

MEDIA RELEASE



**FIRST NATIONS
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FNUniv and UNENE Partner to Advance Indigenous Leadership in Clean Energy and Nuclear Education

SASKATOON, SK — The First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv) and the University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering (UNENE) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that marks a new chapter in advancing nuclear and engineering sciences by weaving Indigenous and Western ways of being, knowing, and doing. The agreement strengthens Indigenous leadership, participation, and capacity in Canada's clean-energy and nuclear sectors.

The MOU was signed on October 21, 2025, at TCU Place in Saskatoon, on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. Leaders, faculty, and community representatives from both institutions gathered to celebrate a partnership rooted in reconciliation through education.

This partnership comes at a time when inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields is vital to Canada's transition toward cleaner, more sustainable energy systems. By linking FNUniv's cultural and educational leadership with UNENE's national network of 18 partner universities, this collaboration creates opportunities for Indigenous students and researchers to engage in nuclear science, environmental monitoring, and innovation from Indigenous perspectives.

Through this collaboration, FNUniv and UNENE will work together to:

- develop and deliver educational programs in nuclear science and engineering that integrate Indigenous worldviews;
- co-create learning resources that are culturally inclusive and technically rigorous;
- support student participation through mentorships, internships, and exchanges across UNENE's national network of 18 universities; and
- advance research and training opportunities focused on environmental stewardship, energy transition, and community well-being.

Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, President of the First Nations University of Canada, said the partnership embodies reconciliation in action.

“We are excited about this partnership as it recognizes the importance of Indigenous and Western knowledges as they relate to science, innovation, stewardship, sustainability. As we continue to progress into a rapidly changing and complex world, nuclear and engineering sciences, environmental monitoring, and clean energy advancement will need to emphasize the inextricable interconnectedness between humanity and the land – that the health and wellbeing of both are interrelated. FNUUniv and UNENE will be working together to create educational programs and learning experiences that will inspire students to help develop and implement, and advocate for cleaner sources of energy. Indigenous people are integral to this kind of progress in Canada.”

“UNENE is delighted to embark on this collaboration with the First Nations University of Canada, in a meaningful step toward building shared understanding and learning from one another. We deeply appreciate FNUUniv’s vision and leadership in engaging with the UNENE network, and we look forward to this journey of growth together, combining nuclear science and Indigenous ways of knowing to achieve common goals.”

Beyond education, the partnership will explore opportunities for community-engaged research and land-based learning, bridging academic and cultural approaches to energy, sustainability, and environmental protection. The institutions also plan to collaborate on public education initiatives that raise awareness of Indigenous perspectives in science and technology — highlighting the importance of balance, respect for the land, and long-term environmental responsibility.

An FNUUniv–UNENE working group will begin developing new courses, professional learning opportunities, and community-based programs that reflect both Indigenous and technical knowledge systems. These efforts will expand pathways for Indigenous youth into nuclear education, policy, and environmental monitoring — contributing to greater representation in Canada’s energy sector and supporting long-term goals of energy sovereignty and self-determination for Indigenous Peoples.

This collaboration positions FNUUniv as a national leader in inclusive clean-energy education, while reinforcing UNENE’s commitment to building a diverse and knowledgeable workforce for the future of nuclear innovation in Canada. Together, these institutions demonstrate how reconciliation and innovation can move forward hand in hand — uniting technology, education, and traditional knowledge for a sustainable energy future.

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About First Nations University of Canada

Established in 1976, the First Nations University of Canada is the country's only national First Nations-owned post-secondary institution. FNUniv is a unique place of learning that serves both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, delivering high-quality post-secondary education through the lens of Indigenous knowledge, languages, and traditions. Learn more at www.fnuniv.ca.

About the University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering (UNENE)

The University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering (UNENE), founded in 2002, is a network of Canadian and partner international universities offering nuclear engineering, science, and technology research and education programming. Its members also include Canadian industry participants and Canada's national nuclear science and technology institution. With its partners and funding organizations, UNENE works to advance nuclear knowledge, build capacity, and heighten the visibility of Canada's strength as a global partner, and to elevate the role of nuclear in advancing global sustainability, prosperity, and a clean-energy future. Learn more about UNENE at www.unene.ca.