

Did You Know?

National Indigenous History Month 2021

Did You Know? is a series run by the University of Waterloo Indigenous Initiatives Office for the duration of Indigenous History Month 2021. "Did You Know" posts were uploaded weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays, featuring information on various topics pertaining to Indigenous histories in Canada. Please share this resource widely.

THE INUIT TAIPIRIIT KANATAMI



Map of Inuit Nunangat.

Inuit are an Indigenous People living primarily in [Inuit Nunangat](#), the Inuit homeland. The majority of their population reside in 51 communities spread across Inuit Nunangat and they have lived in their homeland since time immemorial. Inuit communities are also among the most culturally resilient in North America with around 60% of Inuit reporting an ability to converse in [Inuktitut](#) (the Inuit language).

Inuit Nunangat is comprised of four Inuit regions in Canada. The term "Inuit Nunangat" is a Canadian Inuit term that includes land, water, and ice. Inuit regard their homeland's land, water, and ice to be essential to their culture and way of life.

Inuit Nunangat is a vast region which includes the Inuvialuit Settlement Regions (Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Québec), and Nunatsiavut (Northern Labrador).

The reason to form a national Inuit organization evolved from shared concern among Inuit leaders about the status of land and resource ownership in Inuit Nunangat. Industrial encroachment into Inuit Nunangat from projects such as the then proposed [Mackenzie Valley pipeline in the Northwest Territories](#) and the [James Bay Project in Northern Québec](#), prompted community leaders to take action.

The [Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#) (ITK), formerly known as the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada ("Inuit will be united"), was founded in February 1971 by seven Inuit community leaders at a meeting in Toronto. The ITK now serves as the national voice protecting and advancing the rights and interests of all Inuit in Canada.

In 2001, ITC changed its name to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, which means "Inuit are united in Canada." This name change reflects the settlement of land claims agreements in all Inuit regions following the Labrador Inuit Association's signing of an [Agreement-in-Principal for the Labrador land claims agreement](#).

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