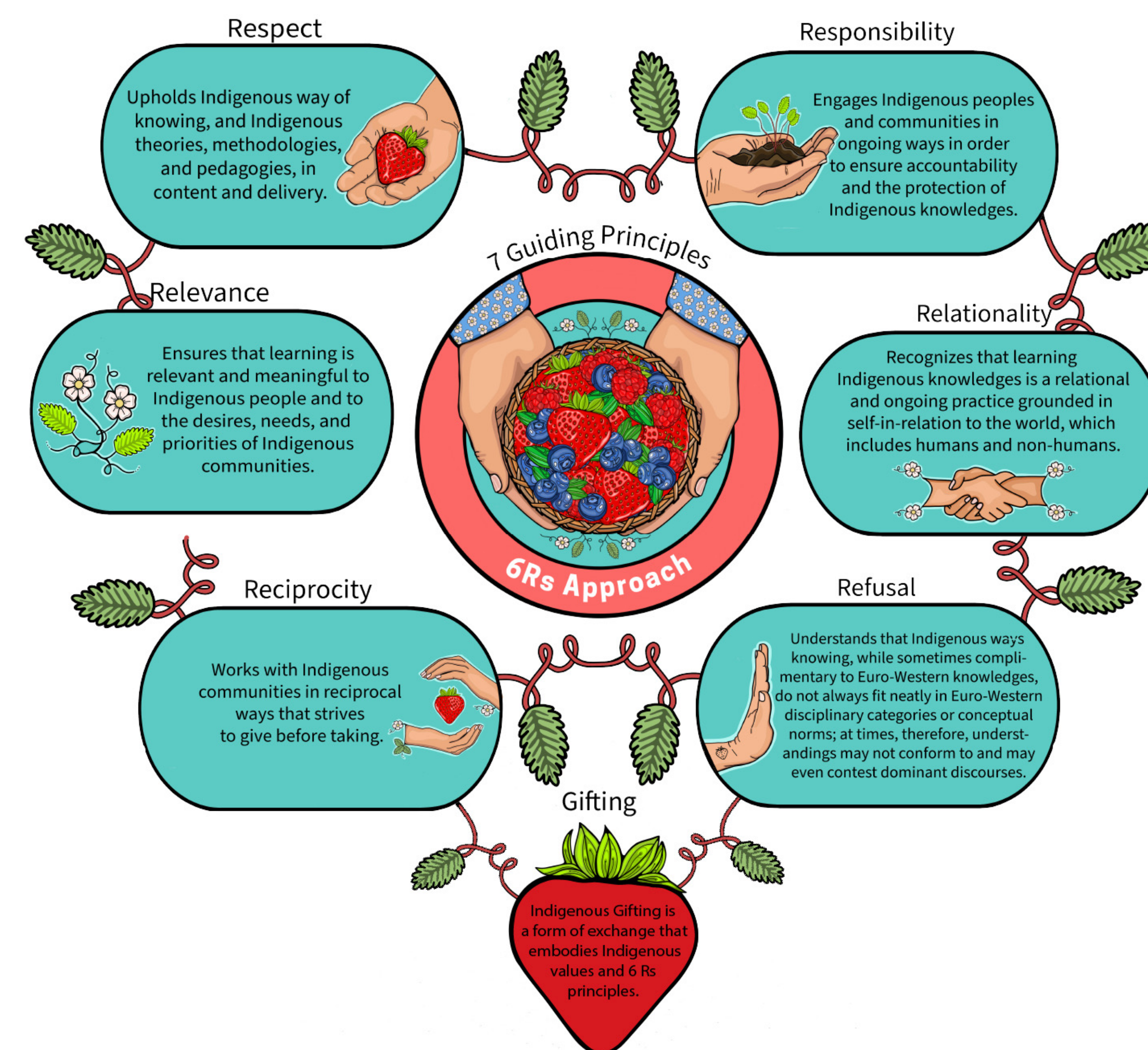
Candace Brunette-Debassige <ul style="list-style-type: none">Orientation to Indigenous KnowledgesIndigenous LeadershipIndigenous Research, Part 1Indigenous Research, Part 2	Jennifer Komorowski <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous Women and Resilience
Sakihitowin Awasis <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous Lands, Spaces and Places	Sara Mai Chitty <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous Storytelling and Media Representation
Erica Neeganagwedgin <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous and Black Solidarities	Robyn Rowe <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous Sovereignty: Data, Governance, Justice, and the Land
	Melissa Schnaar <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indigenous Resistances

Project Goals

The project's overarching goal is to create a digital repository of Indigenous-led teaching resources (also referred to as bundles) that are shared with instructors for use in their classrooms. Every bundle focuses on an Indigenous topic and theme, centering around 3-4 learning outcomes (with connections to Western's learning outcomes) based in Indigenous scholarship. The project supports Indigenous Peoples' educational needs and desires for **better sovereignty over the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in university curriculum**. It also responds to the chronic systemic underrepresentation of Indigenous content across Western's curriculum (Brunette et al, 2022).

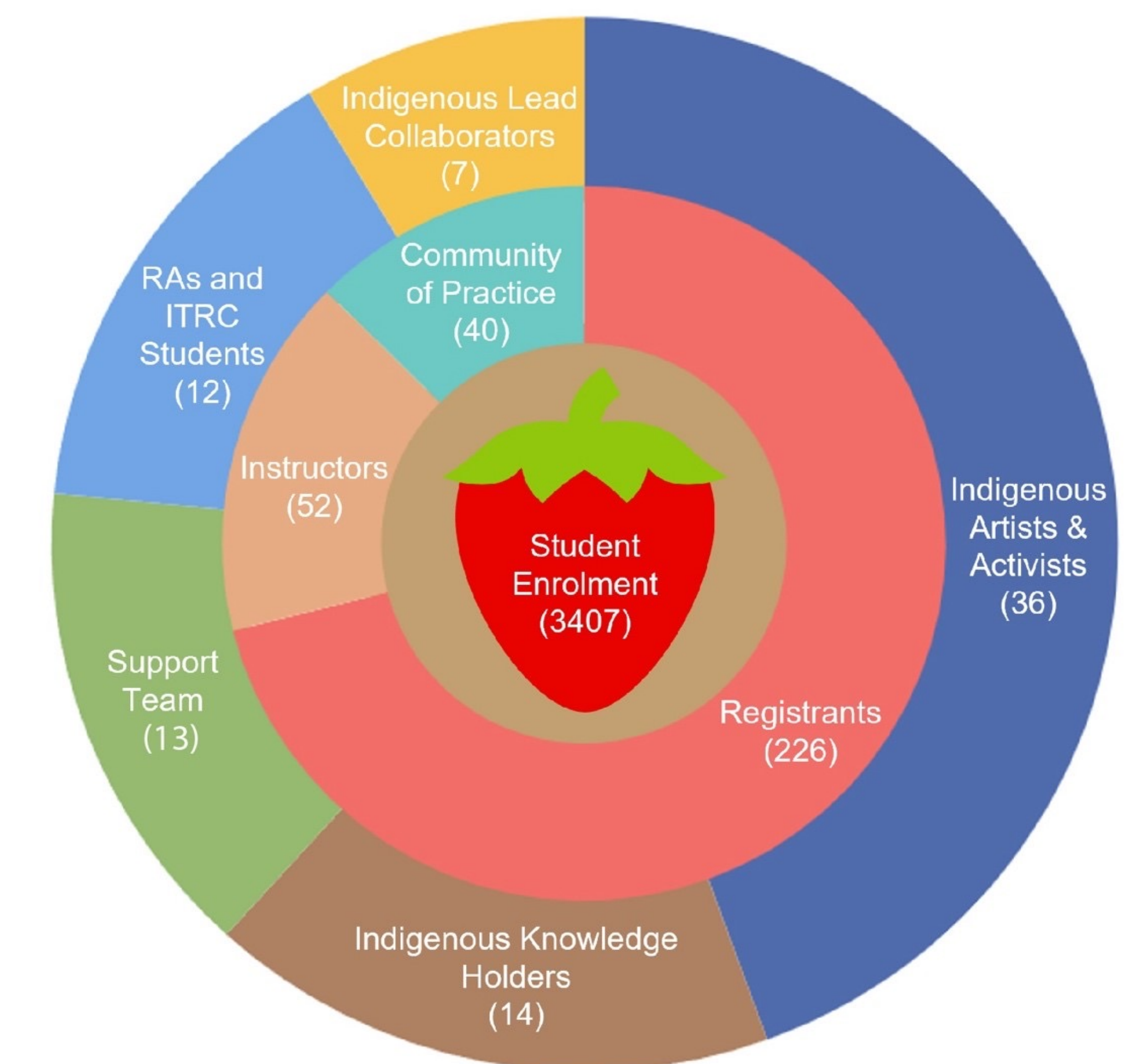
Collaborative Approach

The collaborative spirit unifying the Maatookiiying team centers around a 7 Principled Approach (below) which draws on Indigenous education scholarship, and the principles of **respect, relevance, responsibility, reciprocity** (Kirkness & Barnhart, 1991), **relationships, refusal** (McGregor et al, 2015), and the teaching of **gifting** among Anishinaabe people (Simpson, 2013).



As Indigenous knowledges are a relatively new inclusion in teaching in the academy, many instructors do not have a background in them, and so care is taken to **help ground instructors in the principles listed above**. Because of this approach, we consider instructors themselves to be learners/students within this project.

Before bundles are introduced to students within a course, instructors are first asked to engage with a series of online steps via an OWL Brightspace site. As instructors move through each step, they are prompted to reflect upon their own positionality, and how they can **use the bundles within their courses in a good way**. An optional community of practice for instructors engages with ongoing reflection.



Collaborators who engaged in development (outer circle) and implementation (inner circle), along with students who had a bundle embedded into their course (centre)

References

- Brunette-Debassige, C., Wakeham, P., Smithers-Graeme, C., Haque, A., & Chitty, S. M. (2022). Mapping Approaches to Decolonizing and Indigenizing the Curriculum at Canadian Universities: Critical Reflections on Current Practices, Challenges, and Possibilities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 13(3).
- Kirkness, V.J., & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and higher education: The four R's – respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 30(3), 1–15.
- McGregor, D., Restoule, J. P., & Johnston, R. (Eds.). (2018). *Indigenous research: Theories, practices, and relationships*. Canadian Scholars' Press.
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