



Righting Historical Wrongs and Building a Brighter Future Together

Three years have passed since the landmark report entitled [Land-grab Universities: Expropriated Indigenous land is the foundation of the land-grant university system](#) was published in High Country News (March 30, 2020). So much has happened since then. Indeed, so much was occurring in our nation and around the world right around its publication time that this very provocative article risked being lost to history, along with the original events that triggered it. But the story told so vividly by Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone led to much institutional self-reflection among land-grant universities (LGUs) regarding the Native territories that were taken and sold in service to their foundation as institutions. In some cases, LGUs have acted intentionally to make amends with the original inhabitants of this land, known to some Native Peoples as Turtle Island, though there is plenty of work left to do.

With the course of daily events around the world again threatening to diminish our collective memory, we now are at another crossroads: either more permanent resolutions are enacted soon, or else the opportunity to act may be lost indefinitely. [The Land-Grant Partners \(LGP\)](#) project aims to pursue necessary historical justice activities through the creation of formal alliances between the original 1862 land-grant institutions and those 1994 versions known more commonly as Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). To that end, we are organizing an **1862/1994 Land-Grant Summit** for October 12-13, 2023 in Denver, immediately preceding the annual conference for the First Americans Land-Grant Consortium ([FALCON](#)).

The partnerships we aim to build must begin with dialogue, happening in earnest, neither in a perfunctory nor performative manner. Hence, we are inviting representatives of both 1862 and 1994 LGUs to meet with an intent to generate genuine conversations that go deeper than mere conference presentations. We will hear information regarding some of the challenges faced by TCUs, and then focus on solutions and productive partnerships that will prevail well into the future. The intent is to promote mutual interests affecting both categories of institutions, to the betterment of society as a whole. We envision partnerships involving the LGU staples of research, teaching, and outreach, but also going beyond to include efforts of meaningful benefit to the resilience of Native and non-Native communities alike, including but not limited to issues concerning food security/sovereignty, economic development, physical and mental healthcare, as well as environmental challenges that, in many cases, reflect the fundamentally broken relationship between the land and its original caretakers. Ultimately, this initial summit is intended to lead toward another in 2024 that would invite senior leadership from 1862 and 1994 LGUs to engage in dialogue with an aim to form concrete plans for constructive partnering in the years to come.

One framework that might be used to guide the ways in which 1862 and 1994 land-grant institutions work together is reflected in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) [recent draft report](#), released almost three years to the day following the original Land-Grab article's publication. The summary statement in that report acknowledges "the value of diverse forms of knowledge" and "reflects the increasing diversity of actors involved in climate action." This same approach applies to the other areas of concern mentioned above, and many others, where diverse ways of thinking, methods for conducting research, and cultural practices for implementing solutions will represent critical success factors in our collective future.

Almost every major challenge our society faces today has roots in the divisions represented in part, no matter how unintentionally, by the way in which the land-grant system was founded. Perhaps the bookends formed by the Land-Grab and IPCC reports provide an historical opportunity to pursue and, indeed, achieve effective and durable solutions as a byproduct of the partnerships built in the context of this summit and the programming that may follow. We therefore invite representatives of all 1862 and 1994 LGUs to take seriously this opportunity to meet in forthright dialogue for the betterment of all. As Chief Sitting Bull once said, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children."



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Goals and Objectives for LGP Summit

Overall Goal/Mission: Truth, reconciliation, and reciprocal efforts among land-grant universities to build a better future for everyone.

Objectives:

- 1) To raise awareness of the circumstances associated with the founding of the land-grant university system and stimulate positive steps toward making amends.
- 2) To build collaboration that meaningfully addresses the historical wrongs and generates positive relationships aimed at appropriate reconciliation efforts providing opportunities for healing.
- 3) To build strong partnerships between 1862 and 1994 land-grant universities that direct precious resources and collective wisdom toward solving some of society's greatest challenges.
- 4) To identify and engage groups, offices, and/or individual leaders within institutions who affirm these intentions and are willing to work toward implementation in the years to come.
- 5) To generate necessary infrastructure and operating principles to support this work on an ongoing basis, including both organizational and financial components.

Summit Details

What: Preconference meeting before conference of the First Americans Land-Grant Consortium ([FALCON](#))

When: October 12-13, 2023 – starting early on the 12th and ending at noon on the 13th

Where: Hampton Inn/Homewood Suites, 550 15th Street, Denver, CO

Reservation links – use code FND (please reserve rooms for October 11 & 12 nights)

[Hampton Inn & Suites Denver Downtown](#), phone: (303) 623-5900

[Homewood Suites Denver Downtown](#), phone: (303) 534-7800

Who: Administrators, faculty, Extension personnel, and other officials representing 1862 land-grant universities or 1994 tribal colleges and universities.

Host: [First Nations Development Institute](#) (Longmont, CO), hosting this first summit in conjunction with FALCON and [CHRR at The Ohio State University](#)

Information regarding the meeting and registration: info@landgrantpartners.org

Fundraising Considerations

The intention of summit organizers is to provide financial assistance for anyone needing it to attend, whether it be for hotel reservations, meeting registration, or a combination. In order to support this effort, we are asking registering institutions and other interested organizations to consider sponsoring with contributions of \$5K (corn), \$2.5K (beans), or \$1K (squash). We also eagerly welcome the support of foundations or individuals who are able to sponsor at higher levels, perhaps in the \$10K–\$20K range.

All sponsors will be acknowledged accordingly at the conference and in any materials or press releases developed for and/or after the summit. Any proceeds from the event will be maintained by the First Nations Development Institute to support continuation of the project towards and beyond the next phase of the project in 2024. Those interested in contributing should contact brian@landgrantpartners.org.