

THE FRENCH SOPHIE

Project Proposal: La Francophonie serving the Native Americans of the United States.

Empowering Native American communities by developing resources of their choice to raise awareness among the French-speaking public about their cultures and interests.

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Rationale:

As of today, within the United States, there are over 574 federally recognized Native American tribal nations. 2.7 million U.S. residents identified as American Indian and Alaska Native alone, and 6.3 million as American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination with one or more other races from 2017 to 2021 (US. Census Press Release Number CB23-101, June 15, 2023). Concurrently, over 1.5 million Francophones (and French-speaking Cajuns) live in the country (US. Census Total Population data T01001, 2020: DEC Detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics File A). However, most Native American tribes and initiatives traditionally use English only as their language for communication and outreach to the public.

We think that supporting these Native American tribes and indigenous initiatives in using French to communicate their messages and educate the public about their interests would help them extend their network of support and influence within the US, and to the Canadian and European audiences.

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A concrete example would be for Native American nations and initiatives to develop educational assets in French, such as web pages, lesson plans, or storybooks. Each original entity would keep the copyright of their resources and could earn revenue directly. Nowadays, it is not the case: many Native American tales are thus currently commercialized by non-Native Americans for profit (even in French), and the Native communities do not receive any of that money directly.

Additionally, raising awareness on time-sensitive campaigns, such as the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) campaign, as well as other environmental issues involving Native American ancestral lands, would be facilitated by the creation of resources in languages other than English, such as French.

How to get there:

- **Clients:**
Federally recognized Native American tribal nations and Indigenous-led non-profit organizations may request the services of The French Sophie LLC to develop the educational resources **of their choice**. The project must be under Native American leadership, as the outcome must be creating primary sources in French, not secondary. The purpose of the project is to use la Francophonie to learn from, rather than about, the Native American communities of the United States.
- **Agents:**
The French Sophie LLC is a SAM.gov registered service company whose focus is to facilitate French-American and Francophone exchanges. The company was founded by French-American educator, linguist, and journalist Sophie Suzanne Fung. Sophie is highly trained and qualified in translating and creating educational, informational, and cultural resources in the French language from English, and she also has extensive experience in intercultural communication. Sophie can hire qualified personnel for support when possible and when needed.

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- Sponsors and Partners:

US-based governmental institutions and non-profit organizations can contribute to the project by:

- supporting communication with the Native American tribal nations and initiatives
- facilitating the project's funding (by sponsoring the agents for grant applications, for example).

Please contact The French Sophie LLC at bonjour@thefrenchsophie.com for more information.