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### **Ways We're Centering Justice at the 2023 Higher Education Climate Leadership Summit**

We're excited to share with you a few of the ways we're centering justice at the [Summit](#), and seek your support in identifying any additional steps we should be taking as we build on our Statement of Intent to Build an Inclusive Summit. From our statement:

*"We aim to be anti-racist organizations and to help breakdown the unjust systems to enable the development of more equitable and just systems in all facets of society including education, business, finance, governance, and civil society."*

Learn more about the ways we're centering justice at the Summit below, and reach out to the [Second Nature](#) and [Intentional Endowments Network](#) Teams with ideas [on how to improve this work](#).

#### **1. Learning and Growing from Our Native [Land Acknowledgement](#)**

At our 2021 and 2022 events, we developed and shared a land acknowledgement, and committed to move beyond the land acknowledgment to explore ways to authentically support Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous communities, frontline communities, and their leadership through the climate crisis. We encourage all members of the IEN & SN community to take the following action steps:

- Learn about and recognize the long-standing history of colonialism that has brought us to reside on indigenous lands, and reflect on our place within that history. Research the Indigenous people to whom the land you reside on belongs, the history of the land and how it was stolen, related treaties and how they were upheld or ignored, and where citizens of that tribal nation currently reside.
- Start the slow process of building relationships with Native people where you live, including seeking out local events or cultural centers you can show up to, and identifying individuals you are connected to to build relationships with.
- Commit to taking action to support Indigenous communities -- including donating your time or money, supporting Indigenous-led grassroots movements and campaigns, and committing to returning land to Indigenous people.

At the Summit, we are modeling these actions by:

- Respectful acknowledgement and authentic support of the ancestral and traditional territories of the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida, the Council of the Original Miccosukee Simanolee Nation Aboriginal Peoples and the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida who are the original owners and custodians of the land upon which we will stand and learn in Coral Gables, FL.

## **2. Acknowledging Not Just the Land We're On, But Also the Labor That Built Our Country**

We recognize that the United States as we know it was built at the often-fatal expense of forcefully enslaved Black people. We must acknowledge that much of what we know of this country today, including its culture, economic growth, and development has been made possible by the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking, chattel slavery, and, later on, dehumanization through segregation and Jim Crow laws.

We acknowledge and remember those who did not survive the Middle Passage, those who were beaten and lynched at the hands of White Americans, and those who are still suffering while fighting for their freedom.

We are indebted to their labor and their unwilling sacrifice, acknowledge the long-lasting impact on Black communities to this day and commit ourselves to the work of justice for our colleagues, friends, and fellow citizens.

The following actions and intentions are an attempt to address and make reparations for these atrocities.

*This Statement was modeled after the [University of Chicago's Land and Labor Acknowledgement](#).*

## **3. Centering BIPOC Leaders As Speakers, Topic Experts, and Attendees**

Second Nature and the Intentional Endowments Network are committed to making justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion part of the culture and the strength of our organizations and work, including the Higher Education Climate Leadership Summit.

Our goal is to provide an inclusive platform for speakers, panelists, facilitators, and participants to bring diverse identities, life experiences, and professional expertise to discussion, planning, and action, and to center BIPOC voices throughout the Summit.

We are committed to:

**Design 100% of our Panels to Not be All White or All Male:** Any given session or panel with 4 or more speakers should include at least one speaker who identifies as a woman, non-binary, or genderfluid, and at least one speaker

who identifies as a person of color.

**Develop a Session by and for BIPOC Leaders in the Higher Education Sustainability Community:** Second Nature is leading the development of a session to identify and strategize how to be most effective in assisting HBCUs and MSIs with their climate action planning journeys, to establish a culture of inclusion that can resonate throughout and beyond the summit, and to create a space for BIPOC community members to connect with trusted peers, find new friends, mentors, and professionals to connect and grow with.

**Gather Speaker and Attendee Demographics to Ensure Diverse Representation on Stage and Throughout the Event:** Our registration forms give everyone the option to self-identify their gender and race/ethnicity. This information allows us to plan a diverse and representative roster. We strive to exceed the U.S. Census baseline numbers, and will actively prioritize underrepresented and historically marginalized voices in our outreach and agenda design.

#### **4. Ensuring Our Content and Space is Accessible to All**

As a part of our registration process, we ask all attendees to indicate their accessibility needs, and then work directly with the attendee and event space to ensure all needs are considered (including mobility, visual, auditory, linguistic, and cognitive areas).

All Summit main stage presentations will be streamed online to increase accessibility of content to members of our Networks that are not able to travel to the Summit.

#### **5. Standing With Frontline and Fenceline Communities<sup>1</sup> in Florida**

IEN and SN are committed to breaking down unjust systems to enable the development of more equitable and just systems in all facets of society.

This commitment extends to BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other community members in Florida that are continually negatively affected by suppressive state policies, and those who will face the greatest losses if policies are not enacted to address climate change impacts across the state.

At the Summit, we will work to create a safe, brave, and inclusive space for all members of our community, and will take advantage of the opportunity to include the perspectives of regional community members into our conversations on climate action, adaptation, and appropriate ways to support frontline communities in Florida and the Southeast as we advocate for more equitable systems and policies across institutions and state lines.

As we move forward in selecting future locations for the Summit, our priority will continue to be places where all of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/frontline-fenceline-communities>

our members feel included, welcomed, and accepted. We are making donations to several local BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and indigenous organizations and have invited their participation in the Summit.

## **6. Prioritizing BIPOC and Woman Owned and Operated Vendors**

Throughout the Summit, we are committed to prioritizing BIPOC and woman owned and operated services and businesses through [Yellow Chair](#), including in sourcing dine around restaurants, videographers, photographers, AV teams, event management services, and amplifying patronage of other vendors.

## **7. Implementing a Policy for Complimentary and Discounted Registration and Speaker Honorariums**

In an ongoing effort to make the Higher Education Climate Leadership Summit more equitable, inclusive, and transparent, Second Nature and the Intentional Endowments Network have developed guiding principles and a process to discount and/or compensate attendees and speakers for the time, energy, and knowledge they put into developing and sharing inspiring and actionable content for Summit participants.

While we have set the lowest registration fees possible, we are also conscious of the current and historic inequities that make these fees a barrier to participation for many. We invited all attendees and speakers to honestly assess their experience, needs, and societal privilege, and take that into account when determining if they were able to contribute the full price of registration, or if they required discounted registration, complimentary registration, and/or travel assistance. We invited speakers to reach out if discounted or complimentary registration would increase their ability to participate in this year's Summit.

## **8. Upholding a Brave Space Code of Conduct**

Recently, Second Nature created Brave Space principles to help guide spaces where all can express themselves, challenge each other, and learn from one another.

We've incorporated some of these into this year's Code of Conduct. We invite you to center these principles while participating in conversations throughout the Summit. This public code of conduct that reflects the needs of our community and sets up our team members with a plan of how to respond to any incidents that arise.

### **Summit Code of Conduct**

As a Summit participant, I agree to:

- Hold in confidence any sensitive information shared with me by other participants during the Summit and networking events;
- Take responsibility for both my intent and my impact on others, and be open to feedback about my behaviors that may be negatively impacting others;

- Help ensure equal speaking time for other participants of the Summit;
- Name racist, sexist, and other demeaning and marginalizing behaviors or language;
- Listen and seek to understand different perspectives and opinions, even when they seem to conflict with my own;
- Practice being comfortable with discomfort and the anxiety that can accompany deep learning experiences;
- Be present during Summit events and bring my fullest attention and willingness to engage in this Summit;
- Where I'm able, I will be generous with my time, connections, and resources in support of the members of our community who are working to advance climate resilience and justice.

## 9. Elevating Intersectionality & Ensuring That Conversations about Justice are Integrated Across the Full Program

We recognize that it is not the responsibility of speakers from historically underrepresented groups to focus on justice. We will support all speakers in developing an understanding that conversations about justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion will not just be siloed into dedicated sessions, but addressed throughout the program.

Second Nature and IEN understands each person comes with an intersectional identity, and that no one lives a one-life issue. This is inherent to Second Nature and IENs partnership, as each organization's missions focus on different parts of the climate crisis, but have spaces where conversations together strengthen our solutions.

Additionally, we will work to design sessions that create space for input and calls to action, centering the feedback and thoughts of BIPOC and other historically underrepresented community members in that process, and facilitating sessions in a way that ensures an equitable representation of viewpoints across the event.

## 10. Inviting All Attendees and Speakers to Center Justice at the Summit and Beyond

We know that centering justice is an ongoing conversation, not an end point, and are committed to supporting our networks in advancing JEDI work throughout and beyond the Summit. We encourage you to:

**Move beyond a land acknowledgement** by taking one or all of the action steps listed above.

**Be a Mindful Conversation Participant:** Practice Brave Space Principles listed above, and speak from your own experiences and responses, and do not speak for a whole group or express assumptions about the experience of others. Be willing to "try on" new ideas, or ways of doing things that might not be what you prefer or are familiar with.

**Keep Your Language Accessible:** Everyone in attendance comes from different backgrounds and brings varied experiences to our conversations. Be mindful of the language you're using and concepts that underpin your discussions, and clarify often if your colleagues are following you.

**We invite you to donate to the local organizations we supported this year:**

- [Compass LGBTQ+ Community Center](#)
- [South Florida People of Color](#)
- [Southeast Climate and Energy Network](#)
- [EcoHomies](#)

**Let us Know How We Can Enhance What We're Doing by completing [this form](#)**, or reach out to the [Second Nature](#) and [Intentional Endowments Network](#) Teams with ideas on how to improve this work.

With sincere gratitude,

The Second Nature and Intentional Endowments Network Teams