

# YOU ARE ON INDIGENOUS LAND

Resources & Considerations for Recognizing Indigenous People through  
Land Acknowledgment



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## **What is Land Acknowledgment:**

Land Acknowledgment opens a space with gratefulness. It allows us to publicly recognize the Indigenous people whose traditional lands we stand upon. Land Acknowledgment honors the past and present Indigenous stewardship of the natural world. It also offers respect and visibility for the histories, contributions, innovations, and contemporary perspective of the Indigenous people. As we gather in our institutions, businesses and communities we can acknowledge that we all stand upon generations of their work, in each and every place we move within.

**It is only Indigenous ways of being that will ensure a sustainable future.**

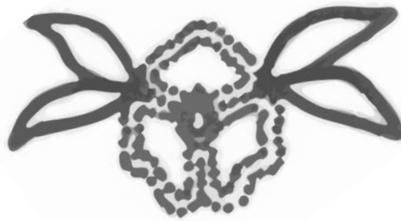


## **What can Land Acknowledgement do:**

- It can be a gesture of respect and recognition of contemporary Indigenous people as well as their ancestors.
- It can begin to counter the colonial narratives of “discovery” and or the “untouched wilderness” of a place.
- It can address the broader invisibility Indigenous people experience within colonized western societies, where harmful stereotypes are still prevalent.
- It can spread public awareness of the histories, experiences and intergenerational resilience of Indigenous peoples.
- It can be a personal movement to building relationships with Indigenous communities.
- It can support truth-telling and reconciliation efforts and actions.
- It can be a reminder that colonization is an ongoing process.
- It can hold one accountable, by publicly committing to actions towards allyship.

## **Why should I do a Land Acknowledgment:**

- It is a chance to look inward and reflect on personal reasons to recognize the Indigenous people of a place.
- It can be a way to check ourselves in our work, to think about our audience and or listeners: What do they need to know about Indigenous people, in both histories and current experiences?
- It is an opportunity to evaluate our power and privilege and to strategize ways to share those and/or give them away.
- It allows us to return to Indigenous knowledge systems rooted in public recognition of work, care and transparent intentions.
- It is a time to reflect on who we are, where we come from and to know the Indigenous people of those places.



## **When writing a Land Acknowledgment ask yourself:**

What do I know about the Indigenous people of the place I currently am?

What do they, the Indigenous people of that place, value and work towards in their community?

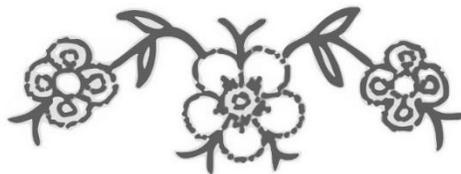
How do I personally and/or professionally support Indigenous sovereignty?

What are the personal benefits to Land Acknowledgement, and how can it signal to others what is important to me?

What does Land Acknowledgement actually acknowledge?

## How to Acknowledge:

- First identify the traditional inhabitants of the land you are on.
  - This is very complicated, many Indigenous people have been forcibly displaced and/or removed from their traditional lands.
- If multiple tribal groups claim belonging to the land, consider deeper research.
  - Consult with local tribes and Indigenous-led organizations equitably, provide compensation for their time.
- Once you've identified the group or groups who should be recognized begin writing your acknowledgement.
  - Consider including their histories, their resilience and the current work each Indigenous group is doing for their tribal communities.
- Also state your personal reasoning for acknowledging the Indigenous communities of a place.
  - Consider your role in the history of colonization and consider what your role can be to in undoing its legacy.
  - Consider committing to specific actions of reconciliation, state them.



## Land Acknowledgment in Alaska:

- Introductions are important.
  - Tell people who you are and take the time to let them introduce themselves.
- Visit and offer gifts.
  - This is the most culturally appropriate way to interact, which emphasizes the value of giving your power and wealth to another.
- Honor the natural world.
  - Indigenous people have the knowledge that has proven to be the only form sustainable stewardship of the land. We can continue this stewardship by honoring and retuning to Alaska Native ways of being.
- Recognize that Alaska Native relationships to the land are deeply rooted in their histories and cultures.

## Resources on Land Acknowledgment:

- United States Department of Arts and Culture  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view)
- California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center <https://www.csusm.edu/cicsc/land.pdf>
- Native Land <https://native-land.ca/territory-acknowledgement/>
- Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group <http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland>
- Northwestern Native American and Indigenous Initiatives  
<https://www.northwestern.edu/native-american-and-indigenous-peoples/about/Land%20Acknowledgement.html>
- Âpihtawikosisân <https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>
- American Indians in Children's Literature  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2019/03/are-you-planning-to-do-land.html>
- Who's Land <https://www.whose.land/en/>
- Teen Vogue <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/indigenous-land-acknowledgement-explained>
- Native Governance Center <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>

**Through Land Acknowledgement we are all learning and changing. These resources will likely change as well. Your Land Acknowledgment should be part of your continual education and a commitment of equity and justice towards Indigenous people. It is important that during this process we openly accept correction without defensiveness. This work is ours to be done, because we are on Indigenous land.**



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