

## Career Opportunity

### Director of Indigenous Health Research at Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute

The [Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute](#) (VCHRI) invites applications for the position of Director of Indigenous Health Research. The appointment is for an initial term of one (1) year with the possibility of renewal, subject to satisfactory review. The anticipated start date is April 1, 2024.

VCHRI is the research arm of Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and a close partner of the University of British Columbia (UBC). It is the home of nationally and internationally recognized research centres and programs conducting cutting edge research that aims to improve health outcomes. VCHRI is also known for its breadth and depth of science from bench side to bedside, technology transfer, incubating spinoff companies, and a central hub for research training, recruitment and retention of future leaders.

### Job/Position Summary

The Director of Indigenous Health Research will lead in the development of an Indigenous Health Research Unit, strategic initiatives to advance the health of Indigenous communities in BC in alignment with the priorities of VCH and Indigenous community partners. Collaborating closely with the UBC, the successful candidate will lead and coordinate the strategic direction, operations, and collaborative initiatives of the VCHRI Indigenous Health Research Unit, to promote Indigenous health equity, cultural safety, and self-determination while fostering research excellence and community partnerships. This position requires strong leadership, strategic planning, and exceptional collaboration skills to drive impactful research efforts and foster partnerships with Indigenous communities, researchers, and stakeholders.

### Organizational Status

The Director of Indigenous Health Research reports to the Executive Director, VCHRI and collaborates with VCHRI leaders, centre and program directors.

### Responsibilities

- Education and Training:
  - Develop and deliver programs on Indigenous health research methodologies, cultural competency, and ethical considerations.
  - Develop training materials to ensure all health researchers are aware of best practices to engage Indigenous partners and design research in a culturally safe way.
  - Build capacity within the VCHRI research community by providing guidance, mentorship resources and support to researchers and staff engaged in Indigenous health research.
  - Develop metrics to understand existing partnerships with Indigenous communities and identify areas of need for development of new educational and outreach tools.
- Research Support:
  - Identify funding opportunities and develop large scale grant proposals to support Indigenous health research activities.
  - Facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations and partnerships to address complex health issues affecting Indigenous communities.
  - Ensure compliance with ethical standards, regulatory requirements, and Indigenous research principles.

- Provide grant development support related to Indigenous health research and engaging Indigenous communities.
- Provide support for grant and project design to advance Indigenous health research in the VCHRI research community.
- Collaborate with research programs and centres at VCHRI to ensure Indigenous community priorities are embedded in research activities.
- Community Engagement and Advocacy:
  - Facilitate partnerships and collaborations between researchers and Indigenous communities, ensuring community-driven and culturally relevant research.
  - Ensure researchers adhere to First Nations principles of OCAP (ownership, control, access, and possession) in the collection and use of First Nations data.
  - Advocate for the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices into healthcare policies, programs, and services, in consultation with First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and other Indigenous stakeholders.
- Strategic Priorities and Collaboration:
  - Foster partnerships and collaborations between researchers and Indigenous communities, promoting community-driven research that is culturally relevant and responsive.
  - Ensure alignment of research programs with VCH Indigenous Health strategic priorities.
- Cultural Safety and Ethical Guidelines:
  - Develop and implement cultural safety protocols and ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous communities, emphasizing respect, reciprocity and collaboration.
- Partnerships and Network Development:
  - Foster partnerships with research institutes, health authorities, Indigenous organizations, government agencies, and community-based organizations to address Indigenous health disparities.
  - Build and maintain partnerships with strategic partners (FNHA, UBC Indigenous Research Support Initiative, FOM Centre for Excellence in Indigenous Health).
- Capacity building:
  - Link evidence and data through vehicles such as Learning Health Systems, to provide recommendations for concrete actions and system transformation supporting research priorities, policies and guidelines.
  - Cultivate partnerships with internal and external stakeholders, funding agencies, philanthropic organizations, and industry partners to develop resources to support Indigenous health research, with FNHA's participation where possible.
  - Develop internal funding opportunities to advance areas of strategic interest in Indigenous health.
  - Create training programs to increase participation of underrepresented Indigenous community members in health research programs.
- Knowledge Mobilization:
  - Develop strategies for sharing knowledge and best practices related to Indigenous health research within the research community and beyond.
  - Develop data governance strategies to support Indigenous health research and advance strategic priorities, in accordance with OCAP and with FNHA's expertise and guidance where relevant.

### **Consequence of Error/Judgment**

The Director of Indigenous Health, VCHRI is a senior leadership position critical to the success of the organization. Lack of tact, knowledge, diplomacy or sensitivity in all aspects of education, communication and engagement with members of the Indigenous Health community could result in damaged relationships, credibility, a lack of cultural safety. Inappropriate consultation could trigger feelings of

oppression, colonization, anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination. The nature of the work involves a sensitive and high level of judgment and decision-making.

### **Supervision Received**

The Director of Indigenous Health reports to the Executive Director, VCHRI and is expected to exercise a considerable amount of judgment and initiative in duties and leadership responsibilities.

### **Supervision Given**

The Director of Indigenous Health will work with the Executive Director, the Institute Senior Leadership Team and Centre Directors and Programs to foster unity in an inclusive, team working environment.

### **Education/Work Experience**

The successful applicant experience and education equivalent to an advanced degree (Ph.D., MD, or equivalent) in a relevant field such as public health, epidemiology, Indigenous studies, or a health-related discipline. Demonstrated expertise in Indigenous health research, including experience working with Indigenous communities and applying Indigenous research methodologies. Comprehensive understanding of Indigenous culture and history in British Columbia and Canada, focusing on the Vancouver Coastal Health region's First Nations cultures, with input from FNHA.

### **Qualifications**

- Proven ability to foster respectful relationships and achieve cooperative goals through negotiation, facilitation, and consensus-building with diverse stakeholders.
- Familiarity with the Indigenous research practices, ethical engagement methods, and cultural protocols for building reciprocal relationships in decentralized institutions.
- Strong leadership skills with a track record of effectively leading interdisciplinary research teams and managing complex projects, with support and collaboration from FNHA and other partners.
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage diverse stakeholders and foster collaborative partnerships.
- Knowledge of ethical guidelines and best practices for conducting research with Indigenous communities, including the principles of community-based participatory research and cultural safety.
- Experience in grant writing, research funding, and resource mobilization.
- Experience working with Learning Health Systems
- Commitment to advancing Indigenous health equity, reconciliation, and decolonization efforts.
- Demonstrated understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories, and worldviews, with a commitment to cultural humility and respectful engagement.
- Ability to engage a diverse range of stakeholders with sensitivity and tact.
- Skilled in communicating with diplomacy and navigating complex situations including with partners with different opinions, or opinions in conflict with their own.

## Application Information

This is a part-time position. The candidate is expected to maintain their academic/clinical research program and fulfill other duties as required. This position is located within a health-care facility. Therefore, this position requires successful verification of full vaccination against Covid-19 provided prior to the start date, as required by the provincial health mandate.

Please submit an application including:

1. Cover letter
2. Detailed curriculum vitae
3. Vision document (1-2-page) describing your vision, leadership approach, strategic priorities for advancing Indigenous Health Research at VCHRI
4. Statement (maximum 1 page) that describes any current or planned engagements and contributions made to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in academic research context
5. Optional (max 5 recent, relevant publications)

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Review of applications will begin on March 15, 2024, and continue until the position is filled.

At VCHRI, we believe that attracting and sustaining a diverse workforce is key to the successful pursuit of excellence in research, innovation, and learning for all faculty, staff and students, and is essential to fostering an outstanding work environment. Our commitment to employment equity helps achieve inclusion and fairness, brings rich diversity to VCHRI as a workplace, and creates the necessary conditions for a rewarding career.

VCHRI is a world class innovator in research and ranked 4th as Canada's top Research Institutes. Our research focus is on innovation and discoveries that improve patient health, transform health systems, and directly impact health and economic outcomes.

**Our Vision:** Healthier lives through discovery

**Our Mission:** To lead and excel in the generation of health knowledge through discovery, education, application and evaluation.

**Our Values:** The adoption of core values is essential to executing strategies and decision-making as we work to realize our Vision and Mission:

*Integrity* - We hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards and moral principles.

*Accountability* - We manage our operations and services with transparency, efficiency and reliability.

*Collaboration* - We promote synergy, teamwork and partnerships.

*Equity* - We foster fairness, diversity and respect in the workplace and in our thinking.

*Community- and patient-focused* - We improve health outcomes and bring meaningful results to patients and the broader population.

Research funding empowers VCHRI to compete on a global scale and attract distinguished research clinicians and scientists from around the world. The VCHRI community — comprising over 2,400 members, including principal investigators, research staff and a diverse group of medical, graduate and post-graduate trainees — fosters a dynamic and thriving research ecosystem. Together with its University partner, VCHRI delivers innovative programs and conducts biomedical, clinical, health services and population health research.

The VCHRI campus is located on the traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations territory.

Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.

[vchri.ca](http://vchri.ca)