



Highlighted Land Acknowledgment Recommendations from the American Anthropological Association's American Indian & Alaska Native Task Force Final Report

The history of American anthropology is inextricably linked to that of American Indian and Alaska Native Nations. Consistent with AAA's strategic priority to build a culture of trust and accountability within the Association that recognizes past and ongoing harms, transforms barriers into opportunities for justice-oriented engagements, creates durable action, and re-evaluates access to all facets of the organization, and at the request of the Association of Indigenous Anthropologists (AIA), the Executive Board commissioned this nine-member Task Force to examine these links.

Defining Land Acknowledgments

A land acknowledgment is more complicated than a single statement, no matter what length, detail, or nuance.

Our collective experiences with these statements and our survey results suggest that such statements should emerge from serious consultation with Indigenous communities, enduring relationships with them, and committed actions in partnership (not on behalf of). As anthropologists, it's imperative to remember that different groups welcome newcomers to their land in different ways.

Incorporation of those practices into a non-Indigenous event or domain requires understanding their unique set of protocols in consultation with them which also will address any concerns of appropriation. Serious engagement with Indigenous communities also demonstrates respect for and legitimacy of Indigenous epistemologies. The investment of time, funding and effort will not only build stronger relationships with Indigenous communities, but it can serve as a model for others, deepening people's awareness and understanding of Indigenous self-determination.

Summary of Findings

The Task Force underscored the need to do what anthropologists do best: **be present and talk to people.**

Comments stressed that it is crucial at conferences to raise awareness of land rights and encourage deeper respect for Native practices and cultures.

The Task Force encourages association members to do their research on the Indigenous communities located in the lands where an annual meeting is occurring, creating action plans to go beyond observing land acknowledgments, the history of Settler Colonialism in the Americas, and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their homelands. Specifically, the AAA Indigenous Committee recommends collaborating with Native Nation, Tribal Governance, and Indigenous people and communities and:

- Researching the range of protocols by tribe/group; no universal practices
- Conduct outreach to Tribal and Indigenous leadership and researchers to establish listening sessions.

The Association of Indigenous Anthropologists (AIA) members stressed inviting Tribal members to participate, particularly leaders, and in general making the meetings as accessible as possible, non-AIA members stressed lowering economic barriers (making them free for Tribal members) and doing outreach to students. AIA members also stressed that creating a welcoming environment needed to be a consistent practice rather than ad hoc.

We regard the recommendations about land acknowledgments not as the final word concluding the Task Force's charge, but rather a first, concrete step towards establishing an educational practice of awareness-raising, regardful collaboration, and responsible engagement moving forward.