



# So We Can All Thrive: The Importance of Indigenous Organizations' Support for Indigenous Post-Secondary Students

A thematic analysis of responses from 2,162 currently enrolled indigenous post-secondary students from the *Following The Path* survey, using qualitative responses to determine the significance of receiving funding from an Indigenous-specific funding body (like Indspire).

## Key Themes – Student Reflection on Indspire's Support

### Understanding Lived Experiences of Indigenous Students



Receiving funding from an Indigenous organization feels like being supported directly by family, relatives, or someone personally known and cared by.



Applicants felt more comfortable with Indigenous staff supporting and assessing applications, as they were perceived to have a deeper understanding of Indigenous students' experiences navigating post-secondary.

### Reciprocal Relationships: Ethical and Responsible Carings



Greater trust in Indigenous funders, who were seen to share common values and ethics.



Indigenous funders are perceived as more ethical, as Indigenous people are investing in each other for the benefit of shared success.



Supports from non-Indigenous organizations give a sense of creating relationships that reinforces power dynamics, with funders positioned as a superior to the recipient.

### Sense of Belonging to Larger Indigenous Community



Receiving funding from Indigenous organizations feels like recognition of their hard work and efforts by a larger community of Indigenous Peoples.



Support from an Indigenous organization provides a sense of cultural integrity; this type of funding can be seen as a contributing factor to Indigenous students' academic achievement.

*"It is important and meaningful to receive funding from an Indigenous organization like Indspire because it feels as though we have people in our corner who we are connected to and who understand us in a way that others may not. It is encouraging to know that we have support from people who see us for who we are."*

*"Receiving funding from Indigenous organizations is more meaningful because it feels as if my community and family are supporting my academic journey. It is not just financial support but the emotional support that my community believes in my goals and is guiding my path to success."*

*"IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME BECAUSE I FEEL DEEPLY HUMBLLED AND THANKFUL FOR MY ANCESTORS FOR EVERYTHING THEY SURVIVED AND FOUGHT FOR. NOW I AM HERE AS THEIR LEGACY AND WHEN I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE FUNDING THROUGH INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS, IT FEELS LIKE EVERYTHING THEY DID UP UNTIL NOW, ALL THE STRUGGLED THEY FOUGHT, IT WAS ALL WORTH IT."*

