

TWO-SPIRIT POLICY PROJECT



ADVANCING INCLUSIVE TRIBAL LAW AND JUDICIAL PRACTICE

Two-Spirit Policy Project is a collaborative initiative between the Two-Spirit & Native LGBTQ+ Center for Equity and the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law aimed at reviewing, analyzing, and strengthening Tribal laws, codes, and judicial practices to ensure the inclusion, recognition, and protection of Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ individuals for Tribal governments and courts.

Grounded in principles of sovereignty, cultural respect, and legal equity, the project seeks to support Tribes in aligning their legal frameworks with both traditional Indigenous gender and sexuality diversity concepts and contemporary human rights standards.

THE AIMS OF THIS PROJECT ARE TO:

- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing Tribal constitutions, statutes, codes, court rules, and administrative policies to identify areas where Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ individuals are unrecognized, excluded, or inadequately protected.
- Engage community members and Tribal leadership by facilitating consultations with Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ Tribal members, elders, cultural practitioners, legal officials, and policy makers to build knowledge and understanding of culturally-rooted gender roles and community needs.
- Develop model language and legal drafting tools that Tribes can tailor and adopt to affirm Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ identities and protect against discrimination in areas such as employment, education, housing, public accommodations, family law, and justice systems.
- Provide capacity building, resources, and technical assistance for Tribal legislative bodies, executive branches, and judicial systems to implement inclusive policies, strengthen enforcement mechanisms, and enhance culturally competent legal interpretation.
- Promote legal education and awareness by creating accessible materials, workshops, and training for Tribal officials, attorneys, judges, and community members to foster understanding of Two-Spirit identities and the importance of inclusive legal frameworks.



By centering Indigenous sovereignty and cultural integrity, the Two-Spirit Policy Project aims to modernize Tribal legal codes and to honor longstanding Indigenous traditions of gender diversity. The expected outcomes include strengthened legal protections, greater community inclusion, and enhanced Tribal capacity to sustain equitable laws that reflect and uphold the dignity of all Tribal members.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Two-Spirit Policy Project, led by Two-Spirit & Native LGBTQ+ Center for Equity and the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law, is a collaborative initiative designed to support Tribal governments and courts in reviewing and revising their laws, codes, and judicial practices to reflect inclusive Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ language and protections. While many Indigenous cultures have long recognized diverse gender identities and sexual orientations, these values are often absent from contemporary Tribal legal frameworks due to historical and structural barriers.

Through comprehensive legal review, community engagement, and culturally grounded policy development, the project assists Tribes in identifying gaps in existing

laws and crafting tailored legal reforms that honor Tribal sovereignty and Indigenous traditions. The project provides model legal language, technical assistance, and capacity building resources to strengthen protections in areas such as civil rights, employment, housing, family law, and court procedures.

The expected outcomes include stronger legal protections for Two-Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ individuals, increased cultural competence within Tribal justice systems, and sustainable improvements to Tribal governance frameworks.

By centering Indigenous knowledge and self-determination, the Two-Spirit Policy Project advances equity, dignity, and inclusion for all Tribal members.