Girl Guides of Canada–Guides du Canada has developed a land acknowledgement template that members are encouraged to use when holding meetings or events. As a land acknowledgement is meant to be a reflective activity and connected to the place where the meeting/event is taking place, keep in mind that you may adapt or change this statement to meet the needs of your community. Below is information that may help you in both your use and understanding of a land acknowledgement. If you have further questions, please reach out to inclusivity@girlguides.ca.

**What is a land acknowledgement?**

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the unique and lasting relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territory.

**Why should I acknowledge the land?**

GGC recognizes and values the richness of human diversity in its many forms, and therefore strives to ensure environments where girls and women from all walks of life, identities, and lived experiences feel a sense of belonging and can participate fully. This commitment to inclusion means GGC’s culture, programming and practices encourage self-awareness and awareness of others. Acknowledging land does just this and is a means of recognizing that Indigenous Peoples have a long and continuing relationship with the land that we hold meetings and events on. Recognizing land allows for the creation of a safe space, open dialogue and community building with Indigenous communities. It is a way for us to acknowledge and appreciate the land we meet on, and a way of recognizing and respecting the Indigenous Peoples, past and present, who have been living and working on the land.

**When should a land acknowledgement be done?**

A land acknowledgement can be done when you are holding a special event, activity, camp or training, or at the start of the Guiding year at your regular unit meeting.

**Whose land do I acknowledge in a land acknowledgement?**

The land you acknowledge will depend on where your meeting or event is taking place. To find out who to acknowledge, try the following options:

1. Download [Whose Land](#) – a web-based app that uses GIS technology to assist users in learning about the territory your meeting or event is situated on.
2. Contact a local [Friendship Centre](#).
3. If you reside in a city with a university, this [resource](#) created by the Canadian Association of University Teachers lists the land acknowledgements for particular cities.
How do I make a land acknowledgement?

Typically, a land acknowledgement is said at the beginning of an event or significant meeting by the host. Stating the acknowledgement at the beginning allows for reflection and mindfulness to be built into your meeting/event. While GGC has created a land acknowledgement template, you are encouraged to adapt the statement to fit the needs and goals of your particular meeting/event. There are many acceptable ways to acknowledge the territory and local Indigenous Peoples so please make an acknowledgement that best represents your experience and relationship with local Indigenous communities and the land you are meeting on.

Please be sure to learn the pronunciation of the Indigenous communities you are acknowledging. If you are unsure, you can call the band office of the Nation to hear the proper pronunciation. You may also wish to practice saying the name out loud before your meeting/event.

What are traditional, ancestral and unceded lands?

Traditional recognizes lands traditionally used by Indigenous People. Ancestral recognizes lands that are handed down from generation to generation. Unceded refers to land that was not turned over to the Crown by a treaty or other agreement. Please be sure to do some research and check the resources provided in this FAQ to see how you should word your land acknowledgement, whether you include traditional, ancestral and/or unceded.

How do I make a land acknowledgement meaningful?

As previously mentioned, please adapt the land acknowledgement to best represent your community and the land your meeting/event is taking place on. Some suggestions for deepening your reflection on the land acknowledgement include:

- Choose an activity from the 150 Acts of Reconciliation to do with participants at the beginning of your meeting.
- Reflect on your own connection to the land you are meeting on.
- Reflect on a specific section or sentence of the land acknowledgement.

I'm interested in learning more about Indigenous People’s history in Canada and Indigenous territories. What can I do?

If you are interested in learning more about the history of Indigenous communities and Indigenous territories in Canada, there are a number of places you can go for more information:

1. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is a component of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Its mandate is to inform all Canadians about what happened in Indian Residential Schools.
2. 150 Acts of Reconciliation: Activehistory.ca published a list of 150 acts that Canadians can undertake to think about Indigenous-settler relationships in new ways.
3. Learn about the history of colonization, Indigenous Peoples and cultures, and the land you live on. There are many books, blogs, documentaries, etc., that Indigenous People have
written that will help you in your understanding. Take the time to listen and absorb. The 150 Acts of Reconciliation provides many examples of materials you can read, watch or listen to. Some examples include:

- **The Inconvenient Indian** by Thomas King (book)
- **The Education of Augie Merasty** by Augie Merasty (book)
- **Red Man Laughing** by Ryan McMahon (podcast)
- CBC’s **Eighth Fire** (movie)

**Resources Cited:**

GGC researched land acknowledgement FAQs from the following educational institutions to help create this document:

Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group: [http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland/](http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland/)

University of British Columbia Student Services: [https://students.ubc.ca/ubcfyi/what-land-acknowledgement](https://students.ubc.ca/ubcfyi/what-land-acknowledgement)

Concordia University Territorial Acknowledgement: [https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html#faq](https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html#faq)