



What you need to know about writing land acknowledgements
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INTRODUCTION

Land acknowledgements, as described by the Government of Canada's website, have a fairly simple formula.

The first element of a land acknowledgement is announcing your intention to “acknowledge”:

I wish to acknowledge—

The second element is describing what you are doing or what you are able to do because of your access to this land:

—the lands on which I am researching and writing this article—

The third element, and the most important, is two-fold: listing the names of the groups of people to whom this land belongs, and noting the treaty which defines the relationship between the colonialist state and these Indigenous Nations:

—Treaty 1 territory, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

These elements make a statement about your organization's attitude toward Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations.

Many organizations and individuals have written or borrowed land acknowledgements after they became more prevalent in the past few years. Indigenous people and Indigenous communicators have noticed.

Too many organizations write and use land acknowledgements simply to keep up with the times – and that’s a problem. If you look for land acknowledgements on some websites of Winnipeg businesses, you’ll see the exact land acknowledgement above, which was pulled from the example on the Government of Canada’s website.

Many communicators and leadership in organizations might ask, *why?* Why should I make a land acknowledgement? This question is far more important to ask first than *how?* Asking *why* first will lead to research and context.

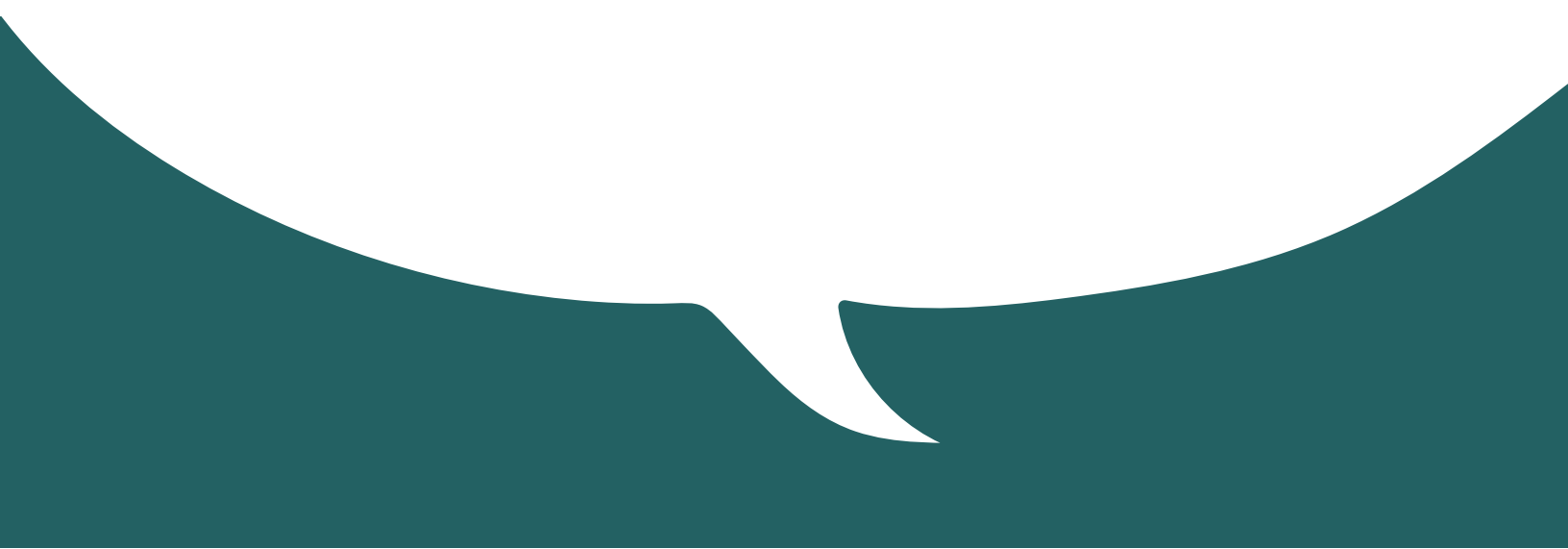
Understanding land acknowledgements in the context of history *and* the current environment will help you understand the importance of collaboration with Indigenous people. Accepting Indigenous people as valuable, creative, and influential contributors to the world today will not only evolve your organization’s conduct and values within the bigger picture of an organization operating on Turtle Island, but will also help shift negative, damaging perceptions of Indigenous people. This is a fundamental aspect to reconciliation, and this is the overarching reason why we make land acknowledgements. The ways non-Indigenous people think of and treat Indigenous people because of these negative perceptions directly influence disparities in healthcare, infrastructure, and justice. Land acknowledgements are a brick in the foundation in changing negative perceptions of Indigenous people — not a be-all end-all solution.

To write an authentic land acknowledgement, you must write with the intent to serve Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations.

This white paper is for communicators in the *why* stage and will point you in the direction of *how*. Maybe you've already written your land acknowledgement and want to evaluate if it's "good enough." This is a good question to ask, but this guide will not give you a "yes" or a "no." This isn't a copy-and-paste solution. You can find that on the Government of Canada's website and call it a day.

This white paper will give you the tools to make your land acknowledgement *stronger*. It will look at case studies and their strengths and weaknesses. It will suggest what you can do to actually "do the work" so many guides online tell you to do.

This white paper will show you that land acknowledgements are only the fruit of the tree that is your work in reconciliation. Land acknowledgements are an expression of the work you've already done to amplify Indigenous perspectives and a pledge to continue that work.



PART ONE

Definition: What are land acknowledgements?

Land acknowledgements are political statements. To make a land acknowledgement is to take a stance on the nature of Canadian society. To make a land acknowledgement is to remind settlers of the nature and state of the treaties and lands which remain unceded.

One of the first well-known land acknowledgements in Canada came from Ryerson University in 2012, which Hayden King, executive director of the Yellowhead Institute, helped write. Though some organizations on Turtle Island had made land acknowledgements prior to 2012, the practice became more widespread after the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's (TRC) Final Report came out in 2015. Indigenous communicators also noted an increase in land acknowledgements after the spring of 2021, when the graves of Indigenous children were affirmed in a mass unmarked burial site at Kamloops Indian Residential School.

Land acknowledgements were not specifically part of the TRC's Calls to Action, though land acknowledgements function as statements of truth. We cannot stop at truth alone, however. Communicators must make the connection to reconciliation.

Too often, settlers write land acknowledgements that fall short. Good intentions, while integral to land acknowledgements, cannot be the basis for your work.

Land acknowledgements must have enough meaningful content to function as the paradigm-changers they *could* be.

Too often, there's no comment on the state of the communities they're meant to honour. There's no exploration, no challenge to the status quo, no mention of the Calls to Action. No answer to the question: *so what?*

The modern communicator

Communicators stake their entire profession on the ability to convey the meaning and value of their messages to gain their publics' interest and attention. What communicators don't say is just as important as what they do say.

Hayden King said in an interview with CBC he regretted writing Ryerson University's land acknowledgement in 2012, saying scripted land acknowledgements aren't useful in the way they need to be:

“I think that the territorial acknowledgement is by and large for non-Native people. So if we're writing a script then providing a phonetic guide for how to recite the nation's names, then it doesn't really require much work on behalf of the people who are reciting that territorial acknowledgement.”

King's comment explains the problem with asking *how* instead of *why* first. Learning why we make land acknowledgements will help land acknowledgements move along the usefulness scale from “something nice to have” to “something that can help change negative perceptions of Indigenous peoples.”

Historical context

For centuries, the colonialist state built systems to specifically benefit Western European settlers with no regard for how these systems might affect all others who don't fit the criteria of the "desirable" settler — that is, white, cisgender, and heterosexual male.

For all the land the state stole and sold to settlers to work hard and build their cities and their farms and their fortunes in a "New World meritocracy," Indigenous peoples' livelihoods and ways of living were disregarded and, at many times, actively maliciously targeted and crushed.

British and French colonialists feared annexation by the Americans, and so that external pressure partially influenced the haste with which they wrote and negotiated the treaties. Where they couldn't get written agreements with Indigenous Nations, they stole the land in the name of the Crown to prevent American interference¹.

Indigenous Nations had adapted to the presence of colonialist states and the settlers they brought over 250+ years and many nations became accustomed to the goods they obtained through the fur trade — particularly metal pots and pans. When the economy shifted in the middle of the 19th century and more settlers came, the role Indigenous communities played in the fur trade diminished. Economic pressure was one of the many pressures that influenced Indigenous leaders to sign the treaties.

¹ University of Alberta, "Indigenous Canada: Looking Forward/Looking Back", accessed January 2022, <https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada>

How do land acknowledgments relate to reconciliation?

Reconciliation is Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations across Turtle Island healing from institutional and interpersonal violence and injustices perpetuated against them since first contact with European settlers. Truth and Reconciliation often refers specifically to the healing of intergenerational trauma caused by the residential school system.

Reconciliation is the shift in the relationship dynamic between Indigenous Nations and colonialist states like Canada. The work of healing falls on both Indigenous Nations and Canada as a whole.

Reconciliation is the whole reason we do land acknowledgements. Recognizing that Indigenous Nations are here, were here since time immemorial, and will be here forever is part of forging a new future where Indigenous peoples and their ways of life are respected and celebrated.

Remember this adage: reconciliation is the path, not the destination. Land acknowledgements are a very small step on the path of reconciliation. Awareness of Indigenous peoples, Nations, and their rights is the bare minimum, but we can and need to do more.

PART TWO

Production: Manitoba, a case study

Former premier Brian Pallister didn't openly oppose land acknowledgements, but he never implemented an official statement for the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Following Pallister's resignation Sept. 1, 2021, the next two premiers, Kelvin Goertzen and Heather Stefanson, greenlit the development of a land acknowledgement for Manitoba Legislative Assembly activities.

On November 29, 2021, Speaker Myrna Driedger delivered the first land acknowledgement on behalf of the Manitoba Government at the beginning of a sitting of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba:

“We acknowledge we are gathered on Treaty 1 Territory and that Manitoba is located on the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, and Nehethowuk nations. Manitoba is located on the homeland of the Red River Métis and northern Manitoba and includes lands that were and are the ancestral lands of the Inuit. We respect the spirit and intent of the treaties and treaty making and remain committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.”

The Manitoba Government and the Treaty Commissioner worked with representatives from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, Manitoba Métis Federation, Assembly of First Nations, and the Manitoba Inuit Association to write this acknowledgement.

This land acknowledgement uses the traditional names of each nation and declares an intent to respect the treaties that first established the relationship between sovereign nations. “Collaboration” with “truth” and “reconciliation” show that going forward, not only will the Manitoba Government abide by the truth, work to restore justice, and support healing, but this work will be done side-by-side with Indigenous Nations and leadership.

This land acknowledgement is good. Better than any copy-and-pasted from the Government of Canada’s website. But as we will explore in the next subsection, the Manitoba Legislative Assembly’s land acknowledgement isn’t flawless.

Respecting the Indigenous perspective of the treaties

To fully comprehend the meaning of the “spirit and intent of the treaties,” you must first understand that when colonialists proposed the treaties, Indigenous signatories interpreted the treaties as agreements to shared responsibility of the land.

The treaties assured Indigenous Nations they would maintain uninhibited access to the lands and waters, and hunting and fishing rights were not to be regulated by the colonialist state (for Indigenous Nations regulated themselves). Some clauses obligated Indigenous people to transition to the same sedentary, agricultural lifestyle of the settlers and to permit the state to educate their children.

Colonialists considered the treaties mass land surrenders in exchange for reserve land, annuities, and hunting and fishing rights on decidedly “Crown lands.” Colonialists used the treaties as tools of assimilation and genocide².

External pressures on both sides of the treaties partially caused one side to have an advantage over the other. The looming threat of American independence pressured British colonialists to unite Canada as a Crown nation, and many Indigenous Nations that had spent the last 250+ years participating in the fur-based economy (which was on a steep decline) felt pressure to sign the treaties.

² University of Alberta, “Indigenous Canada: Looking Forward/Looking Back”, accessed January 2022, <https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada>

The “spirit and intent of the treaties” means to respect the Indigenous understanding of the treaties: shared stewardship of the land and non-interference and respect for Indigenous ways of life — *not* mass surrender.

This meaning is evident in the development process itself for Manitoba’s land acknowledgement. The province consulted extensively with various Indigenous organizations and explicitly stated what they are going to do going forward — that is, working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis People.

Not all Indigenous Nations in Manitoba and around Canada signed treaties with colonialists, thus did not agree to the same terms as signatories. Many Nations consider oral tradition to be sacred and may have made verbal agreements with colonialists. Colonialists may or may not have used these agreements to their advantage at any point in history since there was no supporting paperwork for spoken agreements. Other Nations outright refused to sign treaties or make verbal agreements altogether.

Remember to be conscientious about these nuanced matters concerning treaties when learning why some Nations or Peoples feel ambivalent about the accuracy of wording in land acknowledgements.

The Government of Manitoba and the Indigenous organizations involved in the writing process could not agree on using the term “unceded”, the legal implication of which we’ll see in the next case study. Instead, the government omitted the word entirely.

Even a land acknowledgement as thorough as this one does not completely encompass the sentiments every organization offered. In a conversation *about* Indigenous Nations in which Indigenous Nations were involved, the power of *what is actually going to be*

said is still with the colonial state. Remember this power dynamic when you write your own land acknowledgement, especially if you ever write a land acknowledgement on behalf of a governing body.

PART THREE

Activism: The dangers of performative activism

Performative activism, or engaging with social issues without contributing to real change, is largely a bid to keep up with stakeholders' values. In the time when more people and organizations are discussing reconciliation, land acknowledgements are the seemingly easiest way to do something without actually engaging in activism.

Activism can be uncomfortable and, at times, distressing. But activists don't do activism solely because it makes them feel good – they do it because it's the right thing to do. You're reading this white paper because you know acknowledging land and everything it encompasses is the right thing to do and want to do it well.

The worst thing a land acknowledgement can do is be factually incorrect. Whether it's misspelling a nation's name, including nations that aren't in the area or excluding nations that are, including the same nations twice under a different term, or using outdated/racist terms, incorrect information shows the speaker didn't do their research properly.

The next worst thing a land acknowledgement can do, which is becoming far more prevalent, is make settlers, and thus the colonialist state, feel complacent.

Acknowledging Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations while being unaware of their issues or declining to act on rectifying those issues will inevitably continue colonization, and frankly, genocide.

Catalyzing change on a political level: movements like LandBack

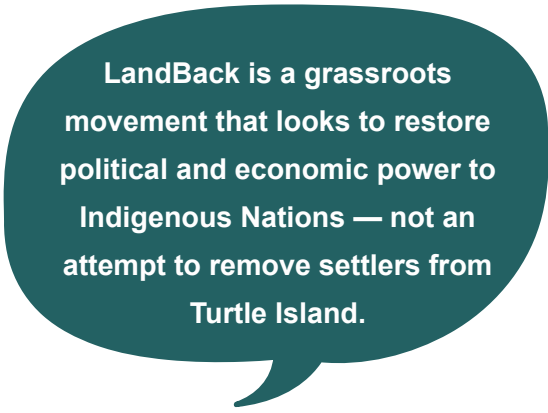
Land acknowledgements are an opportunity to create change, but you must research and write them carefully. Meaningful land acknowledgments could acknowledge the TRC's Calls to Action or specific issues communities face like boil water advisories, ongoing water- and land-defending movements, or institutional disregard for mental health crises.

In many land acknowledgments, settlers don't have to lift a finger or experience discomfort to say they are standing on land belonging to Indigenous Nations. Organizations rarely acknowledge they're on stolen land (as seen in the case of Manitoba), as the prospect of returning land to Indigenous Nations is often incomprehensible or unpalatable to most settler stakeholders (or as we see in the next case study, has legal implications).

For most sensible people, their sense of justice dictates that that which was stolen be returned. But in the case of settlers with the LandBack movement, the thought of "giving the land back" translates to their own displacement. Literally giving the land back creates such a massive cognitive dissonance that they lash out or shrink from the topic altogether (as seen in many discussion boards online, like comment sections on videos about LandBack). Preconceived notions of Indigenous sovereignty prevent many settlers from educating themselves because they're afraid of confirming what they *believe* to be true.

This is partially why many settler politicians do not vocalize support for Indigenous sovereignty. Recognizing colonialism as a tool of genocide that benefits settlers creates

discomfort for their constituents. Constituents will identify the politician as the source of discomfort, and the rule of democracy will cast them out. Therefore, perpetuating a disparaging image of Indigenous peoples that removes the blame from colonialism (which is designed to benefit settlers) is easier for those settlers in power than asking their settler constituents to reflect on their own biases.



LandBack is a grassroots movement that looks to restore political and economic power to Indigenous Nations — not an attempt to remove settlers from Turtle Island.

Victim-blaming Indigenous peoples removes accountability from the colonialist state and clears the consciences of its beneficiaries.

Land acknowledgements are a bottom-up approach to changing the way people think about Indigenous peoples and Nations. Stating the truth, when it conflicts with what settlers believe to be true, will create questions (after the initial shock) — questions that lead to knowledge-seeking, and knowledge-seeking that leads to understanding and empathy, which contributes to the healing of Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations.

Phraseology of land acknowledgements

The wording of land acknowledgements must be considered with utmost care. For example, the common phrase “traditional territory”, without adding that these nations still exist, implies they no longer exist or no longer have the same agency they once had. This phrasing communicates a fundamental misunderstanding of the treaties and the way Indigenous Nations operate within and outside of the framework of a colonialist state.

As communicators, we must be intentional with the things we say. What we don't say is just as impactful as what we do say. By only acknowledging, we unintentionally communicate there is no power to Indigenous Nations; we unintentionally communicate that this land now and forever belongs to settlers; we unintentionally communicate that we have no plans to move forward on the path of reconciliation.

To acknowledge is to tell our publics that yes, we're aware of Indigenous people. To go no further tells our publics (and Indigenous people, regardless of whether or not they are our intended public) that we are comfortable with where we are and where Indigenous communities are — that we're fine with [37 boil water advisories across 29 communities](#), a [mental health and addiction crisis](#), and [a foster system that is 52 per cent Indigenous children while only 7 per cent of children under 14 in Canada are Indigenous](#).

Pivoting from words to actions

Wanting to write a land acknowledgement can be a perfectly acceptable way to enter the arena of reconciliation, but you must commit to reconciliation. Your activism cannot start and end with land acknowledgements. To do so is use Indigenous peoples and Nations as a prop in your effort to earn praise from your stakeholders.

We can and must demand better of ourselves and our peers.

Watch the news. Read Indigenous writers. Listen to Indigenous voices. Follow Indigenous teachers.

Keeping your eyes and ears open to what Indigenous people are saying and using that to reflect on your actions, biases, and goals will help you understand your own place in

reconciliation. Remember to not burden just any Indigenous person that's available with questions — if you can't find and answer alone, look for someone who openly educates or shares their experiences.

PART FOUR

Case Study Two: The Wolastoqey Nations and New Brunswick

In 2020, the Wolastoqey Nations made a claim to about 60 per cent of the land in New Brunswick, and the province took the Wolastoqey chiefs to court to dispute the claim.

When litigation started, the province advised its employees to stop making land acknowledgements in their email signatures and during meetings and to specifically omit the phrase “unceded land.”

In 2021, the Wolastoqey Nations filed a new claim in addition to the land claim, seeking compensation for commercial activity on their land which they did not permit.

New Brunswick employees voluntarily engaged in a social movement which admitted to the theft of land and resources. The province continually disregarded the Peace and Friendship Treaties by allowing commercial activity without consent from or compensation to the nations. The province disposed of land acknowledgements when it became a liability for them.

In his column “Territorial acknowledgements are vital,” Niigaan Sinclair used this development to say that land acknowledgements work. Before land acknowledgements, no one had negotiated for land in New Brunswick since the treaties.

Chief Patricia Bernard of Madawaska Maliseet First Nation, one of the six nations involved in the lawsuit, said in a news conference:

“This is our traditional, unceded and unsurrendered land, and we are owed compensation for the last 200 years of land and resource theft, authorized and overseen by the New Brunswick government and its predecessor Crown governments.”

New Brunswick (and other governments) have a pattern of disregarding treaty rights. Land acknowledgements, however inadvertently, hold these states accountable.

There was no excuse for not consulting Indigenous Nations prior to land acknowledgements, especially since the treaties were designed with the notion of protecting Indigenous land rights. Now, land acknowledgements serve as an accessible, articulated reminder that governments cannot conduct themselves on matters of land, water, climate, and treaty without consulting Indigenous Nations.

Now is the time to go beyond the status quo and hold governments and large corporations accountable for specific problems they contrive – like not providing clean water or extracting resources without permission – at the expense of Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations.

Watch for what happens in New Brunswick. If the Wolastoqey Nations win, it could set a legal precedent for Indigenous Nations taking back economic and environmental control of their lands from Canada on a greater scale.

PART FIVE

Connection: “Doing the work”

For both the earnest and the obligated speaker, a land acknowledgement might seem like an easy way to communicate to your publics that you care about diversity and equity, or it might communicate that you truly believe in the power of movements like LandBack or Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People.

Consider this: you value diversity and equity. You want to foster that kind of culture within your organization and show your stakeholders and competition you hold these values. Land acknowledgements (when done right) are one way to do that, but you can't stop there.

What else? Land acknowledgements can forge a path of awareness through truth. First, we must be aware of whose land we are on, how these circumstances came to be (albeit superficially), and encourage our publics to self-educate on Indigenous history and perspective. What's the next step in strengthening your land acknowledgement?

Big organizations and governmental bodies like the Government of Manitoba have access to Indigenous perspectives because they have an existing relationship with Indigenous communities and Nations.

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) has a good resource for those wanting to use land acknowledgments. The Government of Canada website on

land acknowledgements cites this guide. CAUT's guide invites people to see land acknowledgements as a small step:

“While acknowledging territory is very welcome, it is only a small part of cultivating strong relationships with the First Peoples of Canada. Acknowledging territory and First Peoples should take place within the larger context of genuine and ongoing work to forge real understanding, and to challenge the legacies of colonialism. Territorial acknowledgements should not simply be a pro forma statement made before getting on with the “real business” of the meeting; they must be understood as a vital part of the business. CAUT strongly encourages academic staff associations to reach out to local Indigenous communities to open pathways for dialogue, specifically to discuss the wording of the acknowledgement.”

Going beyond the guides

Many readily available resources tell you to “do the work” to build a relationship with Indigenous communities, but offer no path. This is where the research really begins.

Reaching out to Indigenous communities directly may seem like a good way to start, but simply calling or going into a band office for information is like barging through someone's door to ask for a cup of sugar: entering without precedence and expecting to be given what you ask for. Sound familiar?

Going through established channels where Indigenous Nations and organizations have already agreed to participate and are duly credited and compensated for their work is far preferable to being an inconsiderate neighbour. Organizations like the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and the City of Winnipeg have worked with Indigenous Nations and organizations to develop paths for non-Indigenous organizations and individuals to contribute to reconciliation and Indigenous activism, so band offices aren't inundated with communicators eager to "know how they can help."

In the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Relations Department is [Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord](#). Their Partner Guide offers advice for how to move forward respectfully:

“Winnipeg’s Indigenous Accord is a living document to guide our shared commitment to the Journey of Reconciliation in Winnipeg. Our shared commitment is rooted in the TRC’s 94 Calls to Action and is guided by the commitments and principles stated in the Accord.”

By becoming a partner to the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, organizations and individuals are actually committed to building and maintaining relationships with Indigenous organizations and people in the city. The Accord is a great first step in developing a land acknowledgement. The Accord's Partner Information Guide has many suggestions and resources for doing the work that contributes to the bigger picture of reconciliation.

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, a signatory Partner of the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, has developed its own [Truth and Reconciliation Roadmap](#) to help businesses develop their own strategy to engage in reconciliation.

The Treaty Relations Commission is also a good place to start. They offer professional development training on Treaty education that can help you think of your professional goals in a way that benefits both your Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders.

Commitment to self-reflection and relationship-building are essential to writing land acknowledgements that both reflect your values and serve Indigenous people and Nations.

Strategically building your approach to reconciliation will give you the tools you need to create a culturally-sensitive environment that is in the same vein of bottom-up change that we want land acknowledgements to create.

PART SIX

Collaboration: The path of reconciliation

The decision on word choice and elements, whether to include the TRC's Calls to Action or specific declarations from specific communities, ultimately belongs to the nations you want to acknowledge.

The key to properly acknowledging land now and as it always should have been, is to build a relationship with Indigenous organizations. Using a template or borrowing a script from another organization is a failure to commit to reconciliation.

Land acknowledgements should be fluid and updated according to the social climate of the time. One of the pitfalls of recorded information and knowledge is the possibility of stasis. The problems of today may not be relevant in five years, next year, or even a month from now. As you update your land acknowledgement, keeping a file of previous versions might prove useful for evaluating your organization's journey in reconciliation in the future.

Off to a good start

Land acknowledgements solve the problem of "out of sight, out of mind." Canada, as a colonialist power, uses suppression, oppression, and assimilation to maintain its power over sovereign Indigenous Nations. Land acknowledgements directly address suppression, but we as communicators must work in collaboration with Indigenous communicators to address the other two colonialist functions.

Land acknowledgements assert the place of Indigenous Nations in the broader world and in the minds of settlers. Communicators need to take this opportunity to remind settlers of the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action and Indigenous rights.

Now you have the tools to understand the *why*. The *how* will come when you keep your mind and eyes open to the way others do land acknowledgements.

Always ask questions. Challenge others to explain their *why* and not their *how*.

Listening to what Indigenous people say about land acknowledgements will show you the *how*.

THANKS + ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge and thank all the people that helped make this white paper possible:

Elder Una Swan: thank you for sharing your insight on the treaties and the relationship between Indigenous Nations and the Manitoba Government. I will carry the things you said with me into the workplace and my daily life to better understand Indigenous perspectives that I had not seen or heard of through my colonialist education, and I will try to help others do the same.

Carla Kematch and Sarah Panas: thank you for sharing with me Red River College Polytechnic's process for writing the land acknowledgement. Carla, what you said about changing peoples' minds about land acknowledgements by explaining the *why* really informed the foundation of this piece. It also made me feel like the world isn't such a bad place and that people *want* to do the right thing to make the world a better place for everyone.

Myra Sitchon and Scott DeJaegher: thank you for taking the time to talk with me about the Manitoba Government's land acknowledgement with regards to "spirit and intent of the treaties" and what that means from the historical and contemporary Indigenous perspective. Myra, your sentiment about representation and wanting your son to see Indigenous language and knowledge weaved into everyday instances struck a chord with me. I want to help that hope become a reality soon.

Emily Cain: thank you for all the work you do. Your compassion for your schedule-bound students has really helped us unlock new potentials. Your interest in your students' works, readiness with resources and suggestions, and willingness to extend a deadline really helped ease the burden of final semester.

Marilyn Ringland: thank you for being my mom and my biggest fan and advocate. Every day you teach me something new about being Indigenous. I remember the first time you challenged me to educate myself outside of high school history class with the question, "Should the Indian Act be abolished?." Because of you, every day I focus on listening and learning from Indigenous people.

and **Dorothy Miller:** I would not be here without you. Thank you for the opportunities I have. Because of you, I can do and be anything I want as an Indigenous woman in 2022.

I'd also like to thank RRC Polytech's Creative Communications program and Indigenous Education program and University of Alberta's Indigenous Canada for giving me the tools and understanding to write this white paper and to succeed in today's world.

I want to acknowledge the land on which I have researched and written this paper, the land on which I live and work and enjoy the privileges of colonialist society, is the land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Ojibway-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. I acknowledge Treaty 1 as the agreement that allows colonialist society, of which I am a beneficiary, to exist on this land.

I will use the opportunity I have because of my access to this land to inform my work and my conduct with integrity, open-mindedness, and with Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and ways of knowing.

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