



First Nations Land Acknowledgement Guide

This Land Acknowledgement guide is designed to provide some thought-provoking reflection questions that will help you in the creation of your own Land Acknowledgement.

Our hope is to move past land acknowledgements as mere gestures, and to help you to meaningfully consider, reflect on, and acknowledge your own relationship with the land you live on, and with its peoples.

First of all - Why are Indigenous land acknowledgments important?

Inspired by the 94 Calls to Action contained in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, land acknowledgements are a necessary first step toward honoring the original occupants of a place.

Our hope is to encourage this reflection not only when delivering the land acknowledgment itself, but also throughout the execution of your #RisingYouth project. This is relevant to all projects as we are living on Indigenous land.

START WITH SELF-REFLECTION

Here are some questions to reflect upon when creating your own Land Acknowledgement:

- How do I benefit from living on the land?
- What is my relationship to the land? For those who are non-Indigenous to Turtle Island/Canada, take some time to acknowledge and think about your privilege on the land.
- What is my relationship with regards to history, language, access to education, access to my culture and language, or to food and to clean water? How might that differ from Indigenous people on the same land?
- Think about your personal history and how it relates to the land. For instance, did your family come here for their safety, or by choice? How did the land provide for them?
- How accessible is my #RisingYouth project? Am I prioritizing certain groups either consciously or unconsciously, and for what reasons?

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Here are some questions to reflect on:



- Have I dedicated time to learn about the Indigenous people to whom the land belongs? The history of the land and any related treaties?
- What is my connection to the treaty agreement within the area I live? Be conscious of the trauma that has occurred because of the signing of the treaties, and what Indigenous folk have lost.
- Think about taking it a step further: Consider getting involved with an Indigenous-led organization that supports Indigenous youth and is actively pursuing reconciliation in your community

USE APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

Some questions you can ask yourself are:

- Am I learning / do I know how to correctly pronounce the names of Indigenous territories, tribes, and languages?
- Am I using terms that accurately reflect the atrocities of the past? Terms like: colonization, genocide, and stolen land for example.
- Am I ensuring that I use present and future tenses when discussing Indigenous people? Indigenous people have always been here and their cultures continue to influence our vibrant communities.

INCLUDE A CALL TO ACTION

- Acknowledgment without action does not address the systemic issues facing Indigenous people. Encourage other settlers to go beyond just listening and to take action, whether that is a donation to an Indigenous-led organization, volunteering, or simply educating themselves more on the history of the land.
- Challenge settlers to acknowledge their roles in moving towards reconciliation, and how they personally can be actively involved.

Remember:

- Don't ask an Indigenous person to educate you, or to deliver your land acknowledgment for you. Indigenous people already bear enough of the burden of colonization. It's up to non-Indigenous folks to step up.
- When reflecting on the Land Acknowledgement that you've written, please ask yourself: How would my Indigenous Land Acknowledgement affect Indigenous peoples listening? Would they feel empowered and stronger from what I have shared? Am I being honest with myself and honest to them?