

# Ethical Integration of Indigenous Wisdom in Regenerative Practice:

## A Facilitator's Guide for Organisational Workshops

### Introduction

This guide is designed for facilitators leading regenerative practice sessions in business and organisational settings. It addresses the ethical considerations of referencing and applying Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems within these contexts.

Our aim is to promote respectful, reciprocal engagement with Indigenous wisdom while avoiding appropriation or misuse. This guide provides some initial practical strategies for facilitators to ethically incorporate these valuable perspectives and to teach participants how to do the same in their work. The following sections offer key principles, common scenarios with adjustments, and an actionable checklist for both facilitators and participants.

By following these introductory guidelines, and continuing to learn more directly from the source, we can honour Indigenous knowledge systems, support Indigenous communities, and enhance our regenerative practices in meaningful, ethical ways.

### Ethical Considerations for Facilitators

How to reference Indigenous knowledge ethically in your sessions.

### Key Principles

- **Specific Attribution:** Always name the Nation/practice (e.g., "Dadirri from the Ngan'gikurunggurr people of Australia" not "Aboriginal wisdom").
- **Respect Closed Practices:** Adapt principles, not rituals (e.g., use Ubuntu's communal focus, not Zulu ceremonies).
- **Reciprocity:** Allocate workshop proceeds to Indigenous causes (e.g., land-back initiatives).

## Common Risks & Adjustments

Risk	✘ Mistake	⚠ Impact	✔ Adjustment
<b>Tokenism or Superficial Use</b>	Using terms like "Native American wisdom" without specifying the Nation or practice.	Erases the specificity of Indigenous knowledge systems.	<p><b>Attribute explicitly:</b> "The Diné (Navajo) concept of hózhó teaches balance in decision-making."</p> <p><b>Use principles, not aesthetics:</b> Instead of replicating Māori carvings, discuss kaitiakitanga (guardianship) as a framework for team stewardship</p>
<b>Misrepresenting Closed Practices</b>	Sharing a "simplified smudging ritual" to "cleanse energy" in a workshop.	Violates sacred protocols; risks spiritual harm to Indigenous participants.	<p><b>Focus on open principles:</b> "Many Indigenous systems prioritise relational accountability. Let's reflect on how our team decisions impact all stakeholders".</p> <p><b>Redirect to public resources:</b> Share links to Indigenous-led platforms (e.g., Creative Native's workshops) instead of improvising rituals.</p>
<b>Exploitative "Borrowing"</b>	Teaching the "Barolong conflict-resolution model" without compensating Southern African communities.	Extracts knowledge without reciprocity, perpetuating colonial dynamics.	<p><b>Donate a % of workshop fees to Indigenous-led initiatives</b> (e.g., language revitalisation programs) tied to the referenced knowledge.</p> <p><b>Cite Indigenous scholars:</b> "As Dr. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Māori) notes, decolonisation requires...".</p>

# A Practical Protocol for Regenerative Facilitators

## 1. Pre-Workshop Prep

- **Research:** Use verified sources (e.g., Indigenous-authored books, peer-reviewed case studies).
- **Attribute in Slides/Materials:**

✓ “Ubuntu philosophy (Zulu/Xhosa peoples, Southern Africa) emphasises communal healing.”  
✗ “African tribal wisdom teaches teamwork.”

## 2. During Sessions

- **Acknowledge Power Dynamics:** “We’re referencing Diné peacemaking circles, but I’m not Diné. Let’s listen to Diné voices like [insert Indigenous leader/organisation].”
- **Use Disclaimers:** “This activity is inspired by principles of [practice], adapted with respect to cultural protocols.”

## 3. Post-Workshop Actions

- **Compensate Indirectly:** Partner with Indigenous-led consultancies (e.g., Creative Native<sup>2</sup>) for future collaborations.
- **Audit Content Annually:** Remove practices flagged by Indigenous-led reviews (e.g., FSC Indigenous Foundation<sup>8</sup>).

# When Engagement Isn’t Possible: 3 Alternatives

## 1. Reference Publicly Shared Knowledge

- Use Indigenous-authored TED Talks, podcasts, or open-access papers (e.g., Two-Eyed Seeing framework by Mi’kmaq Elder Albert Marshall).

## 2. Centre Indigenous-Led Tools

- Adopt frameworks like the [Ethical Protocol for Evaluation](#) or [NOAA’s Indigenous Knowledge Guidelines](#) without modification.

## 3. Support Indigenous Sovereignty

- Allocate a % of workshop revenue to land-back initiatives (e.g. NDN Collective) or Indigenous scholarships.

## Reg Flag Checklist

- ▶ Have I named the specific Nation/practice? (No pan-Indigenous terms like "Native American" or "Aboriginal".)
- ▶ Am I referencing principles, not rituals? (e.g., consensus-building vs. talking circles.)
- ▶ Does my example benefit the source community? (e.g., donations, platforming Indigenous voices.)
- ▶ Have I provided resources for deeper learning? (e.g., Indigenous-authored books, organisations.)

## Additional Resources for Deeper Learning

### Guides & Frameworks

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#)

Global standard for ethical engagement, including Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

[TNFD Guidance on Indigenous Engagement \(2023\)](#)

Corporate protocols for FPIC and reciprocity.

[Cultural Survival's Advocacy Toolkit](#)

Best practices for collaborating with Indigenous communities.

### Indigenous-Led Initiatives

[Native Organizers Alliance](#)

Training programs rooted in Indigenous leadership and policy change.

[Indigenous Carbon Industry Network \(ICIN\)](#)

Case studies on Indigenous-led climate projects.

### Reciprocity & Funding

[Cultural Survival: Keepers of the Earth Fund](#)

Directs funds to Indigenous-led environmental projects.

[NDN Collective's Landback Campaign](#)

Supports Indigenous land reclamation efforts.

### Practical Toolkits

[Ethical Protocol for Evaluation \(Two-Eyed Seeing\)](#)

Combines Indigenous and Western knowledge systems.

[Rainforest Alliance Indigenous Partnerships](#)

Business models respecting Indigenous land rights.

[UNDP Climate Promise: Indigenous Knowledge](#)

Examples of traditional fire management and agroforestry.

### Foundational Books

[Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer](#)

Blends Indigenous wisdom with ecological science.

[Sand Talk by Tyson Yunkaporta](#)

Indigenous systems thinking for modern challenges.

**This is a non-exhaustive list.**