

Welcome to MISTI

MISTI (Missing Indigenous Sisters Tools Initiative) is made possible with volunteer community support, tech support, and fiscal agency from [Natives In Tech](#), in addition to the countless hours of volunteer time gifted by Native Peoples impacted by these interlocking crises.

This project aims to educate a general audience about Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) tools. We aim to empower families and community members to begin a search immediately, preserving digital evidence that might otherwise disappear by the time an official investigation begins.

A Crisis of Missing Persons

Indigenous communities face disproportionately high rates of murder, rape, and violent crime. The rates are notably higher than the national averages, with Indigenous women constituting a significant portion of missing and murdered individuals.

- In 2020, Indigenous women experienced the second-highest rate of homicide in the country, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey.
- Homicide ranked among the top ten leading causes of death for Indigenous women aged 1-45.

Human trafficking adds another alarming dimension to this issue.

- A 2017 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) titled “Human Trafficking: Investigations in Indian Country or Involving Native Americans and Actions Needed to Better Report on Victims Served” found that out of 132 tribal law enforcement agencies, 27 reported initiating human trafficking investigations between 2014 and 2016.
- Out of 61 major city law enforcement agencies, six reported initiating human trafficking investigations that involved at least one Native victim during the same period.

These grim statistics illustrate where many women go missing, but few investigations and full-scale search efforts occur. When they do occur, jurisdictional ambiguity, confusion, and apathy can lengthen the timeline for an investigation to begin.

Responding to the Crisis

This project proposal outlines the beginning of a program to educate a general audience about open-source intelligence (OSINT) tools. This would enable families and community members to begin a search immediately, preserving digital evidence that may disappear by the time an official investigation begins.

- OSINT leverages publicly available information to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence.
- When effectively utilized, these tools could significantly increase the information and evidence available in cases and, potentially, increase the odds of finding missing individuals.