

In June of 2026, Thunderchild First Nation(Thunderchild Radio 97.3 FM) signed a Contribution Agreement with the Community Radio Fund of Canada under the program “Local Journalism Initiative”. The amount of funding for the LJ is for \$107,858.78 to be utilized for radio programming until March 31, 2027. The main purpose of this funding is to establish original radio programming for Thunderchild band members on and off reserve. Previous to this funding TCFN members were severely underserved in local news coverage and local events coverage. The LJ Journalist champion is Vince Natomagan and is tasked with creating original radio programming to the community of Thunderchild First Nation.

Mr. Natomagan’s primary responsibility is to vitalize the radio station in Thunderchild and producing original programming as per the guidelines of the Local Journalism Initiative criteria. On that basis, Mr. Natomagan has created and produced the following audio items for TCfm 97.3 radio; these programs are on regular rotation on the on-air programming schedule Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m:

The key achievements and work completed by the station during this period include:

June 2026

- **Purchase of equipment & accesories:** TCfm 97.3 Radio had inadequate equipment, software and accessories to be able to start producing any kind of quality programming. Due to limited financial capacity innovative thinking had to be employed. Radio Automation software was purchased from South America called ‘EBRcart2’ to enable consistent radio programming and ‘Audacity’ software for production capability.
- **Wellness Wheel:** The Wellness Wheel is based on the four(4) quadrants of the Indigenous Medicine Wheel: mental, emotional, physical and spiritual and the four directions of human life. Each topic of the Wellness Wheel is related to its respective quadrant. Physical such as physical exercise, mental such as self-esteem, spiritual such as Indigenous spirituality, and emotional such as generosity.
- **Research & Script writing:** Producing the Wellness Wheel for example requires constant research and feedback from local Band departments. The script writing is tailored towards Thunderchild social & program priorities, customs, tradition and language
- **Cree News:** A significant portion of TCFN population primarily speak Cree and therefore only ‘digest’ news and events in the Cree language. This area is severely underserved and that is why a significant portion of the day is spent researching and writing Cree News; 3 hours a day is spent broadcasting Cree news on TCfm 97.3 Radio.

July 2026

- **Online Streaming:** Roughly half the population of Thunderchild reside in other communities and cities such as Turtleford, Lloydminster, North Battleford and Edmonton, Alberta. According to the online metrics about a quarter of TCFN members tune into TCfm 97.3 Radio to get their news and updated on local events and happenings.
- **Social Media:** TCfm 97.3 established an active social media presence via the Thunderchild 97.3 FM Facebook Page to share real-time community notices, events, and broadcast highlights.
- **Treaty Days & Pow Wow:** Mr. Vince Natomagan was asked to Emcee the Annual Treaty Days and broadcasted the morning program from the new Arbor then Emcee’d the Treaty Days. The Annual Pow Wow Days was broadcasted on Thunderchild Radio(and online) for 3 days.
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August 2026

- **Elder Stories:** TCfm 97.3 Radio started broadcasting one Elder story per day from the www.shareourstories.ca archive. These stories have been received well from the listeners of Thunderchild Reserve
- **BattlefordsNOW coverage:** The regional news media came to Thunderchild Radio to do a story on TCfm 97.3 use of the Cree language on radio and dynamic equivalence. BattlefordsNOW interviewed Mr. Natomagan and Elder James Okanee
- **Community Wellness Center:** The Wellness Center had a grand opening and TCfm 97.3 Radio interviewed the Minister of Indian Services Canada Mandy Gull-Masty.
- **150th Treaty 6 Commemoration :** Mr. Natomagan attended the event at Fort Carlton Provincial Park and interviewed two(2) attendees to the Commemoration and was subsequently broadcasted on Thunderchild Radio.

...to be continued

Vince Natomagan,

LJI Journalist

August 31, 2026