

Acknowledgement Statements – What, Why and How.

An Acknowledgement Statement is an **opportunity to be thoughtful and appreciative** of the historical and social context in which you find yourself.

An Acknowledgement Statement **promotes inclusivity and respect** for under-recognized groups within our community.

It also **raises awareness of oppression**, both in history and right now.

Whilst Acknowledgement Statements can be a powerful symbolic gesture, they should be recognized as just **the first step towards reconciliation**. More can and should be done.

You can find an **example** of an Acknowledgment Statement below that was developed in congress with multiple under-recognized groups at Stanford University.

Example of an Acknowledgement Statement:

I'd like to begin by acknowledging that we meet today on the ancestral and unceded land of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. This land was and continues to be of great importance to the Ohlone people. As an uninvited guest on these lands, I am a beneficiary of the ongoing displacement of the Ohlone people. I pay my respects to the Native peoples, past and present.

I'd like to acknowledge the suffering and resilience of all people whose lives and livelihoods were stolen by those with power, including but not limited to the millions of enslaved African American people. The devastating effects of these injustices continue to be felt today.

I'd like to acknowledge everyone who has a lived experience of oppression, be it racism or sexism, classism or ableism, transphobia or homophobia, or any other form of oppression. To ignore oppression is to assent to oppression.

I appreciate and respect the knowledge and personal experiences of everyone gathered here and I thank you for choosing to share your time and energy to be here today.

Acknowledgement Statements are generally **spoken aloud** by the host or primary speaker/s at the **beginning** of large gatherings or official events.

Anyone can speak aloud an Acknowledgement Statement. This is distinct from a "Welcome to Country" which may only be performed by a Traditional Owner of the land.

You can and should **develop your own** Acknowledgement Statement that is appropriate for your local context, ensuring that it is done **thoughtfully and respectfully**.

Wherever possible, you should **acknowledge by name** the specific tribe of your local area. If you do not know the specific tribe of your local area, go find out!

Ensure that the Acknowledgement is personal and impactful by using **singular pronouns** – "I", "me", "my" – rather than impersonal plural forms.