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Indian Affairs Council

Agency Profile 1

https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/

AT A GLANCE

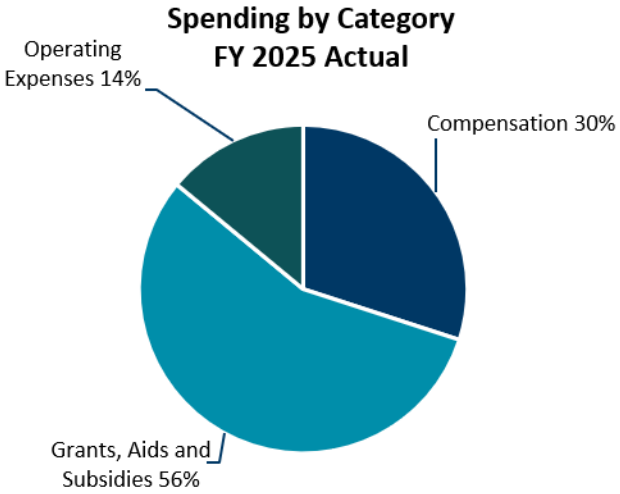
- The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council ("MIAC" or "Council") established under MN Stat. 3.922 serves as a liaison between the state enterprise and the eleven Tribal Nations that share geography.
- The Council board is comprised of elected Tribal Leaders, the Governor's Office, members of the State Legislature, and State Agency Commissioners.
- The Council oversees and provides support for a six-member Urban Indian Advisory Board ("UIAB") that advises the Council on issues specific to the urban American Indian communities in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bemidji, and Duluth.
- According to the 2020 Census there are approximately 69,000 American Indians in Minnesota residing both on and off reservation.
- MIAC has ten (10) full-time staff and two offices located in St. Paul and Bemidji.

PURPOSE

The mission of Minnesota Indian Affairs Council – *To protect the sovereignty of the eleven Minnesota tribes and ensure the well-being of all American Indian citizens throughout the state of Minnesota.*

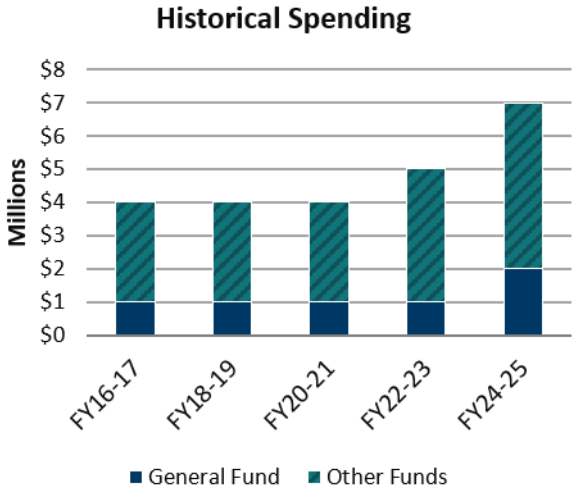
The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council's vision is – *To strive for social, economic, and political justice for all American Indian people living in Minnesota, while embracing our traditional, cultural, and spiritual values.* In the "*Strategies*" section of this profile, MIAC highlights the tactics employed to achieve both the mission and vision of the agency.

BUDGET



Grants, Aids, and Subsidies are the appropriations from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund for Language Revitalization and Cultural Resources.

Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)



Note: After FY14-15 MIAC has not received any federal funds

Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council has a total biennial appropriation of approximately $7.3 million for the FY 2024-25 biennium. The biennial General Fund support is approximately $2.7 million. Funding from the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund, consisting of grants to communities and tribal nations for Dakota and Ojibwe Language Revitalization, is approximately $4.6 million.

STRATEGIES

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council employs the following strategies to meet the MIAC mission:

- Convene quarterly board meetings attended by elected Tribal Leaders (executive board), State Agency Commissioners, State of Minnesota elected and appointed officials, key agency program staff, and members of the public.
- Analyze and offer recommendations to Tribal Elected Leaders, members of the Legislature, and the Governor on programs, proposals, and projects of importance to Tribal Nations and non-Tribal Indian organizations.
- Establish, develop, and maintain community relationships by engaging in community activities.
- Educate state agencies, local governments, and the public on issues important to Tribal Nations and Native American population.
- Educate state agencies and the public on “Why Treaties Matter” exhibit and how this connects to state work and projects.
- Offer technical support to various state task forces engaging in the work that would have tribal implications.
- Assist members of the legislature on language revision, review, and recommendation for proposed legislation that could have tribal implications.
- Create, develop, and maintain a Native American profile for purposes of guiding, directing, and recommending proposed policy and legislation.
- Work with state agencies to review current or future delivery of services to Tribal Nations and Native American population.
- Assist and collaborate with state agencies in establishing advisory councils, boards, and committees that deliver services to Tribal Nations in Minnesota.
- Promote, develop, and advance the revitalization and preservation of the Dakota and Ojibwe Languages through the Language Grants department supported by the Legacy Amendment.
- Direct and regulate repatriation and burial recovery efforts of Native American remains and artifacts through a respectful and culturally competent manner.
- Collaborate with state agencies, the Army Corp of Engineers, state and local governments, Tribal Historic Preservations Officers, and elected Tribal Officials to ensure repatriation efforts remain in compliance with MN Stat. 307.08 (The Private Cemeteries Act), MN Stat. 138.31-42 (The Field Archeology Act), and the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.
- Coordinate with state agency Tribal Liaisons to offer technical assistance and coordination under MN Stat. 10.65 – Government to Government Relationship with Tribal Governments.
- Partner with Tribal Nations and state agencies to plan and facilitate the Tribal-State Relations Training.
- Offer technical assistance in establishing means of delivery of services to Tribal Nations and the urban Native American community.
- Plan, support, and coordinate the Annual Tribal Nation Summit for Elected Tribal Leaders, Legislative members, and the Governor.

Over the past few years, the number and complexity of policy matters affecting Tribal governments have continued to increase. Issues involving natural resources, environmental stewardship, cultural resource protection, economic development, public safety, education, health and human services, child welfare, infrastructure, and treaty-protected rights increasingly require thoughtful coordination across jurisdictions and

branches of government. Through this changing policy environment, MIAC has continued to provide an essential institutional connection between Tribal leadership, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, state agencies, and other governmental partners.

The Council has experienced a substantial increase in legislative fiscal-note requests, cultural resource reviews, consultation-related activities, intergovernmental coordination, and requests for technical and policy assistance. These trends demonstrate not only the expanding scope of MIAC's responsibilities, but also the increasing integration of Tribal-State relations into the broader work of Minnesota government.

For MIAC, section 10.65 has also reinforced the importance of the Council's longstanding statutory responsibilities under Minnesota Statutes, section 3.922. As agencies increasingly engage Tribal Nations on policies, programs, regulations, and projects, the need for institutional expertise in Tribal sovereignty, federal Indian law, treaty rights, consultation, and intergovernmental relations has become increasingly apparent. MIAC is uniquely positioned to help bridge those areas of law, policy, and governmental practice.

The legislative record also demonstrates that the Legislature has continued to expand the Council's responsibilities across numerous areas of state government. MIAC's statutory role now reaches well beyond section 3.922 and includes responsibilities involving cultural resources, child welfare, public safety, education, health, environmental policy, natural resources, economic development, and other statewide initiatives. This continued expansion reflects an important policy principle: Tribal-State relations are not a discrete subject confined to one agency or legislative committee. They are an essential component of Minnesota governance.

At the same time, expanded responsibilities require appropriate institutional capacity. One purpose of this review is therefore not simply to document what MIAC has accomplished, but to provide policymakers with a clearer understanding of the resources, staffing, systems, and expertise necessary for the Council to fully execute the responsibilities assigned to it by law.

Continued investment in legislative and policy capacity, cultural resource protection, research and data, consultation infrastructure, communications, grant administration, and organizational development will strengthen both MIAC and Minnesota's broader government-to-government framework.

The Council must also continue developing measurable ways to demonstrate the public value of its work. Legislative decision-making increasingly depends upon data, outcomes, fiscal analysis, and accountability. MIAC should continue building the systems necessary to document workload, evaluate programs, measure consultation activity, assess policy outcomes, and provide legislators and Tribal leaders with reliable information upon which to make decisions.

The future of Tribal-State relations will also depend upon education. Policymakers and public administrators must understand that Tribal Nations are not simply stakeholders within Minnesota's political system. They are sovereign governments possessing inherent governmental authority and distinct legal relationships with the United States and the State of Minnesota. Recognizing that distinction is fundamental to meaningful consultation, legally sound policymaking, and respectful intergovernmental relations.

MIAC prioritizes the voices of Tribal Governments within the legislative process and offers analysis of outcomes that will have tribal implications. In addition to the items listed above, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council continues to fulfill its statutory duties in accordance with MN Stat. 3.922.

RESULTS

Part A: Performance Data

Measure	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data (FY 2026)
Growth in the Language Grants Department	Quantity	Awards for each fiscal year.	The Indian Affairs Council has come to be a trusted partner in statewide protection, preservation, and revitalization of the endangered Dakota and Ojibwe languages.	**Competitive Grants** Bemidji State $62,100.00 Dakhota Iapi $62,100.00 Dakota Wicohan $60,710.00 Lower Sioux Immersion $61,680.00 Minisinaakwaang Leadership Academy $60,672.00 Minneapolis American Indian Center $61,408.00 Montessori American Indian Childcare $60,000.00 Niigaane Immersion $62,100.00 *There is a separate fund that is split equally between the eleven tribal nations. Each nation that participated received $61,750 for fiscal year 2026.*
Growth in the Language Grants Department through the Annual Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium	Quantity	Online Registrations	MIAC hosted the very first statewide Dakota and Ojibwe Language Symposium in 2022 virtually. It has been held annually since, with a growing number of interested parties both in attendance, presenter requests, and variety in topics addressed.	2022 – held virtually 2023- 90 attendees 2024- 115 attendees 2025 – 120 attendees *MIAC had to close registration due to the amount of interest and capacity to host more than 115 attendees. The trend was the same with presentation requests.
Number of Cultural Resource reviews, archaeology licenses, EAW's, statewide survey proposals, and information requests	Quantity	Cultural Resource Staff Reports https://mn.gov/indian-affairs/about-us/miac-board-meetings/board-meeting-updates.jsp	MIAC cultural resources staff conducts reviews including MS 307.08 reviews, archaeology licenses, Environmental Assessment Worksheets, statewide survey proposals, and information requests pursuant to MIAC's responsibilities under both the Private Cemeteries and Field Archaeology Acts. The number of reviews nearly doubled between the first and fourth quarters of FY 24.	FY26 Q1 – 176 Reviews FY26 Q2 – 82 Reviews FY26 Q3 – 85 Reviews FY26 Q4 – 87 Reviews

Part B: Evidence of Effectiveness

MIAC does not currently have qualifying impact evaluations that meet Results Management's definitions of evidence-based practices. That does not mean there is an absence of evidence demonstrating the value or effectiveness of the Council's work. Rather, many of MIAC's statutory responsibilities involve Tribal-State relations, intergovernmental coordination, cultural-resource protection, legislative and policy work, and governmental liaison functions that do not readily fit within a traditional causal impact-evaluation model.

The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council's legal authority comes from MS 3.922.
https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=3.922