

## Guidelines for giving your own land acknowledgement AIC Equity & Inclusion Committee

### **Please join us in giving Land Acknowledgements at the 2020 AIC Virtual Meeting**

A land acknowledgement is a statement meant to respectfully recognize the original Indigenous people who inhabited and cared for a specific area before colonization or displacement. They are often given at the start of an event, as was done at last year's 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and will also be done during this year's Virtual Meeting opening remarks. Normally we are all in one venue for Annual Meeting, but this year's online format gives us AIC members the opportunity to join in recognizing the many different tribal lands from which we will be calling from. The Equity & Inclusion Committee encourages speakers to consider giving a personal land acknowledgement at the beginning of a session or before their presentation. This is not mandatory and does not have to be intimidating, a few sentences would suffice.

#### **For Example:**

*"Today I am speaking to you from name of city, which is part of the unceded land of the name of Indigenous people. I would like to acknowledge the name of Indigenous people community and pay my respects to their past, present, and future elders."*

In the US, the acknowledgement typically names the Native American tribe of the area and, as possible, is presented according to the tribe's preferences or protocols. At minimum, the speaker gives this statement with the intent to bring public awareness of the communities and histories that are overlooked in that space. However, over time, the acknowledgement should grow as a public commitment to action because of that recognition.

#### **Why include Land Acknowledgements in AIC programming?**

AIC's Code of Ethics includes Statement II: "All actions of the conservation professional must be governed by an informed respect for the cultural property, its unique character and significance, and the people or person who created it." As with any cultural preservation effort, we cannot forget the importance of people in our mission to preserve memory and heritage. Providing this statement is one gesture to demonstrate our recognition of this history and respect for the community where we are holding our activities. It is also important to recognize that the history of colonialism and displacement has benefitted many of the cultural institutions in which conservators work. Therefore, the E&IC strongly endorses the inclusion of land acknowledgements at all future annual meetings.

#### **Tips and Resources:**

- This Native Land Digital Map is a good place to start when looking for the Indigenous tribes that may have inhabited your area: <https://native-land.ca/>
- Try to use the name that the Indigenous group prefers to call themselves by today. We suggest consulting tribal-run websites. Although reaching out to the tribe

directly is usually a good idea, we do not currently suggest requests to tribal members as they are grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Online Resources:  
Guide to Indigenous Land and Territorial Acknowledgements for Cultural Institutions:  
<http://landacknowledgements.org/>  
Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgement:  
<https://usdac.us/nativeland/>  
Native Governance Center: Indigenous Land Acknowledgment:  
<https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>
- Please don't worry about making a mistake! People will appreciate your best effort.

Do you have any thoughts, resources, or questions about land acknowledgements? Share them with us on the [Equity and Inclusion in Conversation Community Board](#) or email them to us privately at [eic@culturalheritage.org](mailto:eic@culturalheritage.org).