

# 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 peoples whose traditional lands we stand upon. Land Acknowledgment honors past and present Indigenous stewardship of the natural world. It also offers respect and visibility for the histories, contributions, innovations and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples. As we gather in our institutions, businesses and communities, we must realize that we all stand upon the work of Indigenous peoples in each and every place we move within.

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

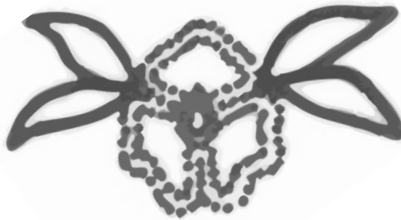


## **What can Land Acknowledgement do:**

- It can be a gesture respect and recognition of contemporary Indigenous peoples as well as their ancestors.
- It can begin to counter the colonial narratives of “discovery” and of a “wild” place.
- It can address the broader invisibility and socialized stereotypes that Indigenous peoples experience within colonized Western societies.
- It can spread public awareness of the histories, experiences and intergenerational resilience of Indigenous peoples.
- It can be a personal commitment 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 be a start to becoming a good ally.

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

- It is a chance for us to look inward and reflect on reasons for recognizing the Indigenous people of a place.
- It can be a way for us to check ourselves in our work, to think about our audience and listeners: What do they need to know about histories and current experiences of Indigenous peoples?
- It is an opportunity to evaluate our power and privilege and to strategize ways in which we might share that or give that away.
- It allows us to respect Indigenous protocols and values rooted in the public recognition of work, care and good intentions.
- It is time to reflect on who we are and where we come from, and who are the Indigenous peoples of those places.

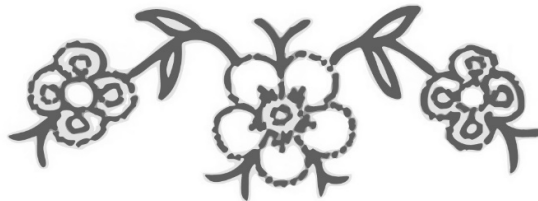


## **When writing a Land Acknowledgment ask yourself:**

- What do I know about the Indigenous people of the place I currently am?
- What 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 can Land Acknowledgment do for me, and what can it tell others about what I believe?
- What does Land Acknowledgement actually acknowledge?

## How to Acknowledge:

- First identify the original inhabitants of the lands you are on.
  - Understand that this is complicated, and that many Indigenous peoples have been forcibly displaced or removed from their traditional lands.
- If multiple tribal groups have lived on the land in the past, consider deeper research.
  - Consult with local tribes and Indigenous-led organizations equitably and provide compensation for their time.
  - If you are unable to provide compensation, look for information created by local tribes and Indigenous-led organizations.
- Once you've identified the group or groups who should be recognized, begin writing your acknowledgement.
  - Include the names for all Indigenous peoples (tribes) you found in your research.
  - Take your writing a step further and educate yourself on the Indigenous histories, resilience and the current work Indigenous people are doing for their tribal communities.
- In writing your Land Acknowledgement also state your personal reason for acknowledging the Indigenous peoples of a place.
  - Consider your role in the history of colonization and what action you can commit to for undoing its legacy.



## 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.
  - Understand that culturally appropriate interactions are ones in which you give power and wealth to another through giving.
- Honor the natural word.
  - Indigenous peoples have access to knowledge that has proven to be the only form of sustainable stewardship on their land. If we want to be here, we must honor Alaska Native ways of being.
- Recognize that Alaska Native relationships to the land are deeply rooted in their history and culture.

## Resources on Land Acknowledgment:

- “Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement” from the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view)
- “Land Acknowledgement: You’re on California Indian Land, Now What?” from the California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center  
<https://www.csusm.edu/cicsc/land.pdf>
- “Territory Acknowledgement” from Native Land Digital  
<https://native-land.ca/territory-acknowledgement>
- “Know the Land Territories Campaign” from the Laurier Students’ Public Interest Research Group  
<http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland>
- “Land Acknowledgement” from the Northwestern Native American and Indigenous Initiatives  
<https://www.northwestern.edu/native-american-and-indigenous-peoples/about/Land%20Acknowledgement.html>
- “Beyond Territorial Acknowledgements” from the Âpihtawikosisân, a blog by Chelsea Vowel (Métis)  
<https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments>
- “Are You Planning to Do a Land Acknowledgement” from the American Indians in Children’s Literature  
<https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/2019/03/are-you-planning-to-do-land.html>
- “Territories by Land” from Whose Land  
<https://www.whose.land/en>
- “Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, Explained” by Delilah Friedler for Teen Vogue  
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/indigenous-land-acknowledgement-explained>
- “Indigenous Land Acknowledgement” from the 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 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 everywhere is and always will be Indigenous land. For more information on this resource and online link please visit [melissashaginoff.com](http://melissashaginoff.com)**

