

McGill Sustainable Events Certification Program

Land Acknowledgements

What?

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. A connection to the land is inextricably linked to Indigenous identity. It is crucial to understand that a land acknowledgement, when performed by non-Indigenous individuals, is not a superficial protocol to brush over without reflection and deliberation. This [article](#) adapted from a radio interview with Hayden King, an Anishinaabe writer and educator at Ryerson University, explains the importance of putting your own thoughts into developing a land acknowledgement.

Why?

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

How?

We encourage you to read the [land acknowledgement created by the McGill First Peoples' House](#) and to consult the information included on their webpage on the significance of acknowledging traditional territory and on truth and reconciliation at McGill. We also invite you to turn to the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) webpage on the [Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg peoples whose ancestral territory includes Montreal](#), including their site's historical resources and [allyship tools](#).

As you plan your event's land acknowledgment, we highly recommend you reflect on how your event can contribute to reconciliation and bring light to Indigenous initiatives, histories, and cultures. We suggest you personalize and craft your own land acknowledgement as much as possible. Consult these [tips from Equity at McGill](#) or this [guide from Amnesty International](#) on how to make a customised land acknowledgment.

It is also important to correctly pronounce the names of nations while performing the land acknowledgement. Haudenosaunee is pronounced as **hoh-DEE-noh-SHoh-nee** and Anishinabeg as **Ah-nish-ih-nah'-bey**. Videos to help practice pronunciation are available online.

Ultimately, the best way to honor the traditional stewards of the land is to invite Indigenous speakers, perspectives, authors, artists, etc. into the actual event programming. Performing a land acknowledgement and reflecting on it are only first steps to understanding the long-standing history that has brought you to reside on these lands and to seek to understand your place within that history.