



National Autism Network Standing Advisory Council Expression of Interest Overview

About the National Autism Network

The National Autism Network (the Network) is a new, independent, community-led initiative supported by funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada. It was created to ensure that Autistic people and their families play a central role in shaping community priorities and driving action to bring Canada's Autism Strategy to life.

The Network brings together Autistic people, families, subject matter experts, and interest-holders from across the country to help shape a future where Autistic people can truly thrive in Canada.

Network Mission

Driven by Autistic people and their families, the National Autism Network informs Canada's Autism Strategy and helps shape a future where Autistic people thrive.

Network Vision

A Canada where the lived and living experiences of Autistic people and their families shape policies, systems, and communities to ensure full inclusion, equity, and opportunity at every stage of life.

Information about Canada's National Autism Strategy is available at:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/canada-autism-strategy.html>

What Is a Standing Advisory Council?

The Standing Advisory Councils are groups of people with lived or living experience who help guide the work of the Network. Their advice helps make sure that Canada's Autism Strategy is inclusive, fair, and based on real experiences.

There are three Standing Advisory Councils.

- **Autistic Advisory Council** – For Autistic people (first-person experience)
- **Family Advisory Council** – For family members (second-person experience)

- **Indigenous Advisory Council** – For First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Urban Indigenous people

Overview

The three Standing Advisory Councils will make sure that people with real-life experience help shape how Canada's Autism Strategy is put into action.

Each council will follow the Network's mission and vision and align with the principles of:

- *Nothing About Us Without Us* – making sure Autistic people and families are involved in all decisions.
- *Intersectionality and Diversity* – respecting all identities and experiences.
- *Distinctions-Based Approaches* – honouring the unique needs and rights of First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Urban Indigenous Peoples.

The councils will help identify gaps in the system and bring attention to marginalized groups that are often overlooked or excluded. They will ensure that the government hears directly from people with lived and living experience, and that the Network's recommendations on autism-related policies and services are inclusive, practical, and based on real-life experiences.

- Autistic First-Person Advisory Council will include a diversity of:
 - regional representations from across the country including from rural and remote communities;
 - life-course representations;
 - level of need for supports;
 - communication styles;
 - economic and educational background; and
 - experience.
- Family Second-Person Advisory Council will include a diversity of:
 - relationship to the Autistic person;
 - regional representations from across the country including from rural and remote communities;
 - life-course representations;
 - level of support required by the Autistic family member;
 - economic and educational background; and
 - experience.
- Indigenous Advisory Council will include a diversity of:
 - first- and second-person experience;
 - Indigenous backgrounds;
 - regional representations from across the country including from rural and remote communities and on- and off reserve;
 - life-course representation;
 - economic and education background; and
 - experience.
- The Indigenous Advisory Council will also:

- Ensure distinctions-based, Indigenous-led approaches to autism policy and services.
- Bring forward Indigenous ways of knowing, community-based solutions, and self-determined priorities.
- Address unique challenges in remote, northern, and culturally distinct communities.

Time Commitment and Support

The Network offers financial compensation to participate on any of the three Standing Advisory Councils.

The estimated time commitment for each council is approximately 42 hours a year, which includes up to 6 meetings per year for a total of 7 hours including preparation time, meeting time, and follow-up.

Once the new Network team is hired, the councils be supported by a dedicated Committee and Council Engagement Coordinator, who will assist with scheduling, background materials, and follow-up to help make participation on a council smooth and well-supported.

How to apply

Anyone who identifies as belonging to one of the council categories listed above is encouraged to apply.

To apply, you need to be a current member of the Network. The membership application is quick and easy, and the Expression of Interest (EOI) forms are combined with the membership application.

You will be asked questions about your background and experiences. You may ask a support person to help you complete the form. Please note, when applying you will also be asked to share some personal information that relates to the council you are applying for.

To start an online application, go to <https://redcap.link/kfxofq9k>

Expression of Interest Open to Applications Until September 15, 2025

Alternative Application Methods

If you prefer not to complete the form online, you may apply in other ways. Please email info@nan-rna.ca to let us know what works best for you. Options include:

- Scheduling an interview
- Emailing a completed Word or PDF version of the application

- Mailing a completed Word or PDF form
- Submitting your application through video, audio, PowerPoint, or another multi-media format.
- Suggest another format that will help you best share your information.

How to Learn More / Questions

To ask questions or learn more about serving on an Advisory Council, email: info@nan-rna.ca