

NCUIH Commends MacArthur Foundation's Native Self-Determination Program and Urges Philanthropy to Invest Boldly in Indian Country

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 22, 2025) – The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) proudly applauds the MacArthur Foundation's launch of its [Native Self-Determination Program](#)—a transformational commitment to Indigenous leadership and community-driven solutions. This announcement comes at a critical moment for Native communities, who are continuing to face compounding public health, economic, and political crises.

"The MacArthur Foundation is setting a powerful precedent for what trust-based, community-led philanthropy should be," said Francys Crevier (Algonquin), CEO of the National Council of Urban Indian Health. "At a time when Native communities are enduring unprecedented public health underinvestment and ongoing federal divestment, we need courageous, values-driven action from philanthropy. We call on all funders to follow MacArthur's lead—now is the time to invest in Indian Country like never before. Vast wealth has been built on our lands; now is the moment to reinvest in our people. While the average American life expectancy exceeds 70 years, some of our relatives are still fighting to reach 50. Less than 1% of philanthropic dollars goes to Native organizations. Philanthropy must step up to close this gap in this critical moment—because our lives depend on it."

The MacArthur Foundation's program builds upon \$109 million in past investments and aims to deepen Indigenous influence across philanthropic practices.

NCUIH has advocated for serious investments in Indian Country as the federal government divests from significant programs. As the premier national organization representing the health needs of over American Indian and Alaska Native people living in urban areas, NCUIH stands ready to partner with MacArthur and other funders interested in advancing Indigenous priorities.

During NCUIH's Public Health Emergency webinar hosted by Grantmakers In Health ([watch here](#)) in November 2024, they emphasized the urgent need for sustained and strategic investment to prevent the unraveling of decades of progress in Native health. "This is not just a crisis—[this is an emergency](#)," Crevier said during the webinar. "Lives are on the line, and philanthropy must act urgently."

A Call to Action

Philanthropy has a critical role in protecting Native health, restoring community wellness, and sustaining self-determination in the face of historic and ongoing disinvestment. NCUIH urges all funders to match MacArthur's commitment—to listen, to trust, and to invest deeply in Native communities now. NCUIH stands ready to support all philanthropy in developing solutions that work for Indian Country.

About NCUIH

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is a national representative for the 41 Urban Indian Organizations contracting with the Indian Health Service under the *Indian Health Care Improvement Act*. NCUIH is devoted to the support and development of high quality and accessible health and public health services for American Indian and Alaska Native people living in urban areas.

NCUIH respects and supports Tribal sovereignty and the unique government-to-government relationship between our Tribal Nations and the United States. NCUIH works to support those federal laws, policies, and procedures that respect and uplift Tribal sovereignty and the government-to-government relationship. NCUIH does not support any federal law, policy, or procedure that infringes upon or in any way diminishes Tribal sovereignty or the government-to-government relationship.

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