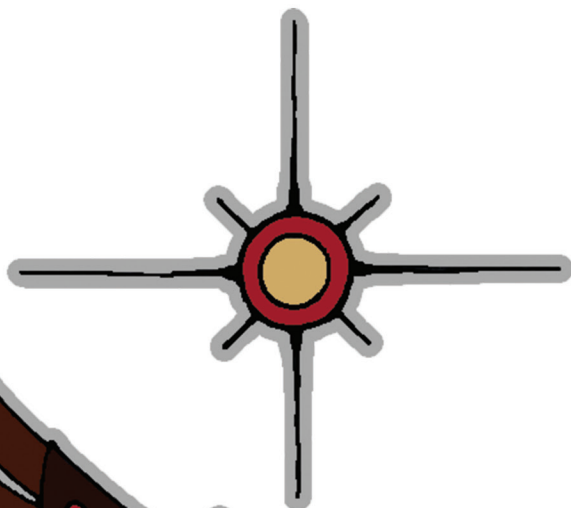
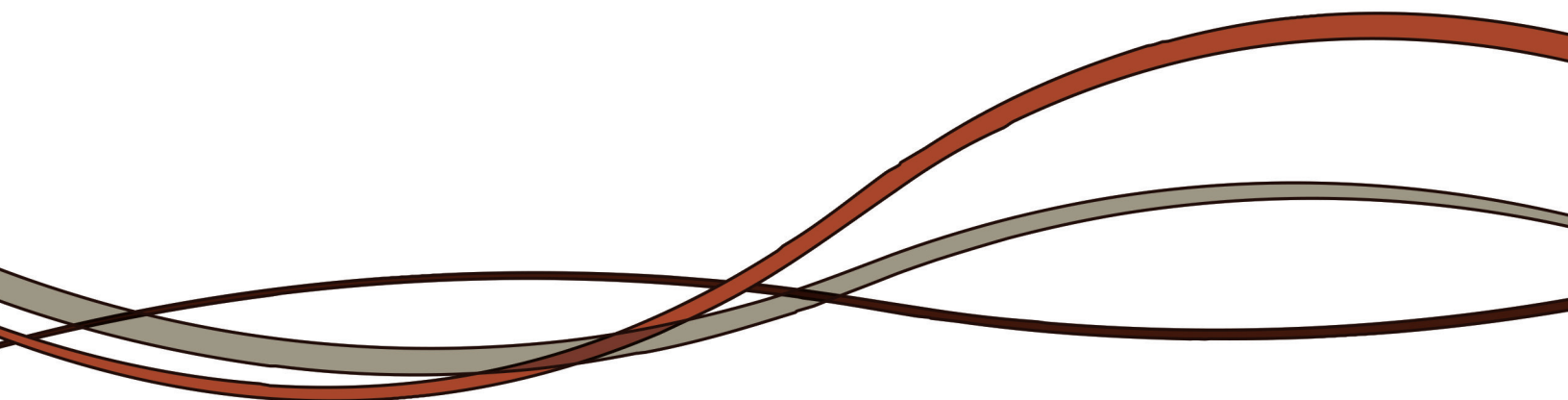




Our Path to Reconciliation: A Guide to Acknowledging Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Territory

Canadian Dental Association Toolkit

March 2025





CANADIAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION DENTAIRE CANADIENNE

This toolkit was reviewed and supported by:



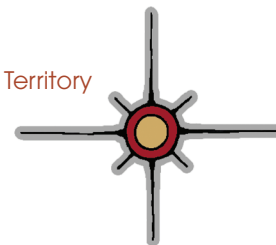
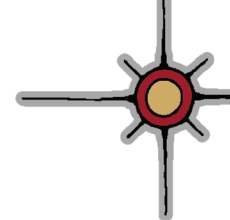


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1.0 Background: How to Use this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) with the tools needed to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples and the traditional territories on which we live, work and play. The main objectives include:

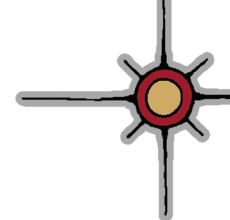
- 1. Education and Awareness:** To provide some historical and cultural context about the Indigenous peoples and their connection to the land.
- 2. Respect and Recognition:** To help the CDA acknowledge the traditional stewards of the land, their enduring presence, and their contributions.
- 3. Relationship Building:** To support our organization's efforts to foster stronger connections with Indigenous communities through genuine engagement.
- 4. Accountability and Action:** To serve as a meaningful and tangible action towards reconciliation.
- 5. Consistency and Guidance:** To offer the CDA practical resources, templates, and examples to ensure land acknowledgements are authentic and not performative.

The incorporation of Land Acknowledgements within your organization demonstrates respect for Indigenous Peoples, recognizing their presence in the past, present and future. This action is a fundamental step for CDA in fostering respectful, mutually beneficial relationships, which is fundamental to the process of reconciliation.

CDA recognizes that Land Acknowledgements are only one small part of building meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island (the Northeastern part of North America). It is important to go beyond identifying the Indigenous lands that we occupy and actively work to understand the histories and experiences of Indigenous Peoples. Additional resources in [Appendix A](#) provide further learning about these histories, while [Appendix B](#) offers guidance on pronunciation. This guide will be used by CDA to deepen the Association's knowledge, situate ourselves in the places where we convene, and to engage and develop meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

Included in this toolkit are both French and English examples of Land Acknowledgement statements, particularly for Canadian regions that are predominantly bilingual.





2.0 Why Are Indigenous Land Acknowledgements Important?

Indigenous Land Acknowledgments are a significant and respectful way to recognize the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of a place. They serve as an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory one resides/meets on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous Peoples who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

It is important to understand the long-standing history that has brought us to reside/meet on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. These Land Acknowledgements also serve as a reminder of the enduring presence, resilience, and contributions of Indigenous peoples, as well as the historical impacts of colonization on their lands and cultures. They are a step towards correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous People's history and culture and towards inviting and honouring the truth.

2.1 Historical Context and Relevance

Indigenous Land Acknowledgements have a significant role in reconciliation efforts, primarily because they directly address the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization. They recognize the fact that the lands we inhabit were traditionally occupied by Indigenous Peoples, long before the arrival of European colonizers.

Historically, many Indigenous communities were displaced from their ancestral lands through various forms of coercion or through treaties that were often disregarded or violated. This displacement and the holistic associated loss of connections to land have had lasting impacts on Indigenous Peoples and communities, contributing to many of the challenges they face today.

In this context, Indigenous Land Acknowledgements are a step towards acknowledging these injustices. They serve as a public recognition of the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of the land, signaling respect for their historical and ongoing connections to the land.

These acknowledgements provide an opportunity for non-Indigenous peoples and communities to learn about the rich histories, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples. This awareness is a crucial part of fostering understanding and respect, which are foundational to reconciliation.

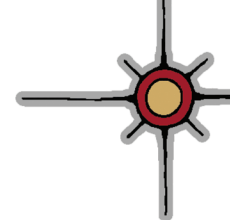
2.2 Overview of Importance and Significance of Land Acknowledgement

Indigenous Land Acknowledgements are not just a formality, but a meaningful practise that contributes to reconciliation by promoting awareness, respect and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures and rights. They recognize and respect the Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of a particular territorial area and are an essential part of the process of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and communities. They serve as a reminder of the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

Cultural sensitivity and respect are paramount in acknowledging Indigenous territories because they demonstrate an understanding, recognition and relationship to the unique histories, practices and rights of Indigenous Peoples. Such acknowledgements honour the relationship these cultures have with the land, dating back to time immemorial. They also serve as a reminder of the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, fostering awareness and encouraging steps towards reconciliation. Furthermore, culturally sensitive, and respectful acknowledgments can help build trust, promote dialogue, and encourage mutually beneficial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

2.3 Understanding Relationship to Land

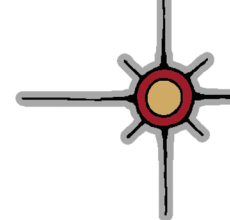
Indigenous relationships to land derive from the long-standing and living powerful, multi-dimensional, practised, and sustaining relationships with specific lands/territories that shape physically, relationally, culturally, and spiritually distinct peoples. The holistic, interconnected, spiritual, and sacred connection to land has been identified as a central determinant of the health and well-being of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit across Turtle Island. The land



sustains Indigenous lives in every aspect physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually from individual, community, and national levels.

For many Indigenous peoples, access to land and traditional territories supports critical social determinants of health and ecological wellness, including cultural ways of Knowing-Being-Doing reflected in daily life such as the ability to harvest food, plants, and medicine, having space for ceremony, and having a safe and affordable space to live. All of these connections interact and create a complex, web-like foundation for the well-being of Indigenous people, as we all are a part of the land and thus, cannot be removed.





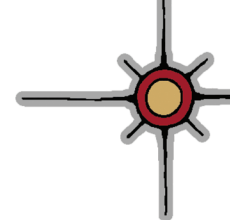
3.0 CDA Land Acknowledgement Protocols

This guide provides CDA with examples of traditional, territory-based Land Acknowledgements to be used at appropriate gatherings. It is recommended that CDA open all formal meetings with a Land Acknowledgement, especially when Indigenous rights-holders and external stakeholders or participants are present, or if an attendee specifically requests it.

- Land Acknowledgements may be made at the following gatherings:
 - All formal meetings, including Board meetings.
 - Meetings where Indigenous rights-holders, external stakeholders, or participants are present.
 - Any meeting where an attendee specifically requests a Land Acknowledgement.
- Land Acknowledgements at internal meetings:
 - All-staff meetings and other team meetings may include a Land Acknowledgement where appropriate, but it is not mandatory unless external participants are involved or requested by attendees.
- Land Acknowledgements for multi-day meetings :
 - If there are multiple, separate meetings with different groups or participants taking place over a few days (i.e., three days of various meetings or training sessions with different groups), a Land Acknowledgement should be made at the start of each day.
 - For continuous multi-day meetings that consist of the same group and participants (i.e., a two-day uninterrupted Board meeting or training, a Land Acknowledgement on the first day may suffice, unless otherwise directed.

This protocol ensures that Land Acknowledgements are provided respectfully and consistently, aligning with CDA's commitment to recognizing traditional territories.





3.1 Understanding Protocols and Cultural Expectations

You may have heard the term “protocol” in relation to working with Indigenous Peoples. This term can include many things but overall, it refers to ways of interacting with Indigenous Peoples in a manner that respects traditional ways of Knowing-Being-Doing. These protocols are not just “manners” or “rules”, they are a representation of a culture’s deeply held ethical system.

Protocols are becoming more commonplace within organizations to improve processes in day-to-day interactions with Indigenous Peoples and communities. The concept of Indigenous Protocols varies from nation to nation; however, it is not a prescribed set of rules or behaviours that must be adhered to. Rather, it is a principle-based approach on how interactions occur cross-culturally to ensure respectful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and communities. It has practical applications for many Indigenous Nations which have occurred since time immemorial. Following Indigenous protocols is a sign of respect, awareness and cultural sensitivity.

When drafting Indigenous Land Acknowledgments, it is important to consider the following cultural protocols and expectations:

- 1. Research:** Make sure to accurately identify the Indigenous Nations who have historically resided on the land. This may require research and consultation with Indigenous communities or organizations.
- 2. Respectful language:** Use respectful language that acknowledges the Indigenous Nations’ ongoing connection to the land.
- 3. Purpose:** Explain the purpose of the Land Acknowledgement to your audience. Make it clear that it is an expression of respect for the Indigenous Nations’ history and relationship with the land.
- 4. Avoid past tense:** Avoid referring to Indigenous Peoples in the past tense, as it can imply that they no longer exist or have a connection to the land.
- 5. Action:** Land Acknowledgements should involve a commitment to action. This could be a commitment to learning more about Indigenous cultures, supporting Indigenous rights, or advocating for issues that affect Indigenous communities.
- 6. Consultation:** If possible, consult with representatives from the Indigenous Nations being acknowledged to ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of your statement.

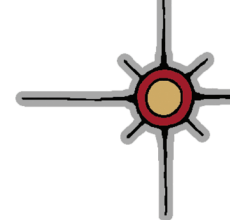
3.2 Exploring the Meaning and Intention Behind Land Acknowledgements

The intention behind Indigenous Land Acknowledgements is to create awareness of the enduring presence and deep traditional connection of Indigenous Peoples with the land. It is a practice of gratitude, respect and recognition, acknowledging the significant contributions and sacrifices of Indigenous peoples who were the original inhabitants and caretakers of the land on which we now live, work and play.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgements also serve as a reminder of the impacts of colonization and the enduring legacy of the loss and dispossession of Indigenous lands. They are a call to recognize and respect Indigenous rights and sovereignty, to uphold treaties and to work towards justice and reconciliation.

Overall, the purpose of Indigenous Land Acknowledgements is to create a broader public consciousness of the history, cultural norms and diversity of Indigenous peoples. It is a step towards engaging in meaningful conversations about history and colonization and creating a more equitable and inclusive society.





3.3 Centering of Self

Taking action starts with looking inward, as suggested by Willie Ermine, Cree scholar from Sturgeon Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan, who was recognized for his work in Indigenous knowledge and ethics. He is best known for developing the concept of the “Ethical Space of Engagement,” which promotes dialogue between Indigenous and Western worldviews in respectful and meaningful ways and describes it as the “inner space”—the deepest part of ourselves where we find our moral compass. This helps us reflect on our lives and figure out our next steps. It is about applying self-awareness to your life and your influence and understanding how learning can lead to action.

When developing Land Acknowledgements, you may want to reflect on your own life experiences, beliefs, biases, privileges and relationships. It is about recognizing your place in the world and your responsibilities as a human being. Using the questions below may provide an opportunity for you to do the same—to examine your assumptions, challenge preconceived ideas and learn from your experiences.

By centering ourselves in the process of developing Land Acknowledgements, we can better understand our relationship with the land and Indigenous Peoples. This self-reflection can help you create meaningful Land Acknowledgements and deepen your personal connection to the land and its history.

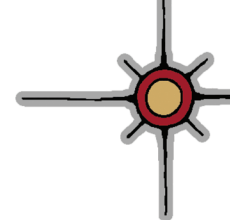
Start with self-reflection. Before starting work on your Land Acknowledgment statement, reflect on the process:

- Why am I doing this Land Acknowledgment? (If you are hoping to inspire others to take action to support Indigenous communities, you are on the right track. If you are delivering a Land Acknowledgment out of guilt or because everyone else is doing it, more self-reflection is in order.)
- What is my end goal? (What do you hope listeners will do after hearing the Land acknowledgment?)
- When will I have the largest impact? (Think about your timing and audience, specifically.)

In preparation for constructing a Land Acknowledgement, it is important to ask critical questions of your motivations, and what you and your organization are hoping to accomplish, such as:

- What are my/our personal goals in developing the Land Acknowledgement?
- What are the goals of my group/organization in creating a Land Acknowledgement?
- What do I need to learn or understand about our local history before composing a Land Acknowledgement?
- How do I go about educating myself on these topics, and not automatically place that burden on Indigenous community members?
- How will I go about educating my group/organization about what I have learned?
- Where will this Land Acknowledgement publicly reside or be delivered?
- How will the Land Acknowledgement inform and improve our institutional culture through words and actions? In the process of crafting a Land Acknowledgement, you will learn about the land we occupy as well as the historical and ongoing nature of colonization. By tying a Land Acknowledgement to actions, individuals and organizations demonstrate a larger commitment to support Indigenous Peoples.





3.4 Example of Land Acknowledgement Framework

There is no homogenous outline or practise for creating a Land Acknowledgement, as they are all highly location-based and contextual as they are unique to the place, Nations, communities' relationships being acknowledged, and the individual delivering the Land Acknowledgement. However, the consensus is that they should be intentional, meaningful and accurate. The following resources provide templates, tools and critical suggestions for creating Land Acknowledgements.

When constructing a Land Acknowledgement, each traditional territory will have its unique historical and cultural context. However, there are essential components that should be considered to create a meaningful and respectful Land Acknowledgement. Below is a generalized framework that can guide you in crafting a comprehensive and thoughtful statement:

1. Acknowledge Traditional Territory:

- **Objective:** Recognize the original inhabitants of the land and their deep, ongoing connection to it.
- **Action:** Research and identify which Indigenous Nations lived in the area prior to colonization. Include references to specific treaties, maps, and historical sources that document their presence. Highlight any complexities or overlapping territories and ensure inclusivity in your recognition.
- **Implementation:** Cite relevant treaties, provide links to resources that detail the forced removal or displacement of Indigenous Peoples, and mention the current status of these Nations. If possible, link to the websites of the Indigenous Nations mentioned, offering a portal to their histories, cultures, languages and governance.

Keywords (for online searches): Traditional Territories, Inuit Nunangat, Métis Homeland.

2. Acknowledge Nations Forcibly Resettled:

- **Objective:** Address the history of forced migration and resettlement of Indigenous Nations to your area/the area of your meeting.
- **Action:** Identify if any Indigenous Nations were forcibly relocated to your area/location of your meeting. Research relevant treaties, and historical documents to understand this history.
- **Implementation:** Include these details in your Land Acknowledgement, noting any Indigenous Nations that may have been temporarily settled in the region due to forced relocation. Provide context for the historical complexities that may have led to the merging or dissolution of these nations.

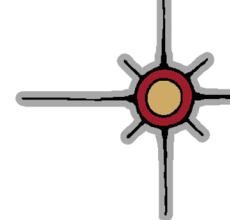
Keywords: forced removal, historic reservation, resettlement.

3. Acknowledge Contemporary Indigenous Presence:

- **Objective:** Recognize that Indigenous Peoples continue to live and contribute to your area today.
- **Action:** Identify and acknowledge the Indigenous Nations that currently reside in your area/location of your meeting, including those with federally recognized reservations and those who live within the community without a formal land base.
- **Implementation:** Highlight the ongoing presence of Indigenous communities, institutions, and cultural contributions. Consider how your organization can engage with these communities respectfully and meaningfully.

Keywords: contemporary Indigenous presence, community engagement, ongoing contributions.





4. Turn Acknowledgements into Actions:

- **Objective:** Ensure that the Land Acknowledgement goes beyond words and leads to tangible actions that benefit Indigenous communities.
- **Action:** Pair your acknowledgement with actionable steps that show commitment to supporting Indigenous Peoples. This could involve listening to sessions, developing programs that meet Indigenous cultural needs, building partnerships with Indigenous Nations, and more.
- **Implementation:** Outline specific or future actions that your institution or organization will take in response to the Land Acknowledgement. These actions could include creating scholarships, hiring Indigenous staff, offering culturally relevant courses, and fostering relationships with local Indigenous communities, etc.

Keywords: actionable steps, community support, educational programs.

A Land Acknowledgement is more than just a statement—it is a commitment to understanding, recognizing and respecting the history and ongoing contributions, as well as your relationship with Indigenous Peoples. By incorporating these essential components into your Land Acknowledgement, you can ensure that it is meaningful, educational, and connected to actionable efforts that honour the Indigenous Nations connected to the land.

3.5 Virtual vs. In-person Considerations

When planning a Land Acknowledgement, the approach can differ significantly between in-person and virtual settings. Each context requires careful consideration to ensure that the Acknowledgment is respectful and aligns with Indigenous protocols and practices.

In-person Land Acknowledgement

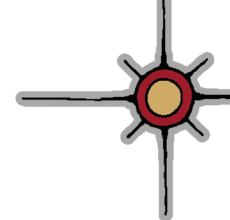
When conducting an in-person Land Acknowledgement, if an Elder or Knowledge Holder from the traditional territory is present, it is recommended to recognize their presence. Their presence ensures the gathering is grounded in the Rights Holding Nation's traditions and practises. If they are present, it is also recommended to follow the Elder or Knowledge Holder's lead regarding the timing of the Land Acknowledgement, which is often delivered either before or after the opening ceremony. This approach not only honours the protocols of the land's original stewards but also demonstrates a commitment to engaging with Indigenous ways of Knowing-Being-Doing in a meaningful way.

Virtual Land Acknowledgements

Doing a Land Acknowledgement for a virtual gathering is a bit more challenging compared to when everyone is in the same room. In this case, people may be joining your gathering from anywhere in the world. Here are a few tips to help you when creating a Land Acknowledgement for a virtual gathering:

- As the host, give recognition to the land that you, individually, are on.
- Acknowledge that many others may be on different territories.
 - If possible, invite others to offer their own Land Acknowledgements.

Please note the same protocol applies as in-person Land Acknowledgements when an Elder or Knowledge Holder is present. It is recommended to invite an Elder or Knowledge Holder from the traditional territory where the gathering is taking place. Their presence ensures the gathering is grounded in the Rights Holding Nation's traditions and practices. It is recommended to follow the Elder or Knowledge Holder's lead regarding the timing of the Land Acknowledgement, which is often delivered either before or after the opening ceremony. This approach not only honours the protocols of the land's original stewards but also demonstrates a commitment to engaging with Indigenous ways of Knowing-Being-Doing in a meaningful way.



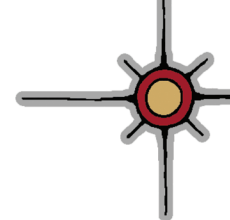
3.6 Additional Factors for Consideration:

Indigenous Peoples have long acknowledged the land in ways deeply rooted in their cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, and community values. These acknowledgements are not just statements but are woven into daily life, ceremonies, and traditions that honour the land and its significance.

Crafting a meaningful and respectful Land Acknowledgment requires more than just stating historical facts—it requires a deep understanding of language, history, and the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples.

- **Use appropriate and respectful language.** Avoid downplaying historical events. When appropriate, use specific terms such as displacement, land appropriation, and forced relocation to accurately reflect history. Whenever possible, prioritize Nation-specific terminology, especially for territory acknowledgments.
- **Use past, present, and future tenses.** Indigenous People are still here, and they are thriving. There are many types of Land Acknowledgments. Do not expect to find a generic formula or template. Land Acknowledgments that come from Indigenous People vs. non-Indigenous people will also look different.
- **Do not ask an Indigenous person to deliver a Land Acknowledgement for your organization.** Land Acknowledgements from non-Indigenous people serve as an action item—a deliberate step toward recognizing the history of colonization, the ongoing impacts on Indigenous communities, and the importance of honouring the original stewards of the land. Although there are many types of Land Acknowledgements, and no generic formula or template, it is essential to understand that these Acknowledgements reflect different perspectives. For non-Indigenous people, a Land Acknowledgement is a critical act of responsibility and reflection, aimed at fostering awareness and taking a first step towards a greater reconciliation journey.
- **Compensate Indigenous People for their emotional labour.** If you do plan to reach out to an Indigenous person or community for help, compensate them fairly. Too often, Indigenous People are asked to perform emotional labour for free. To engage respectfully, start by:
 - **Reviewing Consultation Protocols**—Many communities have set fees for services like technical document reviews or cultural guidance. Check these in advance.
 - **Contact the Right Representative**—Reach out to the community's consultation office to be connected with the appropriate person.
 - **Respect Pricing**—Honorariums and service fees vary by community or individual. Do not negotiate or say the cost is too high.
 - **Cover Necessary Expenses**—If an Elder or Knowledge Holder, etc. needs to travel anticipate to include in the internal budget to pay for travel, meals, and accommodations if required.
 - **Understand Capacity Limits**—Some communities may not be able to assist with your request due to other priorities. Respect their decision.

By using honest language, avoiding token gestures, and compensating Indigenous Peoples for their emotional and intellectual labour, we begin the process of reconciliation. Acknowledging land is just the beginning—it is a call to action and a commitment to continue learning, engaging with, and supporting Indigenous communities in meaningful ways.



4.0 Examples of Land Acknowledgement Statements

Writing a Land Acknowledgement presents unique challenges due to the complex and cultural landscape. Several factors contribute to this complexity:

- Multiple Indigenous Nations with Overlapping Territories.
- Historical Migrations.
- Urban Centres and Urban Indigenous Populations.
- Language Considerations.
- Political Sensitivities.

Given these factors, creating an accurate and respectful Land Acknowledgement requires thorough research, consultation with local Indigenous communities, and a nuanced understanding of the region's history. It is crucial to avoid generalizations and try to be as specific as possible about the Indigenous Peoples connected to the particular location being acknowledged.

Please note the following drafted Land Acknowledgements were not developed in direct collaboration with the Indigenous Nations and communities mentioned. They are meant to be used as general examples. This highlights the need for greater engagement with Indigenous communities in the creation of these statements to ensure that they are accurate, respectful and reflective of the perspectives and cultural values of the communities being acknowledged. Direct involvement of Indigenous voices and additional research is crucial for crafting meaningful acknowledgements.

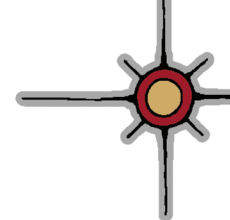
Ontario

For In-person CDA board/executive/other corporate meetings in Ottawa (English)

- I (we) would like to respectfully acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabe (**AH-nish-NAW-be**) Algonquin.
- I (we) recognize the long-standing presence, stewardship, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples to this territory.
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play on, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and learning together in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.





Pour les réunions en personne du conseil d'administration, de la direction générale et autres réunions de l'ADC à Ottawa (français)

- Je tiens (Nous tenons) à reconnaître respectueusement que les terres sur lesquelles nous sommes rassemblés aujourd'hui font partie du territoire traditionnel non cédé du peuple Anishinabé Algonquin.
- Je reconnais (nous reconnaissons) la présence, la protection et les contributions de longue date des peuples autochtones sur ce territoire.
- Reconnaître le territoire sur lequel nous vivons, travaillons et évoluons nous invite à une réflexion sincère quant à notre impact collectif et individuel sur les vies autochtones ainsi qu'au rôle que nous jouons dans la promotion de la réconciliation.
- En particulier, nous prenons en considération l'article 24 de la déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones, qui souligne le droit, en toute égalité, de jouir du meilleur état possible de santé physique et mentale.
- Nous nous engageons à reconnaître le passé, à travailler activement à une meilleure prise en compte des spécificités culturelles dans les soins ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de l'accès aux soins. Nous nous engageons également à apprendre ensemble dans l'esprit d'une véritable réconciliation.

Après la reconnaissance des territoires, les participants peuvent être invités à partager des enseignements ou des réflexions récentes.

For in-person board/executive/other corporate meetings in Toronto

- I (we) respectfully acknowledge the land upon which we gather today.
- This land is the traditional territory of numerous nations, including the Mississaugas (**Miss-iss-sah-gas**) of the Credit, the Anishnaabe (**AH-nish-NAW-be**), the Chippewa (**Chip-eh-wah**), the Haudenosaunee (**HOE-denah-SHOW-nee**), and the Wendat (**Wawn-DA(t)**) Peoples. This land is currently home to a diverse community of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.
- I (we) also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas (**Miss-iss-sah-gas**) of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas (**Miss-iss-sah-gas**) and Chippewa (**Chip-eh-wah**), bands.
- Whether we are visiting here in person or attending this meeting virtually, or for those that live, work and play here on this beautiful land, we acknowledge that we are on ceded and unceded First Nation territories across Turtle Island.
- Acknowledging this territory serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

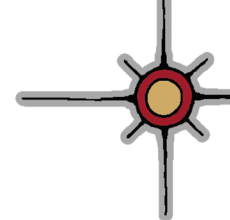
After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

Hybrid Meetings (Attendees from Across Canada)

For hybrid exec/meetings where people are joining from across Canada or Turtle Island

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are all gathered on traditional and unceded territories across Canada.
- CDA recognizes Indigenous Peoples' long-standing presence in and stewardship of this land since time immemorial, and the past, present and future contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.





- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to advancing the journey of reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

Please note:

If hybrid meeting attendees are from the same province but different cities, it is recommended that additional research be conducted on specific urban centres to confirm their respective traditional territory(ies) as outlined in section 4.0 Example of Land Acknowledgement Statements and using section 3.4 Example of Land Acknowledgement Framework.

Quebec

For in-person CDA board/executive/other corporate meetings in Montreal (English)

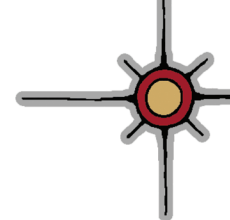
- I (we) respectfully acknowledge the land upon which we gather today.
- We respectfully acknowledge that we are gathered on the Unceded Traditional Territory of the Kanien'keha: ka (**gah-NYEN-geh-hah**) (also known as Mohawk) people, who have long served as stewards of this land. We also recognize that Montreal is historically known as Tio'tia: ke (**Joh-jaw-gay**) in the language of the Kanien'keha: ka (**gah-NYEN-geh-hah**) and it has been a meeting place for other Indigenous nations, including the Anishinabeg (**AH-nish-NAW-beg**) and Huron-Wendat (**wawn-DA(t)**) Peoples.
- Whether we are visiting here in person or attending this meeting virtually, or for those that live, work and play here on this beautiful land, we acknowledge that we are on ceded and unceded First Nation territories across Turtle Island.
- Acknowledging this territory serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation. Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

Pour les réunions en personne du conseil d'administration, de la direction générale et autres réunions de l'ADC à Montréal (français)

- Je reconnais (nous reconnaissons) respectueusement les terres sur laquelle nous nous réunissons aujourd'hui.
- Nous reconnaissons respectueusement que nous sommes réunis sur le territoire traditionnel non cédé du peuple Kanien'kehá : ka (**Ga-niyen-ge-HAA-ga**) (également connu sous le nom de Mohawk), qui est depuis longtemps le gardien de cette terre. Nous reconnaissons également que Montréal est historiquement connue sous le nom de Tiohtià : ke (**Joh-jaw-gay**) dans la langue des Kanien'kehá : ka (**Ga-niyen-ge-HAA-ga**) et qu'elle a été un lieu de rencontre pour d'autres nations autochtones, notamment les Anishinabé (**Ah-nish-ih-nah'-bey**) et les Hurons-Wendat (**Wèwn-DA(t)**).
- Que nous soyons en personne ici, que nous assistions virtuellement à cette réunion, ou encore pour ceux qui vivent, travaillent et évoluent sur ce beau territoire, nous reconnaissons que nous nous trouvons sur des territoires cédés et non cédés des Premières nations de l'île de la Tortue.





- Reconnaître ce territoire est une invitation à une réflexion sincère quant à notre impact collectif et individuel sur les vies autochtones ainsi qu’au rôle que nous jouons dans la promotion de la réconciliation.
- En particulier, nous prenons en considération l’article 24 de la déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones, qui souligne le droit, en toute égalité, de jouir du meilleur état possible de santé physique et mentale.

Après la reconnaissance des territoires, les participants peuvent être invités à partager des apprentissages récents ou des réflexions.

Please note:

Writing a Land Acknowledgement for Quebec presents unique challenges due to the province's complex cultural landscape. Several factors contribute to this complexity:

- **Multiple Indigenous Nations:** Quebec is home to 11 distinct Indigenous Nations, including Innu, Cree, Mohawk, Algonquin, and others. Each nation has its own history, language and relationship with the land.
- **Overlapping Territories:** Many areas in Quebec have been inhabited or used by multiple Indigenous groups over time, leading to overlapping traditional territories.
- **Historical Migrations:** Some Indigenous groups have moved or been displaced over centuries, complicating the notion of “original” inhabitants in certain areas.
- **Urban Centres:** Cities like Montreal have complex histories of Indigenous presence and interaction, often serving as meeting places for multiple nations.
- **Language Considerations:** Quebec’s official language is French, but Indigenous languages and English are also significant. Deciding which languages to use in an acknowledgement can be challenging.
- **Political Sensitivities:** The relationship between Quebec’s provincial government and Indigenous nations adds another layer of complexity to Land Acknowledgements.

Given these factors, creating an accurate and respectful Land Acknowledgement for Quebec requires thorough research, consultation with local Indigenous communities, and a nuanced understanding of the region’s history. It is crucial to avoid generalizations and to be as specific as possible about the Indigenous peoples connected to the particular location being acknowledged.

Please refer to [Appendix A—Resource List: Land, Treaties and Land Acknowledgement](#) for additional assistance.

Alberta

For other in-person board / exec meetings in Alberta

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that the province we are gathered today is the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 6, 7, and 8. Namely, the Blackfoot Confederacy—Kainai (**Gay-nah**), Piikani (**Pee-gun-ee**), and Siksika (**Suhk-si-kuh**)—the Cree, Denesuline (**Dene-su-lee-neh**), Saulteaux (**So-tow**), Nakota Sioux (**Na-KOH-da Soo**), Stoney Nakoda (**Stoney Nah-KOH-dah**), and the Tsuu T’ina (**Soot-inna**) Nation and the Métis People of Alberta. This includes the Métis Settlements and the Six Regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta within the historical Northwest Metis Homeland.
- I (we) acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.
- We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.



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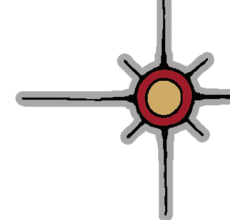
Manitoba

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Manitoba (English)

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on Treaty One Territory and that Manitoba is located on the Treaty Territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg (**AH-nish-NAW-beg**), Dakota Oyate (**Da-KOH-ta Oy yah tay**), Denesuline (**Dene-su-lee-neh**) and Nehethowuk (**Neh-heh-tho-wuk**) Nations.
- We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the Homeland of the Red River Métis.
- We acknowledge that northern Manitoba includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. We respect the spirit and intent of Treaties and Treaty Making and remain committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

- J'aimerais (nous aimerions) commencer par reconnaître respectueusement que nous sommes rassemblés aujourd'hui sur le territoire du Traité 1 et que le Manitoba se trouve sur les territoires visés par un traité et les terres ancestrales des nations Anishinabé (**Ah-nish-ih-nah'-bey**), Dakota Oyate (**Da-KOH-ta Oy yah tay**), Dénésulines (**Dene-su-lee-neh**) et Nehethowuk (**Neh-heh-tho-wuk**).



- Nous reconnaissons que le Manitoba se trouve sur le territoire des Métis de la rivière Rouge.
- Nous reconnaissons que le nord du Manitoba comprend des terres qui étaient et sont toujours les terres ancestrales des Inuits.
- En particulier, nous prenons en considération l'article 24 de la déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones, qui souligne le droit, en toute égalité, de jouir du meilleur état possible de santé physique et mentale.
- Nous respectons l'esprit et l'intention des traités et de leur élaboration. Aussi nous restons déterminés à reconnaître le passé, à travailler activement à une meilleure prise en compte des spécificités culturelles dans les soins ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de l'accès aux soins. Nous nous engageons également à apprendre ensemble dans l'esprit d'une véritable réconciliation.

Après la reconnaissance des territoires, les participants peuvent être invités à partager des enseignements ou des réflexions récentes.

Please note:

Doing Land Acknowledgements for the Métis Nation can be difficult. This is because traditional Métis settlements are dispersed across Canada, and there are debates about the locations and boundaries of traditional Métis settlements.

Métis chartered communities are formal, regional communities established by provincial or territorial Métis Nation leadership. Typically, chartered communities are self-governed by an executive elected by Métis citizens who live within the community's boundaries. Métis chartered communities are similar in structure to the system of Canadian provincial and municipal governments.

The Métis Nations of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario all have chartered communities. Often, if you are at a Métis Nation event, such as an Annual General Meeting, there will be a Land Acknowledgement to indicate the community that you are in.

New Brunswick

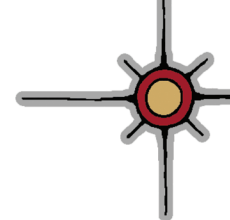
For other in-person board/exec meetings in New Brunswick (English)

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on the unsundered and unceded traditional Maliseet (**Mal-ih-seet**), Mikmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) and the Passamaquoddy (**Pass-uh-muh-kwah-dee**) lands.
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

Pour les réunions en personne du conseil d'administration, de la direction générale et autres au Nouveau-Brunswick (français)

- J'aimerais (nous aimerions) commencer par reconnaître respectueusement que nous sommes rassemblés aujourd'hui sur les territoires traditionnels non cédés et non abandonnés des Wolastoqiyik (**wool-las-two-wi-ig**), des Mikmaq (**Mi'gmaq**) et des Passamaquoddys (**Pass-uh-muh-kwah-dee**).
- Reconnaître le territoire sur lequel nous vivons, travaillons et évoluons nous invite à une réflexion sincère quant à notre impact collectif et individuel sur les vies autochtones ainsi qu'au rôle que nous jouons dans la promotion de la réconciliation.



- En particulier, nous prenons en considération l'article 24 de la déclaration des Nations unies sur les droits des peuples autochtones, qui souligne le droit, en toute égalité, de jouir du meilleur état possible de santé physique et mentale.
- Nous nous engageons à reconnaître le passé, à travailler activement à une meilleure prise en compte des spécificités culturelles dans les soins ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de l'accès aux soins. Nous nous engageons également à apprendre ensemble dans l'esprit d'une véritable réconciliation.

Après la reconnaissance des territoires, les participants peuvent être invités à partager des enseignements ou des réflexions récentes.

Newfoundland and Labrador

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Newfoundland and Labrador

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk (**Bee-oth-uck**). We also acknowledge the island of Ktaqmkuk (**Uk-dah-hum-gook**) (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk (**Bee-oth-uck**) and the Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**)-maq).
- We acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu (In-new) of Nitassinan (**Ne-tass-eh-nen**), the Inuit (**In-new-eet**) of Nunatsiavut (**Nu-nat-see-ahvut**), and the Inuit of NunatuKavut (**Nu-nah-tuhk-ah-vut**).
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

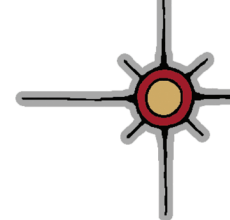
Northwest Territories and Nunavut

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Northwest Territories and Nunavut

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on the traditional territories and homeland of the Denesuline (**Dene-su-lee-neh**) Inuit and Métis peoples of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.





Nova Scotia

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Nova Scotia

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) People, and we acknowledge them as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land.
- This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship," which Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) (**Wool-las-tuh-kway-yik**) Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but, in fact, recognized Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) (**Wool-las-tuh-kway-yik**) title and established rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.
- We respect the continued connections with the past, present, and future in our ongoing relationships with the First Nations People of Nova Scotia and other peoples within the community.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

Prince Edward Island

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Prince Edward Island

- I would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that the land upon which we gather is unceded Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) territory. Epekwitk (**Eh-peh-kwit**) (Prince Edward Island) is located in Mi'kma'ki, (**Mee-gah-mah-key**) the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq (**Mee-gah-mah**) People. The Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq (**Eh-peh-kwit-nay-wahk Mee-gah-mah**) have occupied this Island for over 12,000 years.
- We recognize their long-standing presence, stewardship of, and contributions to this territory.
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

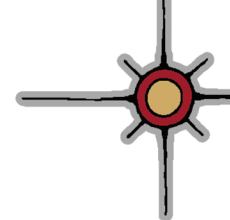
Saskatchewan

For other in-person board/exec meetings in Saskatchewan

For meetings in Saskatoon, start with:

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.





For meetings in Regina, start with:

- I (we) would like to begin by respectfully acknowledging that we are gathered on Treaty 4 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respects to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

Continue recitation for meetings in Saskatoon and Regina

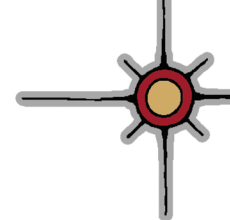
- Acknowledging the territory, we live, work and play, serves as an invitation to genuinely reflect on our collective and individual impacts on Indigenous lives and our role in advancing the broader purpose of reconciliation.
- Particularly, we consider Article 24 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which underscores the equal right of Indigenous Peoples to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.
- We are committed to acknowledging the past, working actively to improve culturally sensitive care and access to care, and to learning together, in the spirit of true reconciliation.

After acknowledging the land, attendees may be invited to share recent learnings or reflections.

International Meetings

When attending meetings internationally, it is important to approach Land Acknowledgements with cultural awareness and respect. As a guest, if you are requested to deliver a Land Acknowledgement, begin by recognizing the traditional territory of the Indigenous Peoples of the land you are visiting. Acknowledge their history, culture, and connection to the land using section 3.4 Example of Land Acknowledgement Framework. After paying respect to the traditional territory(ies) and its Peoples, **when you introduce yourself throughout Introductions you may then provide recognition to the traditional territory from which you come.** This practice honours both the land you are visiting and your own, fostering mutual respect and understanding across cultural contexts. However, please research the local protocols and consult with Indigenous representatives on protocols to ensure delivering a Land Acknowledgment is appropriate given the context and aligns with the host Nation(s) ways of conducting themselves. Please always ensure to follow local traditional protocols, as they differ.





5.0 Areas of Active Engagement: Going Beyond Making a Statement

Incorporating Land Acknowledgements into your organization is an important step toward reconciliation, but true engagement requires going beyond words. Below are specific areas where land acknowledgements can be integrated within CDA, as well as opportunities for deeper, active involvement with Indigenous communities.

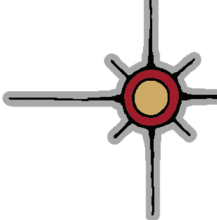
5.1 Areas for Land Acknowledgements:

- 1. Project Proposals and Presentations:** Begin proposals and presentations with a Land Acknowledgement, showing respect for the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of the land where the project will be developed.
- 2. Organization Website:** Include a Land Acknowledgement on the Association's website, especially in the "About Us" or "Our Values" sections. This could include a Land Acknowledgement surrounding where the Association's head offices are located.
- 3. Internal Meetings:** Start internal meetings with a Land Acknowledgement to cultivate respect and awareness within the organization.
- 4. Public Events:** Ensure that all public events hosted by the Association begin with a formal Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.
- 5. Written Communications:** Incorporate a Land Acknowledgement into key written documents, such as annual reports or Association-wide emails. Email signatures for the company could include a Land Acknowledgement surrounding where the Association's head offices are located. Furthermore, additional personalization of individual email signatures could include a section on what traditional territory(ies) an employee resides on.
- 6. Physical Spaces:** If appropriate, display a Land Acknowledgement plaque or signage in visible areas within the office or on project sites.

Please note that Land Acknowledgements are highly contextual, adapting to the circumstances and environments in which they are delivered. Whether in project proposals, presentations, internal meetings, public events or on an organization website, each acknowledgment should be tailored to respect the specific traditional territory(ies) where the activity or interaction takes place.

By committing to these steps, CDA can move from words to meaningful action, fostering stronger relationships with Indigenous communities and promoting reconciliation.





6.0 Terminology

This glossary provides clear and concise definitions of key terms commonly used in the context of Indigenous Peoples, their rights, and their relationships with non-Indigenous entities. The terms included are essential for understanding the roles, responsibilities, and perspectives of Indigenous rights-holders, as well as the appropriate use of terminology when engaging with Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Knowing-Being-Doing: Indigenous Ways of Knowing-Being-Doing is generally considered to be a concept or framework developed through collective discourse and analysis of Indigenous epistemologies. Indigenous scholars have been and are currently in the process of redefining research and outlining ethical protocols for culturally congruent methodologies that can be used by their communities to consider how Indigenous Peoples think and interpret the world realities in differing ways than non-Indigenous Peoples because of their unique histories, cultures, and values.

This framework is deeply rooted in Indigenous worldviews, where knowledge is intertwined with cultural practices and relationships with the land, making “Knowing,” “Being,” and “Doing” inseparable aspects of life. Indigenous scholars and researchers have played a crucial role in articulating and promoting the “ways of Knowing-Being-Doing” framework, allowing for deeper understanding and recognition of Indigenous knowledge systems.

The Indigenous Ways of Knowing-Being-Doing (KBD) framework aligns with the traditional Western four-quadrant research paradigm (ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology) by addressing the same fundamental aspects of research—existence, knowledge, values, and process but through an interconnected, relational, and wholistic lens. While the Western paradigm often treats ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology as separate disciplines, KBD sees Knowing, Being, and Doing as inseparable, ensuring that research is grounded in relational accountability, community engagement, and ethical responsibility.

Alignment Between KBD and the Western Four-Quadrant Research Paradigm

Western Four-Quadrant Research Paradigm	Indigenous KBD Framework	Alignment Explanation
Epistemology (Nature of Knowledge & Knowing)	Knowing (Ways of Knowing)	Western epistemology asks how we come to know things, often through logic and empirical observation. KBD’s Knowing is experiential, oral, land-based, and spiritual. Both frameworks seek knowledge, but KBD integrates multiple ways of knowing beyond empirical observation, including intuition, storytelling, and ancestral knowledge.
Ontology (Nature of Reality/Being)	Being (Relational Existence)	Western ontology explores what exists, while Indigenous Being emphasizes relational existence. KBD asserts that reality is interconnected—humans, land, spirit, and all living things are part of a web of relationships. This aligns with ontology but expands it beyond material or conceptual realities to include spiritual and lived experiences.
Axiology (Values & Ethics of Knowledge)	Being & Knowing (Relational Accountability)	Axiology in Western research focuses on ethics, values, and objectivity. KBD aligns with this by emphasizing relational accountability—knowledge is not neutral; it carries responsibilities to the community, land, and future generations. Ethical considerations in KBD are tied to respect, reciprocity, and relational integrity rather than objectivity.
Methodology (Research Process & Application)	Doing (Ways of Doing)	Western methodology is the structured process of research, often focused on testing hypotheses. KBD’s Doing is an active, subjective, participatory process grounded in ceremony, storytelling, and community engagement. Both frameworks seek to guide research actions, but KBD prioritizes participatory, context-driven methods over universal, standardized approaches.

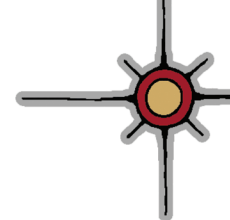
Sources in the creation of *Alignment Between KBD and the Western Four-Quadrant Research Paradigm* chart are as follows:

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Fernwood Publishing

The Winnipeg Boldness Project. (2017). *Ways of knowing, being, doing and feeling: A wholistic early childhood development model*. The Winnipeg Boldness Project.

Ermine, W. (1995). *Aboriginal epistemology*. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 101-112). UBC Press





Indigenous Rights-Holders refers to Indigenous Nations, communities, or organizations that are actively involved in collaborative efforts, projects or decision-making processes. The term acknowledges Indigenous Peoples as equal and essential collaborators with rights, responsibilities, and autonomy in the context of shared initiatives or goals. Using the term “rights-holders” emphasizes mutual respect, trust and the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination in any relationship or process.

Why you would not use the term “stakeholders” in this context:

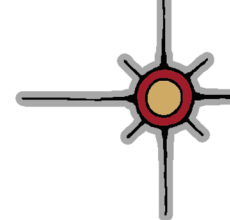
- 1. Equality vs. Inclusion:** The term, rights-holders, highlights an equal and reciprocal relationship, where both parties have an active role in decision-making. On the other hand, the term, stakeholders, can imply a more passive role or merely a group with an interest in the outcome, rather than an active, empowered collaborator.
- 2. Sovereignty and Self-Determination:** Indigenous Peoples have inherent sovereignty over their lands, cultures and governance systems. Referring to them using the term, rights-holders, honours this sovereignty. The term, stakeholders, does not adequately reflect their status as rights-holders, and it can reduce their role to being one of many interest groups, undermining the unique legal and historical relationships Indigenous Peoples have with the land.
- 3. Historical Context:** The term, stakeholders, often comes from a corporate or government context, which can evoke negative associations with colonialism and top-down decision-making. Many Indigenous communities view this terminology as diminishing their role, given the long history of exclusion and marginalization from processes that affect their lands and rights.
- 4. Active Participation:** Using the term, Indigenous Rights-Holders, reinforces the idea that Indigenous Peoples are not merely affected by decisions but are central to shaping the outcomes. The term, stakeholders, suggests a level of detachment or lesser involvement, which is inconsistent with the principles of Indigenous participation and partnership.

The term, Indigenous Rights-Holders, conveys respect, equality and active involvement, while avoiding the more passive, potentially dismissive connotations of the term, stakeholders. It reflects the spirit of collaboration, self-determination and recognition of Indigenous rights

Stakeholders: In a non-Indigenous context, the term stakeholders refers to individuals, groups, organizations or institutions that have an interest in, are affected by, or have the potential to influence the outcomes of a project, decision or policy. These stakeholders may include businesses, government bodies, environmental groups, community organizations, and the general public. The term emphasizes their involvement or interest in the process but does not necessarily grant them the same level of authority or autonomy as Indigenous rights-holders.

When It Is Appropriate to Use the Term, Stakeholders, for Non-Indigenous Proponents:

- 1. Broader Involvement Without Sovereign Rights:** The term stakeholders is suitable for non-Indigenous participants because it denotes their interest or role in a project without implying sovereignty or legal rights over land or decision-making authority. Non-Indigenous stakeholders may include government agencies, corporations, NGOs, and local communities, whose involvement is important but distinct from the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- 2. Consultation and Input:** When non-Indigenous participants are being consulted or providing input on a project, especially when they do not hold formal decision-making power, the term stakeholders appropriately describes their role. For example, environmental organizations, local residents or industry representatives can be considered stakeholders when contributing feedback or expertise.
- 3. Collaborative Processes:** In collaborative or multi-party processes where different groups (i.e., businesses, municipal governments, advocacy organizations) have varying degrees of influence or interest, the term, stakeholders, can describe these non-Indigenous actors. They may have vested interests, but they are not necessarily rights-holders like Indigenous Nations.
- 4. Impacted Groups:** Non-Indigenous stakeholders may include groups impacted by a project’s outcomes, such as local communities, developers or regulatory bodies. In these cases, the term appropriately captures their role as interested or affected parties without implying equal standing to Indigenous Rights-Holders.



5. Non-Governmental and Private Sector Involvement: In contexts involving private sector companies, NGOs, or third-party organizations, the term, stakeholders, is commonly used to describe their involvement in project decision-making processes. For instance, in environmental assessments, these groups might be consulted or contribute to the broader impact analysis but are not governing entities.

Distinction Between Indigenous Partners and Non-Indigenous Stakeholders:

Sometimes the term “Indigenous partners” is used. Indigenous partners are recognized as rights-holders with inherent sovereignty and a direct role in decision-making. Non-Indigenous stakeholders are typically participants who have an interest in or may be impacted by the outcome but do not have the same legal or cultural standing in relation to the land and resources. This distinction helps clarify roles and responsibilities, ensuring that Indigenous rights and sovereignty are respected, while other groups’ interests are acknowledged.

In summary, stakeholders, is an appropriate term for non-Indigenous participants when they are contributors, advisors or affected parties, but not sovereign rights-holders. It helps clarify their position as important yet distinct from Indigenous partners.

Unceded: Refers to land that Indigenous Peoples have never formally given up or transferred to the Crown (the government) through treaty, sale or other legal agreements or through conflict. This means the land remains under the inherent sovereignty and stewardship of the Indigenous communities, as they did not relinquish their title to the land in any formalized way or through war. The concept highlights that Indigenous Peoples retain legal and moral rights to these lands, despite ongoing colonial occupation.

Unsurrendered: Indicates that the land has not been relinquished by Indigenous Peoples to any external authority. It emphasizes that Indigenous communities have not abandoned their claims or stewardship over the land or have “given it up.” Like the term, unceded, it underscores the ongoing presence and rights of Indigenous Peoples, signaling that they have not surrendered control, authority or title to the land.

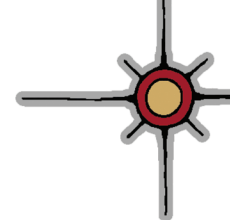
Treaty: A treaty is considered a Western approach to a legally binding agreement between Indigenous nations and a government (most commonly the Crown or the state) that outlines the terms of the relationship, land use, resource sharing and governance between the two parties. Historically, treaties were meant to establish mutual respect and peaceful coexistence, but many were often negotiated under unequal power dynamics, and the terms were frequently interpreted differently by Indigenous peoples and the government.

Key Aspects of Treaties in Indigenous Contexts:

- 1. Land Rights:** Treaties often included agreements about land use, where Indigenous nations agreed to share or cede parts of their traditional territories in exchange for certain rights, protections or compensation.
- 2. Sovereignty:** Although some treaties recognized Indigenous sovereignty over certain areas, others were used by colonial governments to assert control over lands, often without fully honouring Indigenous laws or self-governance.
- 3. Resource Sharing:** Many treaties set out provisions for the sharing of natural resources such as land, water and wildlife, promising access to traditional hunting, fishing and harvesting grounds.
- 4. Cultural Preservation:** Some treaties included commitments to protect Indigenous ways of life, including their cultural practices, languages and governance systems.
- 5. Historical and Modern Treaties:** In Canada, there are two types of treaties: historical treaties signed between 1701 and 1923, and modern treaties or land claims agreements, which have been negotiated since the 1970s to address unresolved land and resource issues.

Despite their original intent, many treaties have been broken or disregarded by colonial governments, leading to ongoing disputes and legal battles for Indigenous rights and land claims today.





Turtle Island: A term used by many Indigenous Peoples to describe the North America continent, reflecting their creation stories and deep spiritual connection to the land. Although Turtle Island is rooted in specific nations' cosmologies, it has become a broader, pan-Indigenous term used by Indigenous communities across North America to affirm their connection to the land and to resist colonial names and borders. It serves as a reminder of Indigenous sovereignty, culture and history predating European colonization.

Today, Turtle Island is often invoked in cultural, political and environmental activism to emphasize the importance of Indigenous land rights, stewardship and ecological balance, as well as to challenge the colonial narrative that imposed names like "North America." In essence, Turtle Island reflects a worldview where land, culture and identity are deeply intertwined, representing a holistic vision of life and the enduring connection Indigenous Peoples have to their territories.

Distinctions Based Approach: Based upon the Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act), a Canadian law that came into effect in 2021, it requires the Canadian government to work with Indigenous Peoples to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Part of this is implementing a distinction-based approach which means that First Nations, Métis and Inuit will be recognized in a manner that acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities and concerns of each, while respecting and acknowledging these distinct Peoples with unique cultures, histories, rights, laws and governments.

Indigenous Peoples' rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 (1) of the federal Constitution Act, 1982. However, not all rights are uniform or the same among or between all Indigenous Peoples. Overall, a distinctions-based approach requires that relations with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit include different approaches or actions and result in different outcomes.

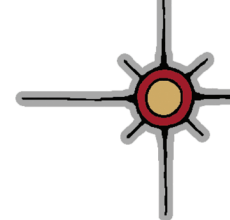
Indigenous: An umbrella term for First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit. The term, Indigenous, refers to all of these groups, either collectively or separately, and is the term used in international contexts, e.g., the 'United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' (UNDRIP). Recently, it has been associated more with activism than government policy and so has emerged, for many, as the preferred term.

In some contexts, however, it can be ambiguous: a reference to "Indigenous Peoples in Canada" could include Māori or American Indian (U.S.) people living in Canada, as well as Canadian Aboriginal people, so in contexts in which legal specificity to people originating in Canada is important, "Aboriginal," or a more qualified use of "Indigenous" may be warranted (e.g., The Indigenous Peoples of Canada). As such, it may be acceptable to use both terms in a formal document or across a communications channel. To avoid confusion, do not use both in the same article, unless there is a logical reason to do so.

Aboriginal: A general term, found in the Canadian constitution, that collectively refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit people in Canada. The distinction was legalized in 1982 when the Constitution Act came into being. Section 35 (2) of the Act states, "Aboriginal Peoples of Canada" includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada. On one hand, the term is broad because it includes all Canadian groups. On the other hand, it is specific because, it is not widely used in international contexts. (In the U.S., for instance, it is not a widely understood term.) Though until recently a preferred term, it does carry a negative connotation because of its use in government policy, though not nearly as strong a one as its predecessor, "Indian."

First Nations: Most, but not all, reserve-based communities in Canada refer to themselves as "First Nations." For informal documents, use "First Nation," or, collectively in referring to reserve-based communities, "First Nations," but in specific references, it is more preferential to use the name that the community (or First Nation) uses publicly. The term, First Nations, can be applied to individuals but technically refers only to those who have Indian status under Canadian law as part of a recognized community. Many Aboriginal people in Canada do not have this formal connection, and those who are Métis or Inuit should never be referred to as "First Nations." Sometimes, the term 'Nation' is more generally applied to a whole cultural group, e.g., "the Mohawk Nation."



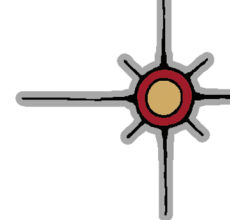


Métis: Métis are a specific Indigenous (and Aboriginal) group in Canada with a very specific social history. Until very recently, they have not been regarded as “Indians” under Canadian law and are never considered “First Nations.” The term ‘Métis’ may be used as singular or plural, and refers to individuals or groups, e.g., “Tom, a Métis student, is attending Queen’s University,” or “The Indian Act does not govern the Métis.” Please be sure to use the acute accent over the ‘e’ in Métis unless quoting a name or source in which it is not used.

Inuit: Inuit are another Aboriginal group, historically located in the Arctic and legally and culturally distinct from First Nations or legally defined Indians and Métis. The singular of “Inuit” is “Inuk,” and because the translation of Inuit is “the people,” it is redundant to add “people” after it.

*When in doubt as to what is the most appropriate term to use, ask the person or group involved, learn what is in use in your area or subject field, or simply ask someone knowledgeable.





7.0 Appendices

Appendix A:

Resource List: Land, Treaties and Land Acknowledgement

[Native-Land.ca](#)

An interactive map of territories, treaties, and languages across Turtle Island (North America).

[Guide to Territory Acknowledgements](#)

Native-land.ca's informative guide to territory acknowledgements

[Beyond Territorial Acknowledgements by Chelsea Vowel](#)

A thoughtful unpacking of the role of territorial acknowledgements.

[Government of Ontario Resources](#)

How to locate First Nation reserves, Tribal Councils, political organizations and land covered by treaties.

[Assembly of First Nations](#)

A national advocacy organization representing First Nation citizens in Canada.

[FirstNation.ca](#)

A directory of First Nation communities in Ontario.

[Land Back—A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper](#)

A red paper about how Canada dispossesses Indigenous peoples from the land.

[UBC Land Rights History](#)

A primer on Indigenous land rights in B.C.

[Government of Canada Resource](#)

Maps and information from Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

[Indigenous affirmation | About us \(uottawa.ca\)](#)

Information on Indigenous Affirmations in the Ottawa Region

[Common Definitions on Cultural Safety](#)

Information on Cultural Safety

[Principles for Engaging with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples](#)

Information from the CPHO Health Professional Forum and Indigenous Health Sub-Group

[A guide to Indigenous land acknowledgment](#)

Native Governance Center co-hosted an Indigenous land acknowledgment event with the Lower Phalen Creek Project on Indigenous Peoples' Day 2019. Through this event a handy guide to Indigenous land acknowledgment based on our panelists' responses was developed.

[Constructing Land Acknowledgements in Kansas: A Toolkit for Educational Institutions From the Kansas Association for Native American Education](#)

The Kansas Association for Native American Education (KANAE) developed this toolkit to help educators in Kansas construct their own land acknowledgements in a more accurate, appropriate, and responsible manner.

[Xwi7xwa—Distance Research: Doing Land Acknowledgements](#)

This guide developed by the University of British Columbia was developed to support researchers working with Indigenous topics.

Appendix B:

Pronunciation Resources

[A Guide to the Pronunciation of Indigenous Communities and Organizations in BC](#)

This is very helpful guide for everyone who is looking to pronounce the names of Nations, organizations or places correctly. This is an evolving document made with the input from the First Peoples' Cultural Council and Indigenous Communities

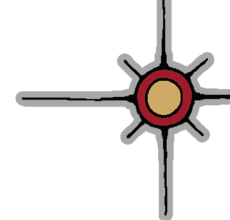
[First Voices](#)

Created by the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation, this site includes recorded pronunciations of words and phrases by Indigenous speakers. Currently has guides for close to 60 Indigenous Languages from across Canada. You can also download the app!

[Government of Canada Resource on Indigenous Languages](#)

Find information on Indigenous culture and the distribution of Indigenous languages in Canada.





Appendix C:

General Reconciliation Resources and Other Works Cited

The Ethical Space of Engagement

This article explores the meeting point between Indigenous and Western worldviews, emphasizing the need for respectful dialogue and mutual understanding. This space serves as a framework for fostering ethical relationships by bridging cultural differences and creating opportunities for collaborative knowledge exchange.

THESE ARE INDIGENOUS LANDS: Foregrounding Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Sovereignty as Primary Contexts for Canadian Environmental Social Work

This article examines how environmental social work frameworks engage with Indigenous peoples' realities and resistances within the context of settler colonialism. It argues that social workers on Indigenous territories must understand and resist settler colonialism to ethically address environmentalism, while also foregrounding Indigenous sovereignty as essential to Canadian environmental social work.

"Togetherness": Exploring How Connection to Land, Water, and Territory Influences Health and Wellness with First Nations Knowledge Keepers and Youth in the Fraser Salish Region of British Columbia.

This article explores how connection to land is a key determinant of health and well-being for First Nations in Canada, rooted in their wholistic, spiritual, and sacred relationship with the land. This study uses a Two-Eyed Seeing approach to explore how connection to land, water, and territory influences health and wellness for First Nations in the Fraser Salish region of British Columbia, Canada.

Distinctions Based Approach Primer

Information on the Province of British Columbia's Distinctions Based Approach Primer.

Indigenous Terminology Guide

Queen's University Guide to the use of Proper Indigenous terminology.

Appendix D:

Comprehensive Land Acknowledgement Checklist

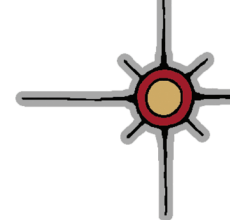
Step 1: Reflecting Inward

- Start by looking inward, as Willie Ermine's concept of the "inner space" suggests. Reflect on your moral compass, privileges, biases, and your personal or institutional responsibilities when developing a land acknowledgement.
- **Ask Yourself:**
 - Why am I doing this land acknowledgement?
 - What do I hope to accomplish? What is my end goal?
 - How can I use this acknowledgement to inspire others to take meaningful action?

Step 2: Research Thoroughly

- **Action:** Invest time in researching the following:
 - The Indigenous peoples to whom the land belongs.
 - The history of the land and any treaties involved.
 - Names of current Indigenous community members, especially those in your field.
 - Indigenous place names and languages.
 - Correct pronunciation of names, tribes, and places.
 - Review examples of existing acknowledgements from the territory.





Step 3: Acknowledge Specific Areas

- **Objective:** Recognize the land's original inhabitants and their ongoing connection to it.
 - Include references to relevant treaties, displacement, and contemporary presence of Indigenous communities.
 - Cite historical sources and highlight complexities or overlapping territories.
- **Key Considerations:**
 - Ancestral homelands or traditional territories.
 - Nations forcibly resettled.
 - Contemporary Indigenous presence.

Step 4: Pair Acknowledgements with Action

- **Objective:** Ensure that your land acknowledgement leads to tangible actions.
 - **Actions to Consider:**
 - Support Indigenous programs, hire Indigenous staff, and build partnerships.
 - Engage with local Indigenous communities in meaningful ways.
 - Commit to continual learning about Indigenous histories and contemporary issues.

Step 5: Delivering Your Acknowledgement

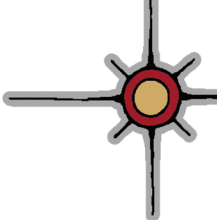
- **In-Person:**
 - When possible, invite an Elder or Knowledge Holder to conduct an Opening and Closing Ceremony to guide you in leading the Land Acknowledgement.
 - Respect traditional protocols and follow their lead during the ceremony.
- **Virtual:**
 - Recognize the land you are on as the host.
 - Encourage participants to acknowledge their own territories.
 - Follow similar protocols as with in-person events when engaging Elders or Knowledge Holders.

Additional Considerations

- **Language:** Use appropriate language that reflects the reality of colonization—words like, **stolen land** and **forced removal**.
- **Past, Present and Future Tenses:** Indigenous Peoples are still here and thriving—acknowledge their ongoing presence and contributions.
- **Compensation:** When asking Indigenous Peoples for help or guidance, ensure you compensate them fairly for their time and emotional labour.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Avoid asking Indigenous Peoples to deliver a “welcome” on behalf of your organization. Respect their cultural practices.

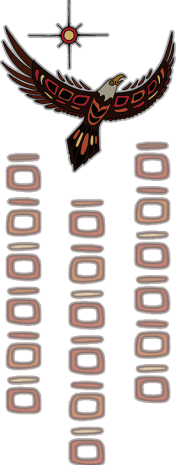
This preparation ensures your land acknowledgement is informed, respectful, and deeply connected to the people and land you are honouring.





Appendix E:

Areas of Active Engagement Land Acknowledgement Examples



Land Acknowledgement



We would like to begin by acknowledging that the CDA head office is on the unceded and unsundered Territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation. The Anishinabe Algonquin Peoples have lived on this land since time immemorial, and Ottawa remains a place of special spiritual, cultural, historical, and economic significance to their Nation. Today, Ottawa is also home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Peoples, each contributing to the cultural fabric of the city. Their vibrant histories, languages, and cultures continue to enrich our communities and generations past, present, and future.

As CDA continues to work to promote oral health, support our members and advance the dental profession, may we work to foster environments that respect and are committed to ensuring that Indigenous voices are heard, valued, and integrated throughout our work. May we each take time to acknowledge and listen to the diversity of voices we hear today as we strive to build respectful and trusting relationships.

Figure 1. Example of Slide Deck Land Acknowledgement or Land Acknowledgement in a Report.

Carlos Castro
Graphic Designer
Concepteur graphique
Canadian Dental Association
1815 Alta Vista Dr., Ottawa, ON, K1G 3Y6
Phone: 613-520-5023

CDA acknowledges that its head office is located on the unceded Territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg People. Their vibrant histories, languages and cultures continue to enrich our communities, generations past, present, and future.

L'ADC reconnaît que son siège social est situé sur le territoire traditionnel non cédé du peuple Anishinabé Algonquin. Leurs histoires, leurs langues et leurs cultures dynamiques continuent d'enrichir nos communautés et les générations passées, présentes et à venir.

Figure 2. Example of Email Signature Land Acknowledgement.



The Project Study Area is located on the traditional territory of many nations including the Anishnabeg, Haudenosaunee and Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Metis peoples. Archaeological evidence from this area shows that people were living and hunting along the Scarborough Bluffs at least as early as 10,000 years ago.

The Study Area is located on lands originally surrendered as part of the 1787 Johnson-Butler Purchase, formally surrendered in 1923 as part of the Williams Commission. Specifically, it is located within the Clause 2 Williams Treaty lands, signed by seven First Nations, including the Mississaugas of Scugog Island, the Mississaugas of Alderville, Hiawatha, Curve Lake, Chippewa of Rama-Mnjakaning, the Chippewa of Georgina Island, and Beausoleil First Nation. It is also the subject of a title claim submitted in 2015 by the Mississaugas of the Credit. First Nation and Métis communities may have an interest in the Project related to traditional land and/or treaty rights and land claims. Specifically, Aboriginal and/or treaty rights related to hunting, fishing, harvesting, and waterways may have the potential to be affected by the Project.

We acknowledge that Indigenous relationships to land derive from the powerful, multidimensional, practiced, and sustaining longstanding and living relationships with specific lands/territories. These relationships shape physically, relationally, culturally, and spiritually distinct peoples. The holistic, interconnected, spiritual, and sacred connection to land has been identified as a central determinant of the health and well-being of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada.

For many Indigenous peoples, access to land and to traditional territories supports critical social determinants of health and ecological wellness, including cultural ways of Knowing-Being-Doing reflected in daily life such as the ability to harvest food, plants, and medicine, having space for ceremony, and having a safe and affordable space to live. All these connections interact and create a complex web-like foundation to support the well-being of Indigenous peoples, as we all are a part of the land and thus, cannot be removed.

In the spirit of Reconciliation ...



Figure 3. Example of Land Acknowledgement in Report.