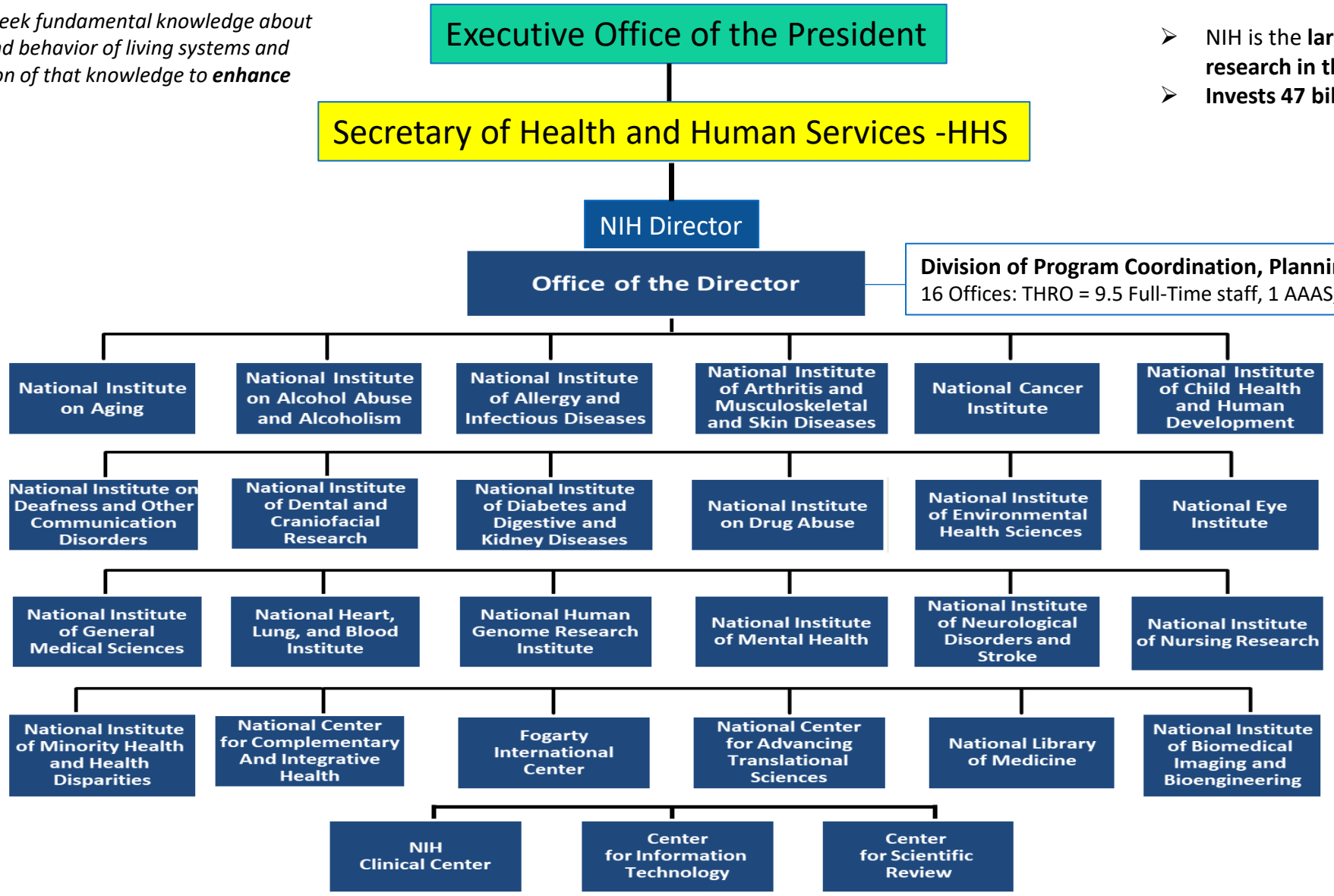
# 27 Institutes and Centers (ICs) – Each Has Its Own Mission and Budget

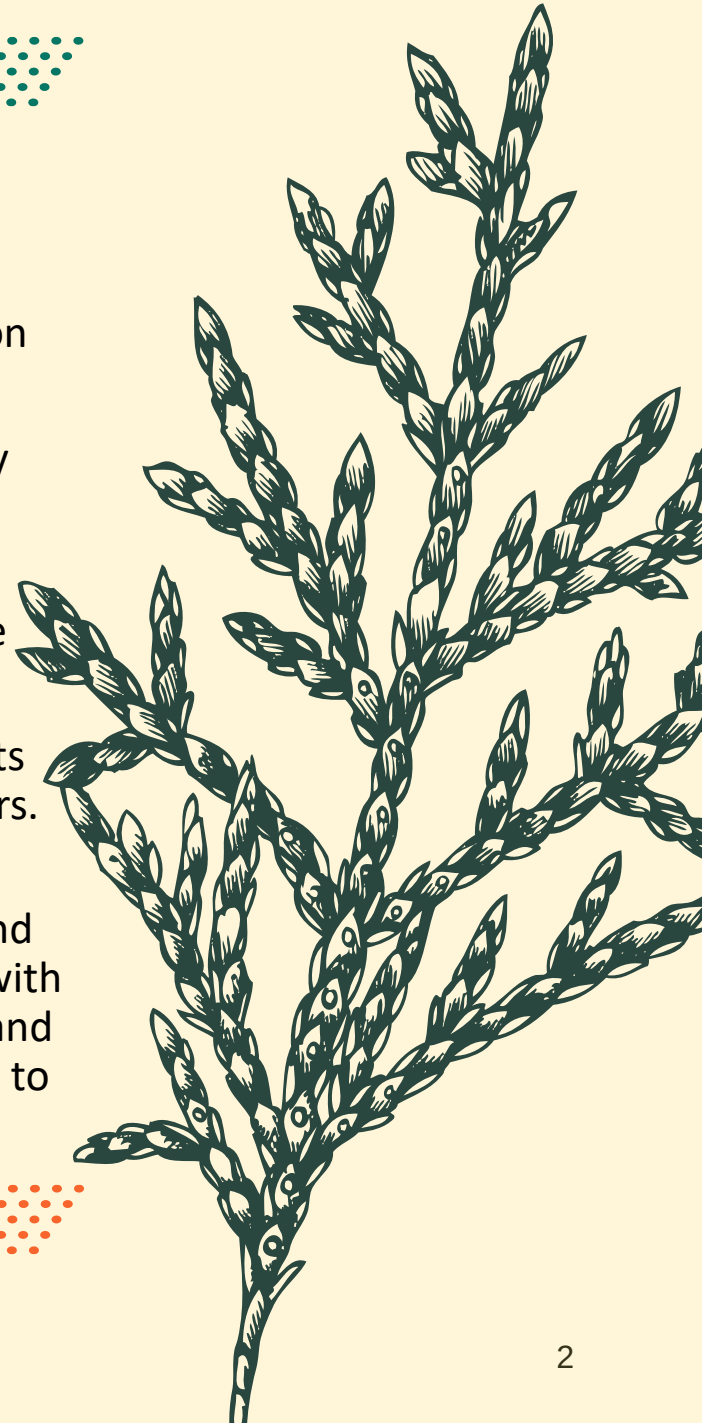
- ***Mission:*** *To seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to* ***enhance health...***




- NIH is the **largest public funder of health research in the world**
- **Invests 47 billion annually in medical research**

# We're Guided by Our THRO Values: CEDAR

- **Creativity:** Moving beyond conventional approaches to science, we center innovative Indigenist-centered methods and knowledges to ensure science drives sustainable population health change.
- **Ethics**: We maintain the highest standards of professional and ethical behavior; are culturally responsive, reflexive, and aware; and demonstrate transparency and honesty in every transaction.
- **Determination**: While recognizing and respecting the diversity of our tribal communities, we honor Tribal sovereignty and AI/AN rights to self-determination.
- **Accountability:** We hold ourselves accountable for the quality, timeliness, and lasting impacts of our work-- and for the commitments we make to tribal communities and research partners. Accountability engenders trust, builds solidarity, and strengthens partnerships.
- **Respect and Relational Responsibilities**: We respect and value unique and diverse talents and experiences of our Tribal communities and research partners. We fulfill our responsibilities with compassion, humility, dignity, and equanimity. Through our efforts, we honor past, present and future generations; are attentive to ancestral, cultural, and traditional obligations; and strive to be a healthful and good ancestor in all that we do.



# VISION: Tribal Health Research Office (THRO)

**Thriving Tribal Nations and AI/AN communities where Native-led science, strong research infrastructure, and an empowered Indigenous workforce advance Tribal health sovereignty, nurture healthy AI/AN lives, families, and communities, and sustain health-promoting environments for generations.**



AI/AN health sovereignty refers to Tribal Nations' and AI/ANs' inherent authority to set health priorities, govern research, and steward their data and knowledge systems. In the NIH context, it calls for research partnerships that respect Tribal governance, advance Native-led science, and build sustainable research capacity and infrastructure.





# Mission

To collaborate with Tribal Nations and across NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices, DHHS, and other Federal agencies to strategically lead, consult, coordinate, and co-fund American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) health research; strengthen research capacity in Native communities; advance NIH policies in alignment with Tribal research statutes, laws, and governance; and cultivate Native science and a skilled research workforce that promotes Tribal health sovereignty, builds thriving AI/AN lives and communities, and enhances health-promoting environments.

# Key Aspects of the THRO Mission

- Serves as NIH's representative for the government-to-government relationship with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities across the U.S. and Territories.
- **Provides expert guidance** to NIH programs and offices on honoring and navigating this government-to-government relationship.
- Acts as the **central authority** and **collaborative, synergistic hub** for all Tribal and American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) health research, programming, and training activities within NIH.
- **Coordinates NIH AI/AN efforts** across Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Tribal Operating Divisions and other federal agencies and branches of government, including the Department of the Interior (DOI) and HHS IEA Tribal Affairs.
- **Leads NIH-wide policy** development and implementation in partnership with OSP and OGC on AI/AN research, ethics, and data governance policies, as well as workforce training.
- **Collaborates with NIH Institutes**, Centers, Offices (ICOs), the NIH Office of the Director, HHS, and Tribal Nations to ensure compliance with federal law and respect for Tribal research laws, customs, and ordinances.
- **Co-funds**, **leads, and develops innovative research and training initiatives** in partnership with NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs) that align with Tribal priorities and strengthen Tribal health.
- **Oversees** the NIH Tribal Advisory Committee, Tribal Consultations, and AI/AN intramural Institutional Review Board (IRB) review in partnership with NIH's Office of Human Subjects Research Protections (OHSRP).

# Strategic Framing Option for NIH Planning

**Supporting Tribal Health Sovereignty requires NIH To…**

- Honor Tribal governance and Consultation processes
- Promote Tribal data governance and Indigenous Knowledge protection
- Increase Native Principal Investigators and research leadership (grantsmanship)
- Co-Develop research agendas with Tribal Nations
- Align funding mechanisms to support Tribal and AI/AN self-determined priorities

**Core Elements of Health Sovereignty**

- Self-determination in Health Priorities
  - AI/ANs set research and care priorities
- Governance and Policy Authority
  - Authority to design, implement and regulate health research systems and interventions
- Data Sovereignty
  - Control over collection, ownership, access, and use of Tribal Health Data
- Cultural and Knowledge Sovereignty
  - Protection and advancement of IK systems, health and healing practices, and ways of knowing.
- Research Self-Governance
  - Authority to approve, guide, and benefit from research conducted with Tribal communities
- Sustainable Infrastructure and Workforce
  - Building and sustaining Native-led health and research capacity

# 5 Element PILLARS

**At THRO, we transform culturally informed discovery into Native health sovereignty by:**

- **Advancing Indigenist Research (AIR):** Elevating Indigenous methodologies and knowledge systems to guide health research that honors Tribal sovereignty and priorities.
- **Cultivating Workforce Capacity (WIND):** Strengthening Native research leadership and building internal and external workforce pipelines to sustain Indigenous science.
- **Watering Seeds of Tribal Engagement and Consultation (WATER):** Nurturing government-to-government relationships through meaningful, ongoing Tribal collaboration, Consultation, and respect.
- **Blazing New Paths for Strategic Initiatives, Policies, and Collaborations (FIRE):** Driving innovative policies, programs, and partnerships that ignite progress toward activating and achieving Native health sovereignty.
- **Cultivating culturally grounded research and innovative solution-focused health interventions (EARTH)**: Developing thriving AI/AN communities through nature-based interventions, culturally derived health initiatives, and research that enhances health-promoting environments, leveraging the healing power of land, water, place, and natural resources to achieve lasting health sovereignty.

# Strategic Pillars for the NIH Tribal Health Research Office



**Tribal Engagement, Consultation, and Sovereignty – Water-sustains life/ replenishes**

We foster authentic government-to-government partnerships with Tribal Nations, respecting Tribal governance, self-determination, and research statutes to guide all collaborations and policies.



**Native-Led Science and Research Capacity Building – Wind –is transformative- carries seeds and nurtures growth and development**

We strengthen and expand Indigenous-led science, research infrastructure, and workforce training, empowering AI/AN researchers and communities to lead health research grounded in their priorities and knowledge systems.



**Policy Advancement and Alignment – Air- represents clarity, vision and insight**

We develop and implement NIH policies aligned with Tribal laws and customs, advance ethical research practices, protect Indigenous data sovereignty, and sustain Tribal health research ecosystems.



**Cross-Agency Coordination and Collaboration – Fire ignites transformation, innovation, and renewal**

We blaze new paths through interagency coordination, partnerships, and strategic initiatives that maximize resources, reduce duplication, and address AI/AN health disparities comprehensively.



**Health Sovereignty and Environment Enhancement – Earth – grounds, heals, and restores life.**

We promote thriving AI/AN communities through land-based interventions, culturally derived health initiatives, and research that enhances health-promoting environments, leveraging the healing power of land, place, and natural resources to achieve lasting health equity

# Measurable Objectives

**Native-Led Science and Research Capacity Building**

- Increase the number of AI/AN-led research projects funded by NIH by 25% over the next 3 years.
- Expand research training programs for AI/AN scholars by 30% within 5 years.
- Establish at least five new Tribal-based research infrastructure projects within 3 years.
- OTHERS….
- OLPA and Congressional communications

# Questions and Discussion

- Key health disparity areas
  - Nutrition/diet, exercise/activity and obesity/diabetes prevention
  - Priority areas? Priority focus (prevention; topic areas)
  - Organized sport/traditional sport initiative
  - Other priorities or points of discussion
- Key THRO Infrastructure Development– growing THRO's infrastructure to support SP goals – staffing, budget
- Key Policy Foci
- Moving forward…
  - TAC Strategic Planning sub-committee (would like 5 TAC and/or TAC Tas) – will meet monthly
  - Strategic Planning retreat for TAC?
  - Subject Matter Experts?