

NEWS RELEASE



Meta

Meta announces Inuktitut as official language on Facebook desktop

New language settings to support Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated's efforts to strengthen and promote the vitality of Inuit language

IQALUIT, NU, July 8, 2022 / - Today, Meta is proud to announce Inuktitut is available as a language setting on Facebook desktop. The initiative to translate Facebook to Inuktitut is the culmination of a four-year partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) to promote the daily use of the Inuit language spoken in communities across Nunavut.

The translated interface is now available to the more than 35,000 people across the Inuit Nunangat, the Inuit homeland in Canada, who list Inuktitut as their mother tongue. The translation is also accessible to people on Facebook globally. The launch aligns with the [United Nations International Decade of Indigenous Languages](#), which designates this decade as a time to draw global attention to the critical situation of many Indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their preservation, revitalization and promotion.

“Inuit expect to see and hear Inuktitut in all aspects of our lives. Recognizing Inuktitut as an official language on Facebook, equal to English and French, reinforces the legitimacy of our language,” said Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. “Being able to access Facebook in our own language is an important and concrete step towards seeing and hearing Inuktitut in all aspects of our lives.”

In Canada, language revitalization is included in the [calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). The preservation, revitalization and strengthening of Indigenous languages is fundamental to advancing the process of Canadian reconciliation.

“Facebook is a vital tool for connection and community for Inuit,” said Debbie Reid, Indigenous Policy Manager at Meta in Canada. “At Meta, we recognize that language is integral to the Inuit way of being and identity, and we are honoured to play a role in supporting the efforts of NTI to strengthen and promote the vitality of their language.”

“The idea of translating Facebook into Inuktitut was born from a brainstorming meeting in Iqaluit we had with President Kotierk and NTI four years ago. We learned that many Inuit are Facebook power users, and we asked how we can make Facebook an even better experience for them,” said Kevin Chan, a Global Policy Director at Meta. “We are so pleased to be able to deliver on this long-standing project.”

Translating the Facebook desktop interface into Inuktitut

The translation of Facebook was led by the [Pirurvik Centre](#), a translation and learning centre based in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Pirurvik ensured the translation was high-quality and consistent with existing technical terminology. As a polysynthetic language, Inuktitut words are longer and more complex when compared to their equivalents in English or French. In total, 2,000 strings of language on Facebook needed to be translated into Inuktitut, representing approximately 4,500 words. There were some new concepts created for the Facebook interface because there were no equivalents in Inuktitut. For example, “Facebook page” will now be known as “Facebook makpigaq” in Inuktitut.

“Pirurvik is honoured to have worked with Meta and NTI to ensure the new words created in Inuktitut reflect the nuances of our language and culture,” said Leena Evic, Executive Director, Pirurvik Centre, “The Facebook interface in Inuktitut will be a daily educational tool for younger generations to learn Inuktitut and a communication tool for Inuktitut speaking Inuit.”

According to Media Technology Monitor’s latest report on media technology penetration and usage in Nunavut, Yukon, and Northwest Territories, Facebook is the most used social network. Now, Inuktitut joins more than 100 other languages available on Facebook, and a growing number of Indigenous languages. In 2018, Facebook launched Inupiaq language settings. Inupiaq is a dialect of the Inuit language family, spoken in northern Alaska and the Northwest Territories.

Changing your language settings on the Facebook desktop interface to Inuktitut

While Inuktitut has multiple dialects, the South Baffin dialect is now available on the Facebook desktop interface. Facebook users can switch their language settings on desktop by following the steps outlined in the link: <https://www.facebook.com/help/327850733950290/>

Meta hopes by introducing Inuktitut as an official language on Facebook desktop, the settings will support unilingual Inuktitut speakers to create community online, while fostering greater adoption of the language amongst younger generations of Inuit. Meta is grateful to NTI for leading this initiative to add Inuktitut as an official language on Facebook desktop and give Inuit the ability to connect in their own language on our platform.

ABOUT NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK INCORPORATED

Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) is the organization that represents the territory's 33,000 Inuit and their rights under the Nunavut Agreement. NTI is governed by a Board of Directors elected by Nunavut Inuit 16 years of age and older. NTI coordinates and manages Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Agreement and ensures that the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations.

ABOUT META

Meta builds technologies that help people connect, find communities, and grow businesses. When Facebook launched in 2004, it changed the way people connect. Apps like Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp further empowered billions around the world. Now, Meta is moving beyond 2D screens toward immersive experiences like augmented and virtual reality to help build the next evolution in social technology.

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