



IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE, KENYA 2025

PRE-CONFERENCE: 18 & 19TH FEBRUARY
CONFERENCE: 19 - 21ST FEBRUARY

Global Impact, Local Solutions:
Funding Indigenous
Self-determination and Leadership.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) respectfully acknowledges the traditional and ancestral Lands of the Maasai Indigenous Peoples, where we gathered in the spirit of learning, sharing and solidarity. We extend our deep gratitude to Indigenous Peoples, funders, partners, and allies who continue to walk alongside us in advancing equity, rights, and Indigenous self-determination.

As we prepared for our first Global Conference on the African continent, we were guided by the dedication of our Conference Planning Committee: Naomi Lanoi Leleto, Jemimah Kerenge, Keisha Whitehair, Anne Henshaw, Rosalie Nezien, and Hassan Roba.

We are especially thankful to our local co-hosts, IMPACT Kenya and the Africa Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO), whose leadership, particularly that of Lucy Mullenkei and Malih Ole Kaunga, was vital to this convening.

Our appreciation also goes to Climate and Land Use Alliance, Grand Circle Foundation, Lush Cosmetics, Mastercard Foundation, and Tamalpais Trust, whose support helped bring this vision to life.

We express deep appreciation to our keynote and plenary speakers, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, Dr. Albert K. Barume, Dr. Kanyinke Sena, Benjamin Bellego, Evans Okinyi, Dr. Stigmata Tenga, and Anna Ndiko for their powerful insights and leadership.

This convening is more than a gathering; it is a collective call to action. Grounded in the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy- Respect, Relationships, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution- it builds on the momentum of past dialogues and calls us to work collectively and deepen trust-based partnerships.

We were honored to celebrate IFIP's 25th Anniversary with you and deeply appreciate your excitement, energy and trust in IFIP. We thank the IFIP Board of Directors for your commitment to IFIP's mission and leadership and the Indigenous leaders, youth, women, elders, and global allies who continue to inspire and guide this work. Together with philanthropy, through dialogue, collaboration, redistribution, and shared vision, we move forward- honoring Indigenous sovereignty, nurturing cultural integrity, and advancing transformative change.

Until we meet again in May 2027 at the Australia Global Conference.

In solidarity,

Lourdes Inga
Chief Executive Director
International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP) hosted its Global Conference from 19-21 February 2025 in Naivasha, Kenya marking a significant and historic milestone as the first time IFIP convened this flagship gathering on the African continent. By bringing the global funding community to Africa, IFIP sought not only to spotlight the realities faced by Indigenous communities in the continent, but also to provide a meaningful platform for African Indigenous leaders to shape and lead the conversations about the future of philanthropy and Indigenous self-determination.

*The conference facilitated honest conversations about systemic barriers within philanthropy and the urgent need to shift power, redistribute resources, and transform relationships and to reaffirm Indigenous Peoples as not only beneficiaries but as knowledge and rights holders, agents of change, and co-creators of sustainable and just futures. At its core, the convening aimed for a paradigm shift and to foster trust-based partnerships rooted in **the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy: Respect, Relationship, Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Redistribution**, which served as a guiding framework for dialogue and action to inform IFIP's broader vision of addressing the asymmetry of power, building partnerships based on respect and trust, and mobilizing resources to Indigenous Peoples globally.*



IFIP also celebrated its 25th Anniversary with members and supporters during the conference and officially launched its ambitious **25th Anniversary Campaign** to Celebrate 25 years of IFIP. This campaign serves as a bold call to action, advancing IFIP's purpose to **Shift Power, Mobilize Resources, and Build Partnerships** that truly reflect the needs and leadership of Indigenous Peoples.

Initial Goals of the 25th Anniversary Campaign:

- **Resource Mobilization:** Raise **\$10 million+** over four years to strengthen IFIP's strategic initiatives, expand its global programming, and support movement-building efforts led by Indigenous Peoples.
- **Redistribution:** Advocate for redistribution of a **minimum 20% in direct funding to Indigenous Peoples Organizations** ushering in the new paradigm within the next five years.
- **Membership Growth:** Engage **25 new members** within the next three years, expanding IFIP's community through strategic programs, outreach, storytelling, and deeper regional engagement.

Through this campaign, IFIP seeks to inspire a bold reimagining of philanthropy—one that places Indigenous Peoples at the center of decision-making, governance, and resourcing.

IFIP reaffirms our commitment to building a global philanthropic ecosystem that is more just, inclusive, and accountable to Indigenous communities. As IFIP looks to the future, the 2025 Global Conference stands as both a celebration of how far the movement has come—and a call to action for the transformative work still ahead.



IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2025- AT A GLANCE

*The conference featured a dynamic blend of **pre- and post-conference sessions, plenary sessions, panel discussions, workshops, and interactive activities** that fostered deep dialogue and collaboration. A central focus was on sharing and exploring philanthropic practices rooted in the **5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy**, as well as strengthening partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.*

The conference featured three dynamic thematic tracks,

TRACK 1

Redistributing Resources: Direct Funding to Indigenous Peoples,

TRACK 2

Promoting Indigenous Sovereignty and Self-Governance in Defending Indigenous Rights to Lands, Oceans, and Climate Justice

TRACK 3

Philanthropy in Fostering and Strengthening Intersectional Indigenous Leadership.

Four site visits to Indigenous communities further enriched the experience, providing participants with grounded insights into the priorities, realities, and transformative work led by Indigenous organizations on the ground.



The IFIP Global Conference in Kenya was truly a global gathering, bringing together over **290 participants from 42 countries**. Women delegates made up **62%** of the total participants. IFIP members represented **37%** of attendees. Notably, **67%** were first-time participants, while **20%** had attended previous IFIP events- demonstrating both strong continuity and new interest. Youth participation was also a key highlight, with **15%** of attendees being youth representatives.

KEY FIGURES

290

Total
delegates

42

Countries
represented

18

Parallel
sessions

across 3 thematic tracks

30

Sessions
organizers

03

Pre-conference
events

4th Global Gathering of
Indigenous-Led Funds; 2nd Global
Indigenous Youth Leadership
Dialogue and the Indigenous
Philanthropy Institute

05

Interactive
dialogues and
workshops

85

Speakers and
moderators

(63 speakers,
22 moderators)

04

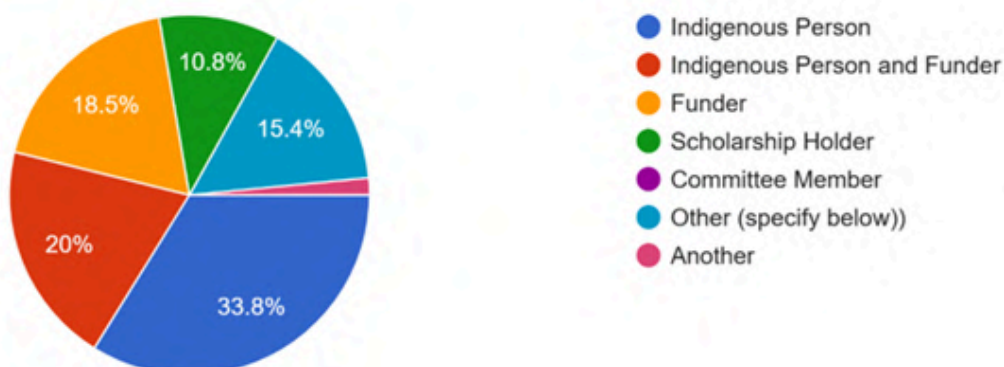
Community
visits

In collaboration with local
Indigenous organizations

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

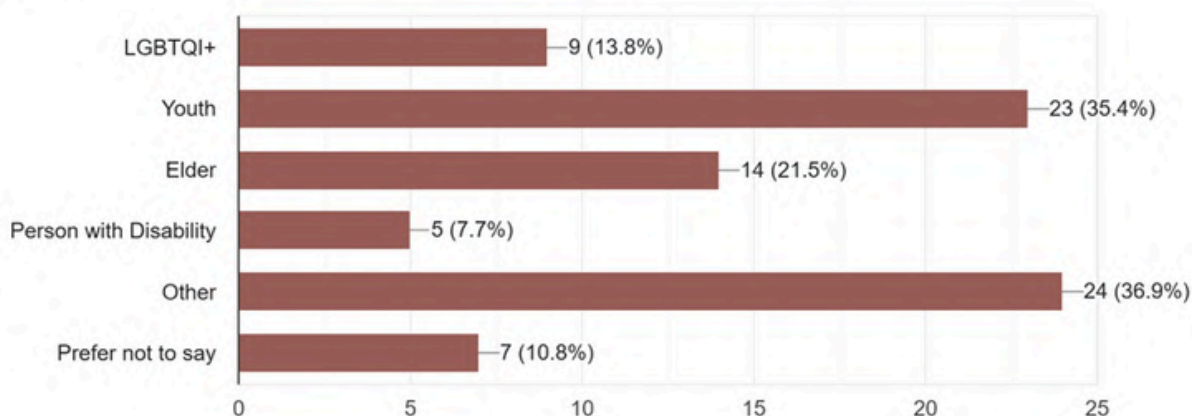
1. Which of the following best describes you?

65 responses



2. Which communities or groups do you identify with? (Select all that apply)

65 responses



LAYING THE GROUNDWORK: PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS AND THEMATIC DIALOGUES

IFIP Hosted 3 pre-conference sessions prior to the official Kenya Global Conference.

4th Global Gatherings of Indigenous Led Funds (ILFs)

This gathering brought together more than 40 Indigenous leaders representing 25 Indigenous Led Funds, three of whom are just emerging, while others have been in existence for more than 40 years. The Indigenous Led Funds that attended the gathering represented Funds from across Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, the United States, and Latin America. Their reach was varied from community-focused, country-wide, regional, and global. Participants explored the current landscape of Indigenous Led Funds and their shared goals, challenges, and values.

A key focus was on the need to recognize the diversity of Indigenous Led Funds globally—each rooted in distinct cultural, geographical, and historical contexts—while also identifying common threads. Another focus was providing feedback to the governance scan models research and now report. As the 4th Gathering of Indigenous Led Funds concluded, there was a strong collective desire to build upon the momentum generated through the conversations had. Participants identified a range of challenges and opportunities across different geographies, stages of fund development, and thematic priorities—such as Indigenous women's funds, governance, sustainability, and the visibility of Indigenous Led Funds.

Participants also recognized IFIP's role in fostering connection and influence, urging the organization to continue offering spaces for Indigenous-led Funds to engage, share, and co-create. In turn, the ILFs committed to being more active in using IFIP's underutilized platform for dialogue, resource sharing, and mutual support.



Second Indigenous Youth Leadership Dialogue



The Conference offered a valuable opportunity to amplify the voices and priorities of the global Indigenous Youth. With the support of conference partner Mastercard Foundation along with IFIP's contributions, **28 Indigenous youths were provided with scholar-ships** to attend the conference representing almost 15% of total conference attendees.

The Indigenous Youth adopted the **Youth Manifesto** which they had worked on collaboratively to present to the IFIP members. The manifesto highlights climate change and environmental impact, representation of Indigenous youths and funding, and human rights discrimination as the pertaining challenges and common issues faced by Indigenous Youths.

The Manifesto calls for commitment of both the philanthropic sector, governments and private sector in supporting youth. It calls out funders to prioritizing, supporting and ensuring funding for Indigenous youth-led initiatives.

Indigenous Philanthropy Institute (IPI)

Indigenous philanthropy plays a vital yet often underrecognized role in addressing the social, environmental, and economic challenges faced by Indigenous communities. As the world confronts a global polycrisis - climate change, biodiversity loss, and human rights crises - the leadership and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples are essential to shaping sustainable, community-rooted solutions. Yet, they continue to face systemic barriers, limited access to funding, exclusion from decision-making, and erosion of traditional rights. Indigenous philanthropy rooted on the 5Rs, directly challenges these inequities by prioritizing self-determination, cultural preservation, and long-term resilience.

Furthermore, unlike mainstream philanthropic models, Indigenous philanthropy supports community-driven strategies and elevates historically marginalized voices, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities. It is not only about funding projects but also about centering Indigenous rights and self-determination on funding practice across all issues. In doing so, it contributes to repairing historical injustices and reclaims Indigenous autonomy and power.



CONFERENCE OPENING CEREMONY

The IFIP Global Conference opened with a traditional blessing ceremony led by Maasai Indigenous leaders—Ole Kumari Parkire, Nataana Ene Shaa, Rumpe Ole Sencha, and Taita Ene Koshoyo—from Narasha, Nakuru County. The ceremony grounded the gathering in the ancestral lands of the Maasai in Naivasha and honored the cultural traditions of Kenya's Indigenous Peoples.

Malih Ole Kaunga, Founder and Director of IMPACT, welcomed participants on behalf of the local hosts, reflecting on the Maasai's long-standing struggle against colonial land dispossession and their continued legal battles for justice.

IFIP Executive Director Lourdes Inga opened the convening by emphasizing that sustainable change is only possible through collective, values-driven philanthropy centered on Indigenous leadership and called for philanthropy's unwavering commitment to Indigenous Peoples in the face of a shifting environment. Board Member Naomi Lanoi reaffirmed the importance of holding the conference in Africa, made possible through strong partnerships with IMPACT and the African Indigenous Women's Organization (AIWO).



Representing the Kenyan government, **Hon. Josphat Lowoi** OGW, Secretary of the Minorities and Marginalized Communities Affairs Unit, committed to working toward national policies and legal frameworks that promote affirmative action and the representation of Indigenous Peoples. He called on philanthropy to align more closely with Indigenous priorities and leadership.

Keynote speaker **Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim**, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, urged funders to recognize Indigenous knowledge and leadership in addressing climate and environmental crises: “Self-determination for Indigenous Peoples benefits everyone. Indigenous-led conservation can restore ecosystems, reduce carbon emissions, and ensure sustainable food systems. Yet only 1% of global environmental finance reaches Indigenous communities—this must change.”



OPENING PLENARY: FROM COMMITMENTS TO ACTION

The opening plenary brought together Stigmata Tenga (African Philanthropy Network), Dr. Kanyinke Sena (IPACC), and Benjamin Bellegry (WINGS) to discuss the role of philanthropy in advancing Indigenous self-determination.

Key takeaways included:

The need for legal recognition of Indigenous Peoples and policy frameworks that support philanthropic growth

Strengthening partnerships between governments, funders, and Indigenous organizations.

Promoting Indigenous knowledge and leadership in policy-making spaces.

Investing in narrative change, long-term relationships, and safe spaces for dialogue.

The opening set a powerful tone—grounded in Indigenous ceremony, political will, and a shared vision to move from commitments to transformative action.



THEMATIC SESSIONS

Track I - Redistributing Resources: Direct Funding to Indigenous Peoples

Sessions emphasized on analyzing the current state of funding for Indigenous Peoples and their organizations, highlighting the transformative role of philanthropic partners in empowering Indigenous communities. Sessions' organizers and speakers focused on bringing the real-life examples and stories of autonomous Indigenous led funding practices, plus strategies and models of work foundations have adopted in various parts of the world to enable self-determination and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, and the limitations of dominant philanthropic models in reaching Indigenous Peoples.



"Indigenous Led funds provide a powerful tool for advancing Indigenous self-determination and economic independence. Indigenous peoples as a global collective are building strong ecosystems."

*Stephanie Harvey, CEO,
Community First Development.*



Key Highlights

- Adopting strategies such as co-designing and co-creation of solutions together with the Indigenous communities builds stronger partnership and collaboration.
- Funders need to engage directly with communities and understand their needs and build a close relationship for co-creation.
- Decolonizing philanthropy is challenging as it requires structural changes in funding practices rather than altering Indigenous communities. Self-reflection, learning, unlearning, reflecting on institutional values and being courageous are necessary to stay the course of decolonizing.

Track II- Promoting Indigenous Sovereignty and Self-Governance in Defending Indigenous Rights to Lands, Oceans, and Climate Justice

Sessions on this track highlighted the challenges and opportunities for Indigenous communities in the face of climate change, land dispossession, biodiversity loss, and the need for Indigenous led environmental conservation. Throughout the sessions, participants discussed key issues such as the importance of recognizing Indigenous land rights, ensuring their active involvement in decision-making processes, and preserving cultural heritage amidst ongoing environmental deterioration. These sessions underscored that Indigenous communities play a central role in environmental conservation and climate action, but they face significant challenges due to the lack of recognition in global decision-making processes. It was emphasized that philanthropy must support Indigenous-led initiatives, particularly those focused on land tenure, renewable energy, land restoration, and cultural preservation.



Key Highlights

- *The increasing need for Indigenous-led initiatives to address climate change, including supporting sustainable agriculture, land restoration, and renewable energy projects.*
- *Developing a holistic approach to land and ocean conservation, considering the deep spiritual and cultural connections that Indigenous communities have with their environments.*

Track III - Philanthropy in Fostering and Strengthening Intersectional Indigenous Leadership

This track explored the intersectionality of Indigenous leadership, emphasizing the importance of promoting Indigenous youth, women, and other marginalized groups in leadership roles. The discussions centered around how philanthropy can support and strengthen Indigenous-led organizations, enhance visibility for Indigenous youth and women, and prioritize Indigenous self-determination in both local and global contexts. Speakers underscored the need for funders to understand the unique challenges faced by Indigenous communities and the critical role they play in preserving culture, advocating for human rights, and advancing environmental justice.



"Indigenous Women play a vital role in passing down education and traditional practices such as weaving and fishing. They care for elders—many of whom still bear the trauma of colonialism—and safeguard the sea for future generations. To continue this work, women must be empowered and given the space to speak and lead."

Yohana Conuecar, Coordinator, Red de Mujeres Originarias por la Defensa del Mar

Key Highlights

- *Indigenous Youth and Women continue to be at the forefront of activism, advocating for climate justice, land rights, and cultural preservation. However, they face numerous barriers to accessing funding and support, including limited mentorship and a lack of representation in decision-making spaces.*
- *The importance of creating spaces for meaningful dialogue between Indigenous communities and philanthropic organizations was emphasized, ensuring that Indigenous voices are heard and that funding strategies align with Indigenous values and priorities.*

CLOSING PLENARY

The conference concluded on 20 February 2025 with a closing plenary titled **“Regional Leadership in Philanthropy for Transformative Change”**. In an interactive panel moderated by Lucy Mulenkei, Executive Director of African Indigenous Women’s Organization (AIWO), Anna Ndiko (Ereto Solidary Fund) and Evans Okinyi (African Philanthropy Network) shared the insights about the roles and opportunities of philanthropy in Africa in the current political landscapes and funding challenges.

“We have to see the world beyond the current state; we have to debate positively in the way we approach the work that we are doing”.

Evans Okinyi, CEO,
East Africa Philanthropy Network (EAPN)



“Whoever wants to engage in philanthropy, that it should be consultative and engaging and consider we (Indigenous Peoples) have knowledge and solutions”.

Anna Ndiko, ERETO Solidarity Fund



Dr. Albert K. Barume, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, stressed that funding is essential to realizing the rights to autonomy and self-governance outlined in UNDRIP: “Indigenous Peoples and their organizations are building the infrastructure to receive and distribute funds directly. Donors are beginning to align with Indigenous values. This shift demands rethinking partnerships, operations, and accountability systems.”



POST-CONFERENCE COMMUNITY SITE VISITS

In partnership with local Indigenous Peoples' organizations, IFIP organized four immersive community visits as part of the conference programming. These site visits were designed to offer participants a firsthand understanding of the lived realities, challenges, and resilience of Indigenous communities in Kenya.

The four community visits included:

Ogiek Indigenous Community, Narok County in partnership with the Ogiek People's Development Program (OPDP)

Maasai Indigenous Community, Narok County in partnership with the Maasai Mara Wildlife Conservancies (MMWC)

Endorois Indigenous Community, Bogoria, Baringo County in partnership with the Endorois Indigenous Women Empowerment Network (EIWEN)

Maasai Indigenous Community, Narasha Village, Nakuru County in partnership with the Narasha Community Development Group (NCDG)



These visits offered a unique opportunity for IFIP participants to engage directly with Indigenous communities, learn about their cultures and traditions, and witness their ongoing resistance and leadership in the face of multiple challenges—including land dispossession, climate change, gender and disability inclusion, forced displacement, and contested conservancy governance. These immersive learning experiences underscored the deep cultural and spiritual ties Indigenous communities hold with their lands and forests.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE IFIP GLOBAL CONFERENCE 2025

The global conference identified and put forward some key recommendations and concrete steps to guide our collective work of supporting Indigenous Peoples.

1. TRANSFORMATIVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES LED FUNDING MODELS

Direct grantmaking to Indigenous Peoples led Funds and initiatives is central to revitalizing traditional knowledge systems and reshaping global philanthropic practices. These models promote Indigenous self-determination by enabling communities to define their own priorities and design in culturally grounded solutions. Indigenous Led Funds embody values of reciprocity, solidarity and trust, ensuring Indigenous Peoples maintain agency over decisions that impact their lives and lands.

2. AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PHILANTHROPY

Effective philanthropy that works for the Indigenous Peoples require granting Indigenous communities' full autonomy over funding decisions while embedding culturally relevant accountability mechanisms. Trust based models allow for flexibility, sustainability and community-led solutions without imposing restrictive external conditions.

3. CO-CREATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Co-designing and co-creating solutions with Indigenous Peoples builds deeper, long-term partnerships. Real-life examples emphasized the importance of building values-based relationships with Indigenous communities, investing in their experiences, priorities, and initiatives to enable meaningful co-creation.

4. EMBEDDING THE 5RS OF INDIGENOUS PHILANTHROPY IN PRACTICE

Funding practices rooted on the 5Rs of Indigenous Philanthropy requires courage, introspection, and structural change within philanthropic institutions. Rather than reshaping Indigenous communities, philanthropy must re-evaluate its own values, governance systems, and power structures to support Indigenous-led development effectively.



5. SUPPORTING WOMEN, YOUTH, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Indigenous Women, youth, and persons with disabilities are key actors in leading cultural revitalization, land defense, and climate justice, but face systemic exclusion from funding and decision-making. Philanthropic strategies must prioritize inclusive mechanisms that center their leadership and build their capacities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately affected by climate change, land grabs, and ecological degradation. Their deep spiritual and cultural connections to land and ocean position them as essential leaders in climate solutions. Indigenous-led actions—such as land rights, land restoration, sustainable agriculture, and renewable energy—must be central to environmental justice funding. Their voices must be included in national and international climate governance.

7. CAPACITY BUILDING AND LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

Investment in Indigenous institutions, leadership growth, and intergenerational knowledge transfer is crucial for sustainable change. Philanthropy must prioritize long-term funding, mentorship programs, and institutional strengthening.

8. TRUST-BASED RELATIONSHIPS AND STRUCTURAL REFORM

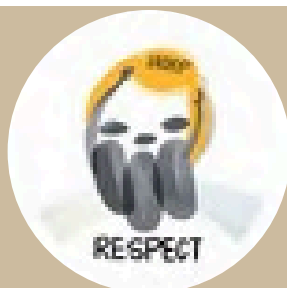
A recurring theme across all sessions was the need for philanthropy to transition from transactional engagements to long-term, trust-based relationships rooted in solidarity. Structural shifts are necessary to position Indigenous Peoples as equal partners, decision-makers, and leaders in philanthropic ecosystems.

The dominant philanthropic practice must evolve - moving from extractive and prescriptive approaches to those that are collaborative, trust based, and rights based oriented. The global polycrisis of our time including climate and biodiversity cannot be solved without Indigenous Peoples leadership. The IFIP Global Conference in Kenya reaffirmed the transformative and collective power of the IFIP Global Community in advancing self-determination, Indigenous leadership and rights, recognizing Indigenous people as agents of change, and strengthening the Indigenous ecosystem of organizations, funds, and leaders. The relationships built and the strategies developed during the convening offer a roadmap for funders, partners, and Indigenous organizations to work together with shared purpose and respect. Let's continue to work towards a healthy and thriving future for all.



IFIP's 5Rs OF INDIGENOUS PHILANTHROPY

Partnering, supporting, and funding Indigenous Peoples Organizations.



Recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights, and worldviews. Seek to uphold the principles articulated in the UN Declaration of Rights for Indigenous People (UNDRIP). Work directly with Indigenous communities to advance these principles and to gain understanding about their aspirations, solutions and initiatives.



Engage directly with Indigenous communities by understanding the nature of their relationships with Mother Earth, their culture, traditions and spirituality. Build and nurture relationships based on mutual respect and trust that eliminate the tendency to exert power over another through building long-term commitments and mutual learning.



Be accountable and transparent in ensuring the effective, meaningful and intersectional representation and participation of Indigenous Peoples where critical decisions that affect them are made. Use funding processes and approaches that are accessible, adaptable, flexible, transparent, and accountable.



Practice the essence of Indigenous ways of living, giving and sharing that connects people, their beliefs and actions. Be open to learning, unlearning, and receiving. Giving and receiving from a place of mutual benefit and solidarity is also part of a virtuous circle of healing principles.



Practice redistribution based on Indigenous Values and ways of living, sharing and giving to shift towards a just and equitable world. Do this through building trust, ensuring Indigenous Peoples are at the decision-making table and directly funding Indigenous-led solutions, initiatives and organizations worldwide.

FURTHER READINGS

Alliance Magazine was the official media partner for IFIP's Conference. They actively covered our event and invited delegates to submit their reflections. From this they curated a collection of blogs and articles from Conference Delegates in the link below.

[International Funders for Indigenous Peoples 2025 Global Conference - Alliance magazine](#)





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