

**National Institutes of Health (NIH) Tribal Consultation on
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) Resource Center
for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC)**

This document provides an overview for Tribal leaders and their designees to participate in the upcoming in-person NIH Tribal Consultation on the **National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) Resource Center for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC)** initiative to take place on Tuesday, October 20, 2026 from 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. PT at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) 83rd Annual Convention in Palm Springs, CA.

National Institutes of Health

The NIH mission is to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and reduce illness and disability. Please visit the NIH [website](#) for more information. The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) leads scientific research to improve minority health and reduce health disparities in the United States and its territories. Please visit the NIMHD [website](#) for more information.

Purpose of Consultation

NIMHD is preparing to renew the Resource Center for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC) funding opportunity through a new competition. The RC-TEC is a single center that provides technical assistance and support to strengthen the research and data science capacity of the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs). The purpose of this consultation is to foster ongoing collaboration and to seek input from Tribal Nations and organizations in the development of a funding opportunity that reflects the research priorities and cultural approaches important to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities, honors Tribal data sovereignty, and ensures the most effective and impactful implementation of the responsibilities associated with the TECs.

Tribal Consultation is a reflection of NIMHD's commitment to the relationship between the NIH and Tribal Nations and to the principle that decisions affecting AI/AN communities should be informed by AI/AN voices. NIMHD remains dedicated to upholding Tribal sovereignty through ongoing engagement with Tribal Nations. This Tribal Consultation is designed to solicit input from Tribal leaders and their designees. The feedback during these Tribal consultations are essential to shaping initiative processes.

Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs)

The TECs, established in 1996 serve AI/AN populations through the collection and analysis of health surveillance data, maintenance of patient registries, evaluation of public health interventions, and mobilization of emergency response to public health crises. Each TEC serves multiple Tribal communities or urban Indian populations and are ideally positioned to contribute significantly to the evidence base and scientific research literature on AI/AN health, though they vary in the availability of scientific staff to conduct research projects.

NIMHD historically provided support for the TEC program through the Indian Health Service in the form of administrative supplements to each TEC. To better connect this support with NIMHD's mission and priorities, a TEC Resource Center was established in 2021 through a cooperative agreement to provide focused technical assistance and support to enhance research and data science capacity for health research focused on AI/AN populations. This Tribal consultation seeks guidance on a new competition to renew that effort.

Resource Center for the Tribal Epidemiology Centers (RC-TEC)

The renewed RC-TEC funding opportunity will support a single resource center to enhance research infrastructure and capacity at the TECs. Anticipated activities may include, but not limited to:

- Providing support directly to each TEC to enhance capacity to engage in data collection, compilation, analysis, and reporting, including support for personnel, training, and/or information technology infrastructure related to the TEC's data needs.
- Providing technical assistance to the TECs regarding research design, methodology, data collection, curation, and analysis through direct consultation with individual TECs.
- Offering research skill development through seminars, workshops, and/or other activities that promote career enhancement, including a sustained mentoring program for investigators based in or closely affiliated with a TEC.
- Implementing a Pilot Project Program that provides opportunities for post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty, and other early-stage investigators at the TECs and collaborating institutions to develop research training skills.
- Disseminating information about NIH and other Federal research funding, training, and mentorship opportunities.
- Maintaining a listing of shareable data resources generated by the TECs, along with data sharing policies and requirements, to foster collaboration across TECs and with external researchers, while honoring Tribal data sovereignty and data privacy. To honor these principles, the RC-TEC will not be responsible for maintaining a data repository.

Eligibility is anticipated to be open to all types of institutions, with applications especially encouraged from institutions with current or past TEC awards or a history of collaboration with one or more TECs.

Use of Tribal Input

NIMHD remains dedicated to collaborating with Tribal Nations to foster inclusivity and ensure direct benefits for AI/AN communities. We honor Tribal sovereignty and prioritize your perspectives. Your feedback will be instrumental in shaping this upcoming initiative, with a comprehensive summary of the input gathered and shared following the consultation. We encourage you to send written testimony, comments, or questions to NIHTribalConsultation@nih.gov and courtesy copy to angela.fernandez@nih.gov and susan.joseph2@nih.gov by end of day on November 4, 2026. For NIMHD specific programmatic questions, please contact Dr. Angela Fernandez and Dr. Susan Joseph at angela.fernandez@nih.gov and susan.joseph2@nih.gov.

Logistics and Participation:

Who should attend: Tribal leaders or their designees

Date: Tuesday, October 20th, 2026

Time: 4:30p.m. - 6:00p.m. PST

Location:

- **In-person:** at the Palm Springs Convention Center, 277 N Avenida Caballeros, Palm Springs, CA 92262.
- Virtual: Please visit the NIH Tribal Consultation website at <https://dpcpsi.nih.gov/thro/tribal-consultations> for Zoom registration information.

Additional Resources

- Tribal Epidemiology Centers (list of the 12 TECs): <https://tribalepicenters.org/12-tecs/>
- Indian Health Service: <https://www.ihs.gov/>
- NIH: <https://www.nih.gov/>
- NIMHD: <https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/>
- Expired RFA-MD-21-003 (original RC-TEC funding opportunity): <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-MD-21-003.html>