Towards *Amaamawi’izing* (Collaborating) in Interdisciplinary Allyship:
An Example from the Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research

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Randy Jackson\(^1,2\), William Gooding\(^1,2\), Renée Masching\(^1,3\), Bridget Marsdin\(^2\), Aaron Li\(^2\), Doris Peltier \(^1,3\) & Alexxis Kydd\(^1\)

The Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research

Is dedicated to community-led research across the four pillars of health. Our intent is to contribute to cultural responses to STBBI in Canada through respectful and dynamic collaborations.

Our goal is to increase the use of Indigenous knowledges in STBBI research to encourage transformational change that addresses the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental health needs of Indigenous peoples living with or affected by STBBI.

Centering Indigenous knowledges within interdisciplinary allyship

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Inspired by our work with the Feast Centre—we explore how Amaamawi’izing (collaborating) facilitates the interdisciplinary and collaborative work of scholars working alongside Indigenous communities.

Amaamawi’izing is an active stance that embraces the action of coming together with one mind in respectful and inclusive approaches.

The Anishinaabe conceptualization of collaborating, Amaamawi’izing, facilitates the interdisciplinary and collaborative work of scholars working alongside Indigenous communities, Knowledge Keepers and Elders.

We conceptualize Amaamawi’izing as grounding the work of the Feast Centre as a traditional research governance model that emphasizes action, brings diverse people together, is respectful, and appreciates difference in all its variations (culture, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.)

Although we strive for consensus, this model embraces and works with the tension in the hyphen between the Indigenous-settler allyship. This relational process allows for a more profound allyship to grow.

As Indigenous Peoples collaborating with researchers, Amaamawi’izing embodies the principles of “all my relations” that honours our first teacher, Ashkaakaamikwe (Mother Earth).
What differentiates *Amaamawi’izing* is its focus on the process rather than on the product, of coming together, of locating our work in the in-between space of allyship. Use of *Amaamawi’izing* in research collaboration highlights the colonial underpinning that might influence community and academic partnerships. The use of *Amaamawi’izing* in our work, potentially offers safe, ethical space where difference does not separate, but is inclusive, valued, and upheld.

The Feast Centre’s diverse team of Indigenous and allied researchers and community members is exploring this sophisticated approach to collaboration. Premised on deep listening, appreciating difference, and striving to achieve consensus, our activities and funding opportunities are informed by Indigenous consciousness and ways of being.
Principles of Amaamawi’izing

Amaamawi’izing (ways of collaborating) is an evolving, traditionally informed, research model that emphasizes action, brings diverse people together, and is respectful of and appreciates difference.

- Following the Four Rs: Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, Respect
- Guided by a Council of Elders
- Upholding Indigenous Sovereignty, Knowledges, Ways of Being
- Bringing our complete authentic selves
- Embracing the tension within the Indigenous-settler allyship
- Meeting together in our shared humanity
- Non-hierarchal governance structure
- Bridging Ways of Knowing
- Consensus Building
- Appreciating our differences

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