



## CENTER FOR INDIAN COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT



FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF MINNEAPOLIS

### SURVEY OVERVIEW

The Survey of Native Nations provides tribal governments with data they can use to identify areas of economic opportunity and to communicate their needs to policymakers. Through the U.S. Census Bureau's Census of Governments, state and local governments have long had access to summary data on revenues and expenditures that they can use to evaluate themselves in relation to their peers. The Survey of Native Nations addresses a data gap in Indian Country by providing comparable information for tribal governments.



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# Survey of Native Nations

The Survey of Native Nations is conducted by the Center for Indian Country Development (CICD), a research and policy institute based at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, an independent bank within the Federal Reserve System. In 2022, CICD undertook a long-term initiative to address persistent data gaps in Indian Country that limit tribes' ability to communicate their economic contributions and articulate their needs. Since that time CICD has introduced a suite of new [data tools](#) to increase the quality and accessibility of economic data available to Indian Country.

As part of this initiative, CICD heard from tribal leaders across Indian Country that they needed better information on how other tribes manage revenues and expenditures in order to identify areas of opportunity and discuss their priorities with policymakers.

To address this need, CICD piloted the Survey of Native Nations with tribal governments in Montana in summer 2023. Feedback from tribal leaders participating in the pilot was used to streamline and refine the survey. In 2024, CICD is offering the survey to additional tribes and Native organization partners interested in bringing the survey to their members.

### BENEFITS TO TRIBES

The Survey of Native Nations gathers information on tribal revenues and expenditures, allowing CICD research and policy experts to analyze tribal financial data in the context of data from other tribes and local and state governments. Participating tribal governments receive reports summarizing their data in comparison with similar data for other governmental entities in their region, as data availability permit.

Tribal government partners can use their reports to inform conversations with local governments, to communicate their tribe's economic contributions to lawmakers and their own citizens, and to describe their policy needs. Reports may also serve as or complement tribal economic impact studies. Native

organizations interested in offering the survey to their tribal government members can use key findings from their member tribes to communicate policy needs and initiatives to lawmakers and other stakeholders.

More broadly, CICD intends the Survey of Native Nations to collectively benefit Indian Country through the provision of quality and secure tribal government financial data which can be difficult and expensive to collect. Over time, CICD anticipates the survey will contribute to growing a secure data ecosystem that advances tribal economic self-determination and data sovereignty by providing data that are useful and accessible to tribes.

## DATA USE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The Federal Reserve System has a long and well-established track record of secure data collection and handling. The Survey of Native Nations is conducted in accordance with CICD's [Principles for Research and Data Use](#), which prioritize tribal data sovereignty and the safeguarding of tribal data stewarded by CICD. Information gathered through the survey is aggregated and anonymized to shield the identity of specific tribes and small groups of tribes while allowing for meaningful comparisons and insights. Protecting tribal government partners' data is CICD's highest priority.

## BECOMING A SURVEY PARTNER

In alignment with its mission within the Federal Reserve System, CICD offers the Survey of Native Nations and related reports to participating tribal governments at no monetary cost. Native organization partners will also receive aggregate reports for their member tribes. Finance and administrative staff approved by the tribe to complete the survey receive onboarding and support related to CICD's data-security protocols and survey completion.

## ABOUT CICD

Based at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, CICD is a research and policy institute focused on Native economies. We work to advance the economic self-determination and prosperity of Native nations and Indigenous communities through actionable data and research that make substantial contributions to public policy.

As part of the Federal Reserve System, CICD is independent and our research services and data products are not for profit. Our work is guided by a [leadership council](#) of Native professionals who include key representatives from national and regional Native organizations, tribal leadership, and tribal economic development and finance practitioners.

## CONTACT US

CICD has a team to support your participation in the survey. For more information, contact:

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