



## CFPC Land Acknowledgement Guideline – Effective October 14, 2022

The CFPC and the Indigenous Health Committee of the CFPC recommend that this document be treated as a guideline, not a script, to making land acknowledgments. People can and should tailor their acknowledgments to where they are located, their relationship to the land, and their own experience (whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous) and their reflections on the original inhabitants of the land.

### **Why are land acknowledgements important?**

Land acknowledgements allow us to reflect on our relationship with the land. We cannot exist without the land. To further deepen our understanding of this relationship we must first know the history of the land we currently occupy. Who were the original caretakers of these lands? Where are they today? We then need to situate ourselves to the land. What brought each of us to be on this land? Finally, we need to think: how do we live on this land that allows us to protect and respect it for future generations? How do we work together to honor the role of the original caretakers of the land? The land is part of who we all are - our past, our present, and our future. Land acknowledgements do not exist in the past tense; they also must acknowledge contemporary situations that exist on the land and our path forward.

### **When doing a land acknowledgement, you could...**

#### ***Acknowledge the history and the present:***

- Acknowledge the Nations who live in the area where you reside, Nations that were relocated or declared extinct and who historically had been the caretakers of the land on which you now live, work, learn and play
  - Learn about the history of the land in which you reside
  - Use <https://native-land.ca/> as a starting point to learn whose traditional territory you are now living, working and playing on
- Name the treaty(ies)<sup>1</sup> where applicable

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<sup>1</sup> While Treaties are helpful to understand some of the history of the land and recognize the land's original inhabitants, it is important to understand that many original treaties were made without adequate consent of the Indigenous nations they concerned, without proper valuation of the land, and without the consistent renewal required as part of the original agreement. (The Luminato Festival Toronto, Honour the Treaties - <https://luminatofestival.com/honour-the-treaties/>)

- Mention unceded territory where it is unceded
  - *What does unceded territory mean?*
    - This is land that was not signed away by the Indigenous Peoples who inhabited the territories before Europeans settled in North America; the land was stolen.
    - Additionally, many territories which are covered by treaties were not necessarily ceded; in many cases, the intent of the agreement was to share the land, not to relinquish land rights<sup>i</sup>.
- Learn about the legacy of colonization, including its lasting effect on the health and well-being of Indigenous people in Canada today and reflect on this in your land acknowledgement

### ***Make it personal:***

- Consider the importance of the land to you and how you personally connect to the land
- Center your positionality<sup>ii</sup> to the land: if you are a settler or newcomer on this land, you could name this, maybe reflect how and why you or your family came to be on these lands
- Reflect on what it means to acknowledge - to show recognition and gratitude for something, somewhere or someone
- Share an experience of being on the land and how it made you feel

### ***Take action:***

- Acknowledge actions that you, your team, or the CFPC as a whole have taken to address the negative impacts of colonialism on Indigenous people in Canada beyond doing a land acknowledgement
- Reflect on how you as individual or your organization are working towards the implementation of recommendations from the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action](#), [The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#), and the [In Plain Sight Report](#)

**Think: How can we create a *moment of reflection* for folks attending an event on land that was all Indigenous land pre-contact?**

### **Suggestions:**

- Part of your land acknowledgement could spotlight Indigenous people in history, art, literature. For example, sharing a passage from your favorite Indigenous author or a piece of Indigenous art from your local area.

- Ask your audience members (if virtual) to use <https://native-land.ca/> to explore the process of finding the traditional inhabitants of the land where they reside
- Do some research on the history of Indigenous people in your local area - think about this and share your learnings, reflect on your connection to that history as a current inhabitant of the land
  - For example: in Quebec City, reflect on local history of the people – e.g., the Huron-Wendat people
- Reflect on your own journey to learn about the land and the people who have an inherent responsibility to it
- Self-reflection questions:
  - What is your connection to this land? Briefly describe it (settler/newcomer/First Nations, Métis, Inuit)
  - How do you benefit from this land?
  - What is your relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples?

### **Helpful resources for understanding the importance of meaningful reflection within land acknowledgements:**

- [Land Acknowledgement and Land Back](#) from the Luminato Festival Toronto
- [Territory acknowledgement](#) from Native Land Digital
- [What's wrong with land acknowledgments, and how to make them better](#) from CBC
- [Why Land Acknowledgments Matter in Healthcare](#) from Vancouver Coastal Health Aboriginal Health and University of British Columbia Department of Emergency Medicine
- [Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples and Traditional Territory](#) from the Canadian Association of University Teachers
- [What Is Land Back? - David Suzuki Foundation](#) from David Suzuki Foundation

A personalized statement, even if imperfect, but based on individual effort and reflection, will always be preferable to a perfect one, read from a prepared text. If you are struggling with how to start your land acknowledgment, see this useful land acknowledgement template resource from the [University of Alberta](#)

### **FMF at Palais des Congres in Montreal:**

Traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka, a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst many First Nations including the Kanien'kehá:ka of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Huron/Wendat, Abenaki, and Anishinaabeg.

The Kanien'kehà:ka are the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet during the conference.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/01/24/analysis/what-we-mean-when-we-say-indigenous-land-unceded>

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<sup>ii</sup> See: 'Positionality' section of SFU Land Acknowledgement Workshop  
<https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/academic-integrity/indigenous-initiatives/icrc/land-acknowledgement-workshop#positionality>