



## Pathways on a Language Landscape: A Planning Guide for Native Language Revitalization

*"It's not just language. It's not just culture. It's the survival of our people."*

-Language Visionary

Imagine standing at the peak of a 10,000-foot-tall mountain, looking out over the beauty of a wide and diverse landscape. You may see ranges, rivers, forests, mesas, deserts, valleys, and plains. As your gaze sweeps the landscape, you become aware of potential pathways and milestones marking your journey toward the horizon in the distance.

Imagine that the horizon line represents your Tribal Nation's vision for reclaiming and revitalizing your language. The pathways leading there represent valuable and tangible language revitalization planning practices that can be chosen and utilized to help move you, your families, and communities toward the horizon—your Nation's vision of speaking, thinking, and embodying the language of your ancestors.

*Pathways on a Language Landscape* maps out nine pathways, or language revitalization practices, to support Native communities in developing Native-led language and cultural revitalization programs.

By exercising self-determination and Native Nation building, we envision Tribal Nations creating supportive and thriving language learning environments in which Native children live and flourish at the horizon, and speak, think, pray, and embody their languages each and every day.

With great appreciation to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for its support of this planning process and for believing that every child deserves to live a full life.

For more information, contact the MICA Group, [www.micagroup.org](http://www.micagroup.org).

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**“Our languages are the breath of life. Inherited from our ancestors, our languages live through us as whole human beings, communicating how to live fully.”**

- Language Visionary

## 9 Pathways on a Language Landscape



<b>Awareness</b>	Building individual, community, and Tribal government awareness of language loss; recognizing the need for intervention.
<b>Values</b>	Sharing knowledge systems, values, and cultural practices through language.
<b>Family</b>	Supporting families who are committed to maintaining the language for future generations.
<b>Intergenerational Involvement</b>	Actively engaging all generations in language revitalization.
<b>Tribal Sovereignty and Policy</b>	Asserting Tribal sovereignty and developing policies to ensure that language revitalization programs survive and thrive.
<b>Materials and Documentation</b>	Maintaining an easily accessible and expansive repository of language learning materials, documentation, data, and research.
<b>Teaching and Training</b>	Investing in long-term language instruction, including language planners, teachers, teacher training, and academic expertise.
<b>Language Use in Media</b>	Using the language in all forms of media to increase its relevance in daily life.
<b>Resources</b>	Garnering the resources necessary to sustain the Tribe's ability to keep the language alive and thriving.

# Foreword

## First Words

Suzan Shown Harjo

When asked to write the Foreword for this language landscape, I was taken with the idea of writing the word before the words and with the question: what comes before that first word?

For a writer, the first word is the most difficult to find and to fix on the page. For a singer, it is that perfect first note. For a mother, it's her baby's first sound. But before that elusive word or magical note or precious cry, there is breath. Breath, like the mist before dawn, as delicate as the smell of sage before it is burned, as strong as wings of a dragonfly.

In human ways, the ways of words and dreams, we began to map pathways along the landscape of heritage languages. It was questioned whether fluency, attainable by only a very few, should be the primary objective, or if using the language, however haltingly, is more realistic and productive for most people.

This reminded me of the many decades of discussions among Native speakers, linguists and others that led to substituting the word "revitalization" for "preservation." It was the difference between "pickling" language in a pristine state, often until it no longer exists as a living language, and breathing new life into language, especially through regular use between the eldest and youngest generations.

This is the value of coming together and of talk and of silence – understanding comes.

In diplomacy, deference is given to one and all who gather, to the nature of the journey made and to those left behind. Sorrows, troubles, and passages of time are acknowledged and given great respect, both to begin and to suspend encounters.

In 1992, as many people were celebrating the Quincentenary of the Columbus Voyages, most Native Peoples of this hemisphere were mourning those who did not survive the Invasion and commemorating those who did. Onondaga Nation Faithkeeper Oren Lyons and I co-chaired a gathering at Taos Pueblo of 100 writers, artists and wisdom keepers. At the conclusion of our five days together, we issued a *Statement of Vision Toward the Next 500 Years*, which reads in small part:

*We envision that in five hundred years Indigenous Peoples will be here, protecting and living with Mother Earth in our own lands. We see a future of coming generations of Native People who are healthy in body and spirit, who speak Native languages daily and who are supported by traditional extended families.*

*We look forward to leadership that encourages the religious and cultural manifestations of our traditions, and the reclamation and continuing use of our traditional ceremonies, hairstyles, foods, clothes, music, personal and tribal names and medicines. Our cultural renewal will assure the perpetuation of natural species that are dying, and perhaps even some of those thought to be extinct.*

*All life is dependent upon moral and ethical laws which protect earth, water, animals, plants and tribal traditions and ceremonies. Humanity has the responsibility to live in accordance with natural laws, in order to perpetuate all living beings for the good of all Creation.*

In myriad Native ceremonies, the first words follow the breath of silence and name the Creator, the Great Mysterious. And then? Gratitude. And always? The Gifts of Creation we appreciate and give thanks for at this time.

The Haudenosaunee call this *Words Before All Else: Greetings to the Natural World*. This Thanksgiving Address, the Ohen:ton Karihwaterhkwen, opens and closes ceremonial and social gatherings of the Six Nations of the Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Onondaga, Seneca and Tuscarora. In full and depending on the oratory powers of the Speaker, it can be a sunrise prayer or take hours or a whole day. After giving thanks for the Natural and Spiritual Worlds, each part ends with, *Now Our Minds Are One*. It begins by giving thanks for The People:

*Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty and responsibility to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as one as we give our greetings and our thanks to one another as people. Now Our Minds Are One.*

The Thanksgiving continues for Our Mother The Earth, for The Waters, for The Fish, for The Plants, for The Food Plants, for The Medicines and Keepers of The Medicines, for The Animals, for The Trees, for The Birds, for The Four Winds, for Our Grandfathers The Thunders, for Our Eldest Brother The Sun, for Our Oldest Grandmother The Moon, for The Stars, for The Wisdom Keepers, and for The Creator. And after each, *Now Our Minds Are One*. Then come the Closing Words:

*We have now arrived at the place where we end our words. Of all the things we have named, it is not our intention to leave anything out. If something has been forgotten, we leave it to each individual to send their greetings and their thanks in their own way. And Now Our Minds Are One.*

To end these *First Words*, two things.

First, I encourage every reader to become a protector of our heritage languages. A Language Protector may be a speaker or not; one who appreciates the value of people learning and using their own language; one with language skills who can help others speak; one with a kind manner who does not abide laughing at the mistakes of a language learner; or simply one who can make other people comfortable while they speak and learn in their own way and time.

Second, I invite you to enjoy these words from the good mind and heart of Lance Henson, who is Hetomitoneo Tsistsistas, a Cheyenne Dog Soldier of the Dog Men Society. He lives in Italy and returns home for ceremonies and poetry readings. He writes in several languages and seems to think, imagine and remember in all of them. He has written this poem in Cheyenne, English and Italian, and has allowed it to be presented to you in the way he protects language by using it and letting it use him.

na shi neh  
no tum  
num haisto  
ish i tsis iss i ni is  
ish i tsis a kit a es

maiyun asts

nah tsistsistas  
nah tsistsistas

*mahago domiutz  
hetomitoneo  
tsistsistas*

*I am standing here  
where the cold wind comes from  
where the cold wind goes  
where the sun comes up  
where the sun goes down*

*spiritual powers listen to me*

*I am a human being  
I am a human being*

sono qui  
da dove il vento freddo arriva  
dove il vento freddo va  
dove il sole sorge  
dove il sole tramonta

poteri dello spirito ascoltatevi

io sono un essere umano  
io sono un essere umano

*Lance Henson,  
Dog Soldier\*  
Cheyenne*

\*Dog Soldiers (soldati cane – hetomitoneo in lingua Cheyenne)  
sono una delle più antiche confraternite di guerrieri del popolo  
Cheyenne, ed era comune anche nelle altre nazioni dei Nativi delle  
grandi pianure: Lakota, Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche.

# Introduction

## **"l-we:mta" – O'odham ("Working together; supporting one another")**

Aleena Kawe, Peggy Mainor, and Amanda Tachine, PhD

In December 2016, over 200 language visionaries and representatives of over 85 Tribal Nations gathered at Isleta Pueblo as the culmination of a two-year process to gather and share their collective wisdom regarding revitalization of Indigenous languages. That wisdom is gathered into this document, and intended to be shared with Tribal Nations, educators, funders, and anyone else interested in revitalizing Native languages and cultures. Reclaiming and revitalizing languages and cultures is key to Native identity, education, health, and well being. As one language visionary observed, "It's not just language. It's not just culture. It's the survival of our people."

American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Nations are composed of distinct tribes, bands, villages, and communities. These Indigenous groups reside in North America as sovereign nations, having a government-to-government relationship with the United States. A fundamental characteristic of Native American tribal nations is a way of life grounded in Indigenous knowledge encompassing language, culture, land, community, and lifeways. These aspects contribute to strengthening and empowering the well-being of Native peoples<sup>1</sup>.

Native children and youth are stakeholders in the continuance of strong and thriving peoples. While there is much hope and promise in the next generation, our youth face many challenges. A 2014 White House report declared that "Native youth and Native education are in a state of emergency."<sup>2</sup> This situation is not new. Native youth and Native education have been dealing with injustices since the dawn of colonization. Native youth suicide rates are four times the national average;<sup>3</sup> Native children have the highest school dropout rate of any group (32%); Native teens are more likely than teens from any other racial or ethnic group to be neither in school nor working.<sup>4</sup> Harsh societal conditions of poverty, unemployment, and health disparities plague Native peoples. Still, Native communities continue to rise above the struggles. In the face of these challenges, the nearly universal conviction of Native peoples is that "[l]anguage reclamation is not merely, or even primarily, a linguistic one, but is profoundly linked to issues of educational equity, Indigenous self-determination, and the (re)construction of community well-being..."<sup>5</sup>

Empirical research proves that language and cultural education matters and that it works to address educational equity concerns and improve the well-being of Native peoples. Tribal Nations, language advocates, and a multitude of tenacious people have created highly successful, research-supported educational opportunities for Native children centered around language and culture. Hawaii's 'Aha Pūnana Leo language nest system embedded Hawaiian language and culture into the core of their schooling practices. Beginning with only 36 fluent children, they have contributed to increasing that number to 5,000 children fluent in the

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<sup>1</sup> We use terms Native, Native American, American Indian, and Indigenous interchangeably, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous peoples.

<sup>2</sup> US Executive Office of the President (2014). Native Youth Report. [https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/20141129nativeyouthreport\\_final.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/20141129nativeyouthreport_final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control 2015 Report.

<sup>4</sup> "Teens ages 16 to 19 not in school and not working by race," [www.aecf.org/datacenter/kidscount](http://www.aecf.org/datacenter/kidscount) (2017).

<sup>5</sup> McCarty, T. L., & Nicholas, S.E. (2014). Reclaiming Indigenous languages: A reconsideration of the roles and responsibility of schools. *Review of Research in Education*, 38, pp. 106-136.

Hawaiian language, a 100% high school graduation rate, and an 80% college attendance rate.<sup>6</sup> Across the nation, many more inspiring initiatives are contributing to the well-being of and advancing educational equity for Native people.

This document presents the findings of a Native-led planning process generously funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation that supports transformational educational equity for Native children through the powerful engagement of Native language revitalization. *Pathways on a Language Landscape: A Planning Guide for Native Language Revitalization* provides a framework of planning practices to assist Native communities in developing Native-led language programs.

An intentional and thoughtful process went into the development of the Language Landscape. Sixteen language visionaries created the nine planning practices that comprise the Landscape's framework during a two-day convening in August 2016. Over 100 community Native language teachers and administrators, elders, Native academics, community members, and additional language visionaries reviewed, commented on, and supplemented the framework during the fall of 2016. The process culminated in the 2016 Pathways to Fluency Gathering, where convening facilitator Aleena Kawe engaged participants in using the Landscape as a community level planning tool. Participants worked hands on with the nine pathways and identified next steps for their programs. At each stage, the Language Landscape was shaped into a user-friendly tool for communities to plan their journey to their Nation's language revitalization horizon.

The Language Landscape presented herein is a framework of planning practices that Native Nations, communities, and programs can utilize in planning language and cultural revitalization programs. While the Landscape strongly supports programs that focus on children's early learning and immersion programs, as those methods are the most effective way to achieve transformational educational equity for Native children, the beauty of the Landscape is that it can be used for any type of language revitalization strategy. The process and intent recognize that each Native Nation's goals and pathways will vary, and that these choices are a function of sovereignty and self-determination.

Therefore, the Landscape is not a linear "step-by-step" process nor a "one size fits all" technical manual. Rather, this work contains wisdom and teachings from leading language visionaries, who have, in some cases, been working, thinking, writing, and practicing in the field for over 40 years. The Landscape aims to support Nations and programs in conceptualizing and organizing thinking around language revitalization planning.

Funders, government agencies, and other stakeholders who support language revitalization will find the Landscape useful both in understanding the complexity of language revitalization and in providing a framework for thinking about the programs they are being asked to fund. The Cultural Resource Fund will seed a 2018 funding initiative to put the most promising of the Landscape's recommended planning processes into practice. See [www.culturalresourcefund.org](http://www.culturalresourcefund.org).

All Native children have the inherent right to acquire culturally-relevant educational opportunities grounded in their language and worldview, so that they may contribute their intelligence and brilliance to their Native Nations, our country, and the world. We urge you to join us in participating in this conversation and exploring research-based, successful strategies that will lead to a healthy and socially just educational foundation for Native children.

### **A Backdrop of Destruction**

2010 U.S. census data reported that 6.4 million people identify as American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiians, or "other Pacific Islanders."<sup>7</sup> Of those peoples, approximately 370,000 speak 170 Native American languages.<sup>8</sup> The Linguistic Society of America reports that 73 of the nation's remaining Indigenous languages are spoken almost entirely by adults over age 50, and an additional 49 are spoken only by a few people,

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<sup>6</sup>Iokepá-Guerrero, N. (2016). Revitalization programs and impact in the USA and Canada. In Sarafín M. Coronel-Molina & Teresa L. McCarty (Eds.) *Indigenous language revitalization in the Americas* (pp. 227-246). New York, NY: Routledge.

<sup>7</sup>Norris, T., Vines, P.L., & Hoeffel, E.N. (2012). *The American Indian and Alaska Native Population: 2010*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau.

<sup>8</sup>Siebiens, J. & Julian, T. (2011). *Native North American languages spoken at home in the US and Puerto Rico: 2006-2010*. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau.



mostly over age 70.<sup>9</sup> Indigenous languages have been framed as “just a whisper,” silent, sleeping, dormant, and endangered. The endangerment is rooted in a destructive entanglement of settler colonialism, deliberate government policies to forcibly assimilate Indigenous peoples, and economic disparities. Historically, Native peoples faced extreme hardships and traumatic events over multiple generations that separated them from their language, culture, family, community, and land. Forced relocation removed many Native peoples from their homelands for the benefit of European acquisition of Indigenous land. “The settler colonial nation-state is dependent on destroying and erasing Indigenous inhabitants in order to clear them from valuable land.”<sup>10</sup> In essence, life, humanity, liberty, and purpose was stripped away from Native peoples.

In 1819, the Civilization Fund Act supported missionary schooling that aimed to eradicate Indigenous ways of life. Following missionary schooling tactics, the federal government created English-only boarding schools. Native languages and cultures suffered greatly under the Indian boarding school movement. By 1900, Carlisle Indian Boarding School superintendent R.H. Pratt reported that “they [Native children] have been systematically taught self-repression.”<sup>11</sup> The hurt, loss, and shame of this systematic repression contributed significantly to creating the Native language crisis that we face today. Ashamed to speak the languages of their ancestors, children whose parents attended missionary and boarding schools report that their parents, punished severely for speaking their language at school, often refuse to speak and teach their language to them. Current educational policies and practices that promote English as the official language, as well as English-only testing in schools, continue to threaten an extremely fragile landscape.

The impact of historic and generational trauma contributes significantly to Native students’ low academic achievement and their overrepresentation in remedial education. Native students often have some of the lowest assessment scores in reading and math compared to other racial/ethnic groups. Nationally, Native students have a 68% high school graduation rate (53% for those attending Bureau of Indian Education schools.) Of those who graduate, only 20% will go to college. Only 9% of American Indians/Alaska Natives hold bachelor’s degrees, compared to 32% of whites and 19% of the U.S. population. Less than one percent receive graduate degrees, compared to 10% of the total population. Higher educational attainment is related to economic gains.<sup>12</sup>

Native children disproportionately live in poverty (35% compared to 21% for all Americans and 12% for white children) and in homes where family members are unemployed (12.4%, nearly 3 times the national rate of 4.9%). In 2015, the median household income for Native populations was \$38,530 compared to \$55,775 for the U.S. as a whole. On rural reservations, jobs are scarce and difficult to access, resulting in a much higher poverty rate, with some areas reporting rates up to 19 times the national average.<sup>13</sup>

Well-being, including mental and physical health, is closely linked to educational and poverty levels. Native youth are 2.5 times more likely to experience trauma compared to their non-native peers. An estimated one in ten American Indian children meet the diagnostic criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Violence, including intentional injuries, homicide, and suicide accounts for 75% of the deaths of Native youth. Type-2 diabetes is nearly three times the national average and five times higher than among white youth. Native youth are more likely to have used illegal drugs, smoked cigarettes, and participated in binge drinking in the past 30 days than any other race or ethnic group.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Woodbury, A. C. What is an Endangered language? Retrieved from: <https://www.linguisticsociety.org/content/what-endangered-language>.

<sup>10</sup> Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2014). R-words: Refusing research. In D. Paris & M. T. Winn (Eds.), *Humanizing research: Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities* (pp. 223-247). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

<sup>11</sup> In 1900, Richard H. Pratt surveyed his teachers and asked them to compare their Indian students to the white students they had taught before coming to Carlisle. Their comments were published in the February 1900 issue of “The Red Man” (school paper). See also: Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction (1892), 46–59. Reprinted in Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites,” *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian” 1880–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, (1973), 260–271.

<sup>12</sup> [www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/center-for-native-american-youth](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/programs/center-for-native-american-youth) (2017).

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

<sup>14</sup> Indian Health Service, [www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/disparities](http://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/disparities) (April 2017).

Revitalizing Indigenous languages and cultures “address[es] the ‘disease of displacement’ and the pain of ‘re-remembering’ (putting ourselves back together) after being oppressed by colonial powers and forced to stop speaking our mother tongues... it means restoring our Native identity.”<sup>15</sup> There is much hope for the future. After more than 400 years of destructive policies and social conditions, Indigenous people, and their languages, survive.

### **Toward the Horizon of Indigenous Knowledge, Survival, Sovereignty, and Liberation**

In 2015, the Cultural Resource Fund asked 237 participating Tribes to share their most important cultural priorities. Two hundred Tribes responded, with a clear majority voicing language revitalization as their number one cultural priority. This is not surprising, as many Tribal Nations acknowledge that language is intricately connected to individual and collective identity. Hualapai language educator (and Language Landscape visionary) Lucille Watahomigie shared, “It is said that when the languages were created, language identified the people – who we are, where we came from, and where we are going.”<sup>16</sup> Indigenous language is deeply interwoven in the ontology, epistemology, pedagogy, cosmology, and axiology of an Indigenous worldview. In essence, language is Indigenous knowledge personified. Restoring Indigenous languages is therefore an act of survival, self-determination, and liberation.

Indigenous knowledge is centered on the survival of peoples within places linked to history and genealogy, experiential and sacred teachings, and ancestral relatives. Hawaiian scholar M.A. Meyer affirmed, “Knowledge is the by-product of *dialogue*, or of something exchanged with others.”<sup>17</sup> Since time immemorial, Native peoples have utilized and valued dialogue through oral storytelling. Storytelling passes on values, teachings, and guidance. In oral traditions, telling through Indigenous languages is optimal, as meaning is lost in translation or interpretation. Native languages maintain accounts of the experiences that Tribes have had throughout history. The retention of this history is so significant that many Native peoples regard it as sacred knowledge, as it contains creation and genealogy stories as well as terminology and meaning for ecological insights and ceremonies practiced today. Indigenous ways of knowing are most effectively taught through Indigenous languages and paradigms.

In Indigenous Knowledges, principles of relationships and reciprocity, strongly connected to survival, are fundamental. “Language is an integral part of the law of reciprocity, and it is because of this value that most Indigenous peoples resist the notion that languages ‘go extinct.’ Languages are alive and dynamic; they change, evolve, grow, shrink, mutate.”<sup>18</sup> From this strength-based perspective, Indigenous language is living and vital to a community’s existence, its ability to evolve, its members’ ability to connect with one another, and their ability to provide for the next generation.

The value of Indigenous languages and the critical importance of revitalization has been recognized both nationally and internationally in recent years. The 1990 Native American Languages Act (NALA) declared the federal government’s responsibility to “preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages.”<sup>19</sup> The 2006 Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act provides funding for language schools, teacher preparation, and curriculum resources. The United Nations’ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples unequivocally states that “Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures.” In pursuit of survival and liberation, sovereign Native Nations possess the inherent right to prepare and educate their children through Indigenous languages and knowledges. “We must make certain that Indigenous languages within North America are not allowed to die, and we must employ every humanitarian effort it takes to do so.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Nelson, M. (2002). Indigenous language revitalization. *ReVision*, 25(2), 3-4.

<sup>16</sup> Watahomigie, L. J. (1998). The Native language is a gift: A Hualapai language autobiography. *International Journal of Sociology of Language*, 132, 5-7.

<sup>17</sup> Meyer, M. A. (2001). Our own liberation: Reflections on Hawaiian epistemology. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 13(1), 124-148.

<sup>18</sup> Nelson, M. (2002). Indigenous language revitalization. *ReVision*, 25(2), 3-4.

<sup>19</sup> Native American Languages Act. (1990). Retrieved from: <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/101/s2167/text>

<sup>20</sup> Okakok, L. (1989). Serving the purpose of education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 59(4) 405-422.

## A Solution Grounded in Research

“What science tells us about how the brain works is consistent with what we know intuitively and from our own learning experiences . . . . The more relevant the learning process, the more we learn.”<sup>21</sup> Relying on best practices in Eurocentric formal education will not always bring out the best in all children. Children’s learning is more effective if it occurs in a cultural context to which they can relate. Culturally relevant education, including language immersion, helps students succeed by making school more relevant for them.<sup>22</sup>

Culture-based education helps cultivate a strong sense of individual and collective identity and cultural pride, which leads to a positive self-concept and confidence in children.<sup>23</sup> Recognizing and using Native language is a key component of a culture-based education.<sup>24</sup> Teaching culture through language teaches through the lens of culture, rather than teaching “about culture” – two very different perspectives and pedagogical approaches.<sup>25</sup> Research demonstrates positive correlations between comprehensive culturally-based education programs that include a strong Native language component and improved student academic, social, and cultural development. Cultural relevance in the classroom increases children’s self-esteem and resiliency which in turn fosters achievement. Resilient children have four common attributes: 1) *social competence*: the ability to establish positive relationships with adults and peers; 2) *problem-solving skills*: the ability to see oneself in control and resourcefulness in seeking help from others; 3) *autonomy*: a sense of one’s own identity and the ability to act independently and exert some control over his or her environment and 4) *a sense of purpose*: goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future.<sup>27</sup> Children and adults who learn two or more languages outperform monolinguals in both verbal and non-verbal tests.<sup>28</sup> Students attending Tséhootsooí Diné Bi’ólta’, a pre-K-12 Navajo language school, consistently outperform their peers in English-only classrooms on local and standardized assessments in (English) reading, writing, and mathematics.<sup>29</sup> Fostering socio-emotional skills, as well as cognitive and language skills, helps prepare children for school and bestows life-long benefits for them and for their communities. Research on high-quality early learning programs that serve vulnerable children shows that these programs can help reduce remedial education costs, increase school achievement and future earnings, and reduce crime and social costs.<sup>30</sup>

## The Importance of Early Childhood Initiatives

The quality of life for a child and the contributions the child makes to society as an adult can be traced back to the first years of life. From birth to about five years old, a child undergoes tremendous growth and change. If this period of life includes support for growth in cognition, language, motor skills, adaptive skills, and social-emotional functioning, the child is more likely to succeed in school and later contribute to society.

Studies find that well-focused investments in early childhood development yield high returns. Neuroscience and child development research suggest that school readiness is sown during the child’s earliest years. The first few years of life are critical for healthy brain development (including language development), which occurs during early interactions that build neural connections and healthy brain architecture.<sup>31</sup> Five areas of the brain that regulate language peak in growth during the first year of life, when a baby’s brain can discern differences in sounds of every language spoken in the world. The earlier children are exposed to language, the less effort it

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<sup>21</sup> Kana’iaupuni and Ledward, supra n.2, at 159.

<sup>22</sup> Id.

<sup>23</sup> Bowman, *Culturally Sensitive Inquiry* (1989); Phinney & Chavira (1992); Phinney, Cantu & Kurtz (1997); Tibbetts, Kahakalau & Johnson (2007).

<sup>24</sup> Oglala Lakota Language Council (2014).

<sup>25</sup> Bruner, J., *The Culture of Education* (1996); see also Cornelius (1999); Gruenwald (2003); Irvine & York (1995); Kawakami (2003); Lee (2003).

<sup>26</sup> McCarty, T. (2011). *State of the Field: The Role of Native Language and Culture in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Student Achievement* (Policy Brief).

<sup>27</sup> Bernard, B., *Fostering Resilience in Children* (1995).

<sup>28</sup> LaFarge, 31 Report of Paul Boyer.

<sup>29</sup> McCarty, T. L. & Nicholas, S. (2014). *Reclaiming Indigenous languages: A reconsideration of the roles and responsibility of schools. Review of Research in Education*, 38, 106-136.

<sup>30</sup> Heckman, J.J., Grunewald, R., and Reynolds, A.J. “The Dollars and Cents of Investing Early: Cost-Benefit Analysis in Early Care and Education.” *Zero to Three*. Vol. 26, No. 6, 2006, 10–17.

<sup>31</sup> Key Concepts: Serve and Return, Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.

takes to learn. Research demonstrates that when children are engaged in a language-rich environment during early childhood, they are more likely to develop peak proficiency in the language, including control over the sound system and grammatical structure.<sup>32</sup> Research also suggests that children who develop dual language skills may have advantages in some aspects of executive function, the mental processes that enable planning, focusing attention, holding working memory, and juggling multiple tasks successfully.

Native communities face many socioeconomic circumstances that can be detrimental to Native children. Language immersion programs can help counter these destructive effects by offering Indigenous knowledge rooted in survival, reciprocity, relationality, self-determination, and liberation which can empower young Native children to thrive.

## **Conclusion**

Partnering with Native communities is the best way to help Native children succeed. Culturally relevant education promotes solid relationships with and support from surrounding communities and families. Strong links between home, neighborhoods, and schools are key features of effective educational programming in Indigenous communities.<sup>33</sup> When language and culture are taught together, language immersion helps children understand and appreciate their deep history, world view, culture, and unique place and purpose in the world, which can help support them when facing challenges throughout their lives.

We have no doubt that Native languages and cultures can and will be saved. We envision thriving, vibrant communities grounded in ancestral knowledge brought forward to the times in which we live, when these values are sorely needed. We are privileged and honored to know you, language warriors, the 7th generation. We stand with you at the crossroads, the gateway to the transformation, which the white buffalo and many other signs have foretold.

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<sup>32</sup> Newport, E.L., Bavelier, D., and Neville, H.J. "Critical Thinking about Critical Periods: Perspectives on a Critical Period for Language Acquisition," *Language, Brain and Cognitive Development*. Emmanuel Dupoux, ed. The MIT Press, 2001.

<sup>33</sup> Kana'iaupuni, S. and Ledward, B.: *The Call for Cultural Relevance in Education* (2013); Lipka & McCarty, *Changing the Culture of Schooling* (1994).

# Honoring Our Language Visionaries

## **"Sumi-nangwa" (Hopi) (Accomplishing visions together as a whole)**

In August 2016, sixteen language visionaries met in Santa Fe, New Mexico to collectively share their wisdom, experiences, and research to help create a framework of practices for language revitalization program planning. Additional visionaries, also listed below, commented on and enriched the document.

We honor and recognize the language visionaries for their passion and devotion to saving languages and the cultures embodied within. Thank you, visionaries, for demonstrating that Indigenous languages are living and therein lies a responsibility to teach others.

Daryl Baldwin, Ph.D. (Miami)  
Dr. Carlotta ("Penny") Bird (Santo Domingo Pueblo)\*  
Dr. Suzan Harjo (Cheyenne and Hodulgee Muscogee)\*  
Leslie Harper (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe)  
Dr. Leanne Hinton\*  
Dr. Valorie Johnson (Eastern Band of Cherokee)\*  
Amy Kalili (Native Hawaiian)\*  
Colleen Lucero (Hopi) (student visionary)\*  
Jacob Manitowa-Bailey (Sac & Fox)  
Marshall McKay (Yocha Dehe Wintun)\*  
Mona Polacca (Hopi/Tewa)  
Nāmaka Rawlins (Native Hawaiian)\*  
Alyce Sadongei (Kiowa/O'odham)\*  
Dr. Christine Sims (Pueblo of Acoma)\*  
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Maura Dhu Studi, Indigenous Language Institute\*  
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Lucille Watahomigie (Hualapai)\*  
Philbert Watahomigie (Hualapai)\*  
Dr. Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O'odham)\*  
Aleena Kawe (Noeme), Facilitator\*

\*present at initial visionaries gathering

# What Is a Language Landscape?

Cultural and linguistic revitalization and sustainability emerge from intentional and shared vision-setting in which communities engage in a planning process that is context-specific and locally led. A community-driven, strategic, collaborative approach for cultural and language revitalization will lead to greater equity for underserved indigenous communities. The benefits of this approach and its outcomes cross all spectra of community well-being and revitalization, including education, family health and wellness, and family economic security.

*Pathways on a Language Landscape: A Planning Guide for Native Language Revitalization* is a set of planning practices designed to increase the use and transmission of Native languages within Tribal Nations and communities. Planning language revitalization can be complex and requires a comprehensive approach. The pathway to language use will be different for every Tribal Nation.

The pathways, markers, strategies and resources provided herein are not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor are they meant to prescribe a particular approach. Rather, they are meant to provide markers along the journey as each Tribal Nation and community discovers the pathway that is most appropriate for them.

This Language Landscape aims to:

- Describe nine common language planning practices used to revive and maintain Native languages
- Provide a goal for each practice that is written as a visionary statement of what is possible
- List some of the key pathways at the identification (early), development (intermediate) and integration (advanced) stages of readiness that can be used to measure progress towards each goal
- Share strategies to guide and advance Tribal Nations and communities through each readiness phase
- Describe some of the internal resources a Tribal Nation (i.e. leadership, infrastructure, materials, information technology) might need to implement the strategies and practices
- Link Tribal Nations and communities to organizations and promising practices, training, guides, and other resources available to support capacity development

Collectively, these nine milestones provide a comprehensive overview of the research, advocacy, education, and reflection needed to develop an effective language revitalization program. As a planning tool, the milestones help communities identify their strengths and accomplishments, and potential next steps. The markers focus on more than the work of teaching a language. While instruction and related activities (such as curriculum development) are very important, a successful revitalization effort must also build a climate that recognizes the reality of language loss, argue for the value of language, engage all members of the community, and continually monitor progress. By focusing on this larger landscape, revitalization becomes not the lonely work of a few teachers, but an ongoing, community-wide effort that relies on advocacy and self-reflection as much as textbooks and instruction. The pathways presented in this report reflect this larger understanding of the revitalization process.

*To begin a revitalization effort is, in itself, an act of community renewal and tribal nation-building.*

# How to Use the Landscape

Each pathway contains: 1) a visionary statement 2) markers for achieving the vision 3) strategies to reach each marker 4) resources needed within a Tribal Nation and community to support the strategies and 5) resources available from organizations, individuals and others working in Native language revitalization 6) community examples when available. The pathways, markers, strategies and resources provided herein are not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor are they meant to prescribe an approach. Rather, they are meant to provide ideas for the journey as each Tribal Nation and community discovers the pathways most appropriate for them.

## Pathway

**Visionary Statement** – Similar to a goal, the visionary statement articulates what can be achieved, focusing on what is possible. Like a vision, it is stated in present tense.

## Markers

**Markers for achieving the vision** – Indicators that can be used to determine where a Tribal Nation and Community are in achieving the vision by stages of readiness: early, intermediate and advanced.

- *Early Stage (Identification)* – Tribal Nations and communities are identifying needs and assets; they are determining whether action is needed.
- *Intermediate Stage (Developing)* – Tribal Nations and communities are developing plans to take action based on the needs and assets identified in the early stage. In many cases, the plans have been started.
- *Advanced Stage (Integration)* – Tribal Nations and communities are successfully implementing plans, establishing policies and integrating activities into daily life.

## Strategies/Practices

**Strategies to reach each marker** - Strategies, practices and activities that a Tribal Nation and community can implement to move from one stage of readiness to the next. There may be other strategies that Tribal Nations and communities use to achieve their vision.

- Early Stage (Identification)
- Intermediate Stage (Developing)
- Advanced Stage (Integration)

<b>Resources Needed</b>	Lists resources needed within a Tribal Nation to successfully implement the strategies and practices. These may include, but are not limited to: capacity needs, leadership, infrastructure, materials, and information technology.
<b>Resources Available</b>	Lists promising practices, training, guides, articles, programs, services, organizations and other existing resources that a Tribal Nation can look to for guidance and support to build their capacity to implement the identified strategies.
<b>Community Examples</b>	Identifies locations where these practices have been implemented. Identifies who has a story to tell that will bring these strategies and practices to life.

# 9 Pathways on a Language Landscape

## 1. Awareness

**Our Tribal Nation is aware of a language shift and recognizes the need for intervention.**

Traditionally, languages are the medium through which we share knowledge, including social norms and customs, societal roles, wellness and healing, ceremony, and the arts. Tapping into our cultural resilience – overcoming challenges and reclaiming our traditional values, ways of life, and beliefs – helps us face our language loss and reclaim our power to revitalize it.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Tribal leaders, elders, communities, and families are talking about their concerns about language loss.
- Youth are asking their parents, elders, and community to teach them the language.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Nation wants to better understand the extent of language loss in our communities and its potential impact and has begun to explore ways to learn more, such as hosting community forums about language (awareness, loss, and opportunity) targeting different groups (parents, grandparents, teachers, youth, caregivers), attending language conferences, and researching effective survey tools.
- Individual and community attitudes about the need for language revitalization (emotional and psychological aspects of ‘wholeness’) are changing; that change is apparent through people’s personal stories.

#### Integration

- Our Tribal Nation has conducted a survey to better understand the community’s perception of the value of our language and its use in the home and community.
- Our Tribal Nation and communities are exploring strategies to promote the use of our language in our homes, schools, community, and government affairs.
- Our Tribal Nation has hired a language planner or linguist to support us in planning next steps.

### Strategies and Practices

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#### Identification

- Begin to ask Tribal leaders and community members if they use the language at home and with others in the community. Why or why not?
- Form a task force or committee to identify ways to better understand the issues, such as surveys, community forums, or other gatherings.



## Development

- Host Tribal meetings to inform and listen about language loss and revitalization.
- Develop a survey to better understand language use. Determine the most appropriate way to distribute the survey and collect data. Make sure the survey is up-to-date.
- Identify strategies to engage the community and involve them in promoting the value of the language.
- Show videos, share writings, or invite guest speakers to share how other groups are revitalizing their languages.
- Convene the task force or committee on a regular basis to discuss implementation and outcomes of the survey, forums or gatherings.

## Integration

- Conduct the language survey.
- Use the data collected in the survey to develop an approach to increasing awareness in the community.
- Report the results of the survey back to the community.
- Take people to visit communities that are successfully revitalizing their languages.
- Look to the task force or committee for guidance and recommendations for next steps.

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## Resources Needed

- Individuals who have an interest in preserving and revitalizing the language.
- A place where individuals, families, and the community can gather.
- A dedicated group or committee for language planning.
- Opportunities to attend conferences and gatherings on language revitalization, including gatherings of related language group “families.”
- Access to literature, websites, and videos on language revitalization.
- Training on how to develop and conduct surveys.
- Support from Tribal leadership, i.e. funding, resolution, declaration, or other official policy supporting the language; involvement in language gatherings, official approval of the survey.

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## Resources Available

### Language Assessments and Surveys

- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) offers training workshops on how to develop and conduct surveys, and how to organize the data gathered, <http://www.indigenous-language.org>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) *Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 3, Conducting a Language Survey*, <http://www.indigenous-language.org>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) *Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 4, Envisioning a Language Program*, <http://www.indigenous-language.org>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) *Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 10, Understanding First and Second Language Acquisition*, <http://www.indigenous-language.org>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) *Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 5, Knowing Our Language Learners*, <http://www.indigenous-language.org>
- American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center trains on how to choose, develop, and conduct surveys, and how to use them strategically to accomplish goals. <https://coe.unm.edu/administration/institutes-centers.html>

## Community Examples

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Tribes and programs listed as community examples have achieved success in the pathway under which they are listed. The listed communities and programs have generously given permission for programs to contact them for advice. Please check the listings to see how they would prefer to be contacted. Please respect their time!

These Tribal communities have conducted numerous community meetings and surveys with successful outcomes.

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## 2. Values

**Our Tribal Nation (1) values our language and (2) is committed to ensuring that we transmit our culture and values through our language.**

The Values pathway is two-fold: The first is that the Tribe and community actually values the language through commitment to sustaining it.

The second is recognizing that cultural values and identity are embedded in language. Teaching words is not enough. By using the language in our daily lives, we can transmit our knowledge and values in our homes, communities, ceremonies, and other activities. Cultural values can also be taught along with language instruction.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our Tribal Nation understands that our language embodies our cultural values and identity.
- Our Tribal Nation values our language and is committed to sustaining it.
- A group of individuals who are concerned about language have organized themselves to act.
- Our Tribal Council has addressed the need to revitalize our language by passing a resolution or other declaration.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Nation has a current plan (within the last 10 years) for language revitalization that includes transmitting our values.
- Tribal administration, departments, and programs use our language in their materials and activities (e.g. speaking, signage, brochures, media, etc.)
- Our Tribal Nation invests in programming to practice and transmit cultural knowledge and values through language.
- Our community is engaged and involved in learning, speaking, and promoting our language and values.

#### Integration

- Our Tribal Nation is implementing a comprehensive plan for language revitalization including values.
- Our community is using the language in ceremony, traditional practices, and everyday activities.

### Strategies Needed

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#### Identification

- Hold meetings to discuss language shift and the importance of bringing the language back.
- Increase language use during ceremonies and traditional activities, and through media, signage, and any other means.
- Include youth in ceremony and other traditional activities.
- Engage elders and others in discussions about the language and its value to the Tribe.

#### Development

- Establish a language program or department with dedicated staff.
- Develop a plan for revitalization based on community surveys and forums. If the Tribal Nation has an existing plan, determine if it is current and needs to be updated. (See Awareness milestone)

## Integration

- Develop tribal-wide, departmental, and program (e.g. housing, education, health, and administration) policies regarding language use in programs, services and communications.
- Elevate the value of language by developing a campaign to use and celebrate it as a nation.

## Resources Needed

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- Native speakers who are interested in maintaining the language
- Language resources for developing and translating materials
- Sample language use policies and plans
- Training on how to develop a language revitalization plan for the Nation
- A group or committee dedicated to language planning and implementation

## Resources Available

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### Indigenous Knowledge Transmission

- Learning and Knowing in Indigenous Societies Today, edited by P. Bates, M. Chiba, S. Kube & D. Nakashima, (UNESCO: Paris, 2009) 128 pp. Includes examples from indigenous communities in North America and abroad.

### Language Planning

- American Indian Language Development Institute, University of Arizona. <http://aildi.arizona.edu/>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) “How to Start a Language Program” Training [www.indigenous-language.org](http://www.indigenous-language.org)

## Community Examples

---

Tribes and programs listed as community examples have achieved success in the pathway under which they are listed. The listed communities and programs have generously given permission for programs to contact them for advice. Please check the listings to see how they would prefer to be contacted. Some have requested to be emailed first to set up a time to talk. Please respect their time!

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## 3. Family

Our Tribal Nation supports families in creating a new generation of first language speakers who are committed to continuing the effort for future generations.

Language revitalization often starts with individuals who wish to raise their children to speak the language. Whether fluent or not, these individuals make an effort use the language in their daily lives when speaking to and around their children. Families are often in need of language resources not only to build their knowledge of the language, but also to teach their children through games, books, and activities.

Everyone can become a protector of our heritage languages, whether a speaker or not, by appreciating and supporting those learning and using the language and by making other people comfortable as they speak and learn in their own way and time.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Families who have speakers start using their language at home with their children.
- Our Tribal Nation has identified families who want raise their children to speak our language.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Nation hosts group gatherings for families interested in teaching the language at home.
- Our Tribal Nation provides a language-learning program where parents and caretakers can learn the language and how to teach it to the children.
- Our Tribal Nation makes resources, books, materials and advice on using the language at home available to the community.
- Our Tribal Nation offers language learning program activities and materials *regularly* and makes them easily accessible by families living within the community.

#### Integration

- Our families have the resources and support needed to create bilingual (or multilingual) homes.
- Our language program works with families to create a language plan for children at home.
- Our families know how to identify and involve Native speakers (both in the family and in the community) in their efforts to raise children who speak the language.
- Our families are using the language at home and in the community.
- School programs work in concert with families to help their children become fluent and understand the value of their language.
- Immersion schools offer adult classes to support families who wish to learn the language along with their children.

### Strategies and Practices

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#### Identification

- Encourage families to learn the language with their children.
- Offer activities where families can gather and learn about teaching the language at home.
- Provide readings and advice about using the language at home.
- Identify and provide games, activities, and other useful materials that families can use at home.

## Development

- Develop and provide a language-learning program that meets regularly over a period of time.
- Mentor families on using the language in the home and provide opportunities for them to discuss issues and receive support.

## Integration

- Develop a training program for families to carry out language revitalization and maintenance in the home.
- Provide opportunities to families who are teaching and using the language at home to network and support each other.
- Host community-wide language activities that everyone can attend.
- Provide resources on how children can take responsibility for maintaining the language (e.g. by teaching younger children, illustrating stories for the family, saying prayers at meals).

## Resources Needed

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- Opportunities for learning the language (e.g. classes, activities, resources and materials).
- Books, recordings, games, and educational materials that families can use.
- A place to have gatherings and meet mentors and other families.
- Training for adult family members on effective language learning methods.
- A program structure that specifically supports families teaching the language at home.

## Resources Available

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- Hinton, Leanne, selected publications <http://lx.berkeley.edu/node/625>
- Indigenous Language Institute <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>
  - Learner-Driven Language Learning Training
  - Engaging Families & Communities in Language Learning and Teaching Training
  - “How Do I Say...Learner-Driven Language Learning” method and workbook

## Community Examples

---

Tribes and programs listed as community examples have achieved success in the pathway under which they are listed. The listed communities and programs have generously given permission for programs to call them for advice. Please check the listings to see how they would prefer to be contacted. Some have requested to be emailed first to set up a time to talk. Please respect their time!

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## 4. Intergenerational Involvement

Our Tribal Nation actively engages all generations in language revitalization efforts, each with different needs, skills and knowledge.

Involving everyone in language revitalization activities effectively taps into the knowledge and resources across every level of our communities, speakers and learners. While the goal may be to increase fluency among speakers, it is also important to use the language daily, in a variety of settings, with a variety of people.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Children, youth, adults and elders communicate with one another in a variety of settings (such as schools, senior centers, community and cultural events).
- Our Tribal Nation understands the importance of intergenerational involvement in language learning and is committed to developing a plan for intergenerational involvement.

#### Development

- Elders participate in language revitalization planning and implementation.
- Elders are engaged in revitalization efforts as resources for learning tribal history, such as historic events, sacred sites, place names, and the natural environment.

#### Integration

- Intergenerational language classes are provided in various settings in the community.
- Our language program has a written strategy for ensuring ongoing intergenerational involvement in all program activities, such as gardening or traditional activities.
- Our language program provides opportunities for children and elders to visit historic and cultural sites together.

### Strategy and Practices

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#### Identification

- Invite elders into immersion or bilingual classrooms to lead activities, tell stories, or to talk with the children and youth in the language.
- Offer stipends and transportation to support elders who wish to participate.
- Host combined activities with the senior center and preschool or after-school K-12 programs.
- Help familiarize elders with technology.

#### Development

- Develop a Master-Apprentice program.
- Teach elders how to teach family members to speak the language.
- Document the elders speaking the language.
- Teach youth to help document the language, such as videos, audio recordings, and family stories.
- Provide workshops or trainings for elders on how to teach the language effectively.

## Integration

- Offer combined senior center after-school center and preschool activities.
- Provide senior “teaching” centers where elders can share knowledge through storytelling, traditional arts, and conversation.
- Develop a strategy as part of the language plan that is aimed specifically at ensuring intergenerational involvement in program activities.
- Develop a learner-driven language learning method that involves mentors and learners.
- Establish an Elder/Learner committee to develop new words to accommodate technology and modern expressions now used in communities.

## Resources Needed

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- Elders who speak the language and are willing and available to participate.
- Recording and editing equipment, including training on the use of equipment.
- Facilities to host elders and learners.

## Resources Available

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- American Indian Language Development Institute, University of Arizona. <http://aildi.arizona.edu/>  
Teacher training for speakers
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council, Canada, Master-Apprentice Program Resources <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Programs/Master-Apprentice.aspx>
- Silver Bullet Productions youth training on video documentation <http://silverbulletproductions.com/>

## Community Examples

---

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## 5. Tribal Sovereignty and Policy

Our Tribal Nation recognizes that our language is a gift, and we assert our sovereignty to ensure our language survives and thrives.

Sovereignty plays an important role in language revitalization. Tribes have the authority to develop language ordinances and policies within the tribe, and to enter agreements establishing language policies in partnership with local and state governments.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our Tribal Council is aware of the Native American Languages Act (NALA) and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Our Tribal Council determines language policy, programs, institutions, funding and other actions.
- Language learning/teaching is explored and determined through various methods, including coalitions, committees, and task forces.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Council has been presented with the data collected about the status of our language.
- Our Tribal Nation has a short- and long- range language policy plan.
- Our Tribal Nation's plan includes putting a system in place to align language use across tribally operated programs and activities.

#### Integration

- Our Tribal Nation's official language policy is supported with strong infrastructure.
- Our Tribal Nation has defined its relationship to, and intersection with, federal and state language policies through executive order, resolution, or other legal means.
- Our Tribal Nation participates in inter-tribal coalitions to cooperate on language efforts.
- Our Tribal Nation's language policies are reviewed periodically and updated as needed.

### Strategies and Practices

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#### Identification

- Place the language issue on your Tribal leadership's agenda.
- Determine the status and use of tribal language in your community.

#### Development

- Develop a long-range language policy plan with short- and long-term outcomes that is supported by the tribal leadership.
- Establish language proficiency as a minimum or desirable criteria for opportunities provided by the Tribal Nation.
- If there are enough speakers, consider establishing a policy that sets a minimum or desirable language proficiency level as criteria for various opportunities, such as tribal leadership, scholarships or employment.

## Integration

- Highlight language revitalization efforts being discussed via an intertribal or other tribal organization's convening.
- Tie Tribal Nation higher education scholarships to language learning and use. Offer recognition to students who speak the language through higher education scholarships and awards.

## Resources Needed

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- Tribal Leadership with a vested interest in language revitalization who are educated on the issues.
- Resources to support the development of a long-range plan.
- Data and information for Tribal Nation leadership to make policy decisions.
- Communications materials to help Tribal Citizens understand the issues affecting the language.

## Resources Available

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### Legislative Acts

- Native American Languages Act <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/101/hr5518/summary>
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

### Community Resources and Models

- Language programs based in higher education institutions, including Tribal Colleges
- Tribal Nation Cultural Centers, Museums, and Libraries
- New Mexico Tribal Language Consortium <http://www.nmtlc.org>

### National Resources

- National Coalition of Native American Language Schools and Programs <http://www.ncnalsp.org/>
- American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center, University of New Mexico, <https://coe.unm.edu/administration/institutes-centers.html>

## Community Examples

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Tribes and programs listed as community examples have achieved success in the pathway under which they are listed. The listed communities and programs have generously given permission for programs to call them for advice. Please check the listings to see how they would prefer to be contacted. Some have requested to be emailed first to set up a time to talk. Please respect their time!

### **Aha Pūnana Leo Hawaiian Immersion Program**

Namaka Rawlins, Director of Policy  
[namaka@ahapunaleo.org](mailto:namaka@ahapunaleo.org)

### **Akwesasne Freedom School**

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe  
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### **Pueblo of Jemez**

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### **Choctaw Tribal Language Programs**

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[dsaunders@choctaw.org](mailto:dsaunders@choctaw.org)

### **Keres Children's Learning Center**

Trisha Moquino, Program Director  
Pueblo of Cochiti  
[tricia@kclcmontessori.org](mailto:tricia@kclcmontessori.org)

### **Maori Language Revitalization Strategy**

Jeremy Tatēre MacLeod, Director  
Ngati Kahungunu, New Zealand  
[Jeremy@kahungunu.iwi.nz](mailto:Jeremy@kahungunu.iwi.nz)

## 6. Materials and Documentation

Our Tribal Nation has an easily accessible and expansive repository of language learning materials, documentation, revitalization data and research.

Creating an enduring record of our Native languages can be achieved through language documentation and material development. The documentation that is collected and developed can have immediate use, but more importantly, it can be used by future generations. Multimedia resources can be developed for a variety of purposes and functions.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our language program convenes a group of individuals with a vested interest in language revitalization.
- Our language program has identified, located, catalogued, organized, and archived Native-speaker resources (such as Tribal documents, newspapers, other written material, audio files, video, etc.)
- Our language program has conducted an assessment of materials and curricula available to determine what is still needed to teach the language in schools and in the community (e.g., materials to teach 2nd language learners; content-areas for “immersion” schools).

#### Development

- Our language program has developed a plan for aggregating existing, and developing new materials, documentation, data and research.
- Our language program maintains a database of language materials, documentation, and resources that are available and are being developed.
- Our language program has implemented the initial phases of a plan to gather needed materials and documentation.

#### Integration

- The community can easily access materials and resources for learning and teaching the language.
- Our language program has digitized our database of language materials.
- Our language program is actively using the materials it has gathered and developed throughout the community.
- Our program’s success is strengthened because of the materials and documentation available.
- The people (staff and citizens) conducting the research, creating the resources, and hosting activities are doing it in our language.

### Strategies and Practices

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#### Identification

- Look to traditional sources of knowledge and Native speakers for ideas regarding content for materials development.
- Review existing research and strategies for developing and archiving documentation and materials, especially research and data collection methods.

## Development

- Develop a plan to document and archive language documentation and materials. Define what research will be done, what data will be collected and by whom.
- Develop immersion materials that address both *language* and *content*; identify materials that use content that reflects the Native experience and perspective, not simply translated into the language from English.

## Integration

- Maintain a process for archiving existing documentation, as well as newly developed documentation. Learn about permission and intellectual property rights.
- Identify a central location to maintain documentation and resources to make them more accessible to the program, teachers and community.

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## Resources Needed

- Fluent speakers and linguists who can help develop teaching methods, curricula and material.
- Fluent cultural and subject matter experts, including tribal historians, who can identify and develop materials.
- The information technology required to digitize and store materials and resources in a database.
- A physical space to house materials and resources, including access to a computer and the materials or database.

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## Resources Available

- Universities, such as the University of New Mexico and the University of Arizona, with indigenous language programs and linguists.
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 9, Evaluating Our Language Program, <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 2, Developing Materials and Activities for Language Teaching, <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>

## Community Examples

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Tribes and programs listed as community examples have achieved success in the pathway under which they are listed. The listed communities and programs have generously given permission for programs to call them for advice. Please check the listings to see how they would prefer to be contacted. Some have requested to be emailed first to set up a time to talk. Please respect their time!

### **Waadookodaading, Inc.**

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(715) 634-8924 x1313  
[brooke.ammann@lkoosk12.org](mailto:brooke.ammann@lkoosk12.org)  
[www.waadookodaading.org](http://www.waadookodaading.org)

### **'Aha Pūnana Leo Hawaiian Immersion Program**

Namaka Rawlins, Director of Policy  
[namaka@ahapunanaleo.org](mailto:namaka@ahapunanaleo.org)

### **Maori Language Revitalization Strategy**

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[Jeremy@kahungunu.iwi.nz](mailto:Jeremy@kahungunu.iwi.nz)

### **Choctaw Tribal Language Programs**

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### **Keres Children's Learning Center**

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Pueblo of Cochiti  
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### **Akwesasne Freedom School**

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe  
Elvera Sargent  
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### **Pueblo of Jemez**

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## 7. Teaching and Training

Our Tribal Nation is invested in our capacity to sustain long-term language instruction, including language planners, teachers, training, and academic expertise.

We often look to individuals who speak the heritage language to be language teachers in our communities. However, being a fluent, or nearly fluent speaker does not always mean that the speaker is able to teach the language. In fact, first language speakers are often unaware of the difficulties of learning the language. Investing in teacher training can increase the effectiveness of language immersion programs and can prepare teachers with culturally relevant teaching methods that benefit both language speakers and learners.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our Tribal Nation has identified speakers who are interested in teaching the language.
- Our Tribal Nation has assessed the fluency levels of speakers to determine language needs.
- Our Tribal Nation has identified the need for community and/or school-based curricula.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Nation has developed language materials and curricula for teaching our language.
- Language teachers and other general educators are trained to teach the language in culturally appropriate and effective ways.
- Our Tribal Nation offers language immersion programs/language nests in community pre-K settings, such as Head Start and childcare centers/programs.
- There are an emerging number of language teachers and educational practitioners in the community.

#### Integration

- Language programs and curricula are in place to teach learners of all ages (children, youth, adults and elders).
- Our Tribal Nation has a teacher certification program.
- Our Tribal Nation recognizes that language is most easily learned at the Pre-K level.
- Language use is visibly increasing in schools and in the community.
- Both language speakers and language learners are teaching through the use of language.
- Educators and linguists have significant roles within the community and their collective work helps to support long-term efforts.
- Our Tribal Nation offers language immersion programs in community pre-K to 12 schools.

### Strategies and Practices

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#### Identification

- Provide language-learning opportunities, such as Master/Apprentice programs, to speakers to raise fluency levels and language use.
- Provide opportunities for fluent speakers to observe immersion practice in other communities.

## Development

- Develop an internship program to help train and prepare speakers to teach the language.
- Provide intensive adult immersion courses to accelerate language acquisition among adults.
- Identify teacher-training opportunities available at universities, tribal colleges and language organizations.
- Educate language teachers and supporting staff about different language teaching methods and strategies.
- Collaborate with tribal educational institutes at all levels (Head Start, K-12 schools, and colleges).
- Support development and sharing of language immersion curricula.
- Partner with educational institutions to address licensing and training issues.

## Integration

- Partner and communicate with non-tribal educational institutes to impact non-Native teacher training.
- Collaborate with funders that are supportive of providing training opportunities.
- Facilitate communication among Native language instructors within language groups.
- Develop protocols for respectful treatment of first language speakers in public schools.

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## Resources Needed

- Directory of fluent speakers and language supporters in the community.
- Financial resources to invest in language programs and revitalization efforts.
- Partnerships with higher education institutions to provide teacher training.

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## Resources Available

### Training and Curriculum Development

- American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) at the University of Arizona <http://aildi.arizona.edu/>
- American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center, University of New Mexico <https://coe.unm.edu/administration/institutes-centers.html>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) Handbook: Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 8, Designing Curriculum, <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) Handbook: Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 7, Training Our Language Teachers, <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) Handbook: Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series 6, Knowing Our Language Teachers, <http://www.indigenous-language.org/>
- The Language Conservancy <http://www.languageconservancy.org/>

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## Tribal and International Examples

- ‘Aha Pūnana Leo, Hawaii <http://www.ahapunaleo.org/index.php?/resources/>
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council, Canada, Language Nest Resources <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Programs/Language-nest.aspx>
- Language associations with other Tribal Nations within the same language group for support, networking, education and training and conferences.
- Yuman Language Family Summit <http://www.yumanlanguagefamilysummit.com/>
- Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust Board, New Zealand, Language Nests <http://www.kohanga.ac.nz/>

## Community Examples

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### **Cherokee Language Master/Apprentice Program**

Cherokee Nation  
[Howard-Aden@cherokee.org](mailto:Howard-Aden@cherokee.org)  
Waadookodaading, Inc.  
Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Ojibwe

### **Brooke Mosay Ammann, Executive Director**

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[www.waadookodaading.org](http://www.waadookodaading.org)

### **‘Aha Pūnana Leo Hawaiian Immersion Program**

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[namaka@ahapunaleo.org](mailto:namaka@ahapunaleo.org)

### **Choctaw Tribal Language Program**

De Laura Saunders, Coordinator  
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[dsaunders@choctaw.org](mailto:dsaunders@choctaw.org)

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### **Maori Language Revitalization Strategy**

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### **Akwesasne Freedom School**

St. Regis Mohawk Tribe  
Elvera Sargent  
Friends of Akwesasne Freedom School  
[bela@westelcom.com](mailto:bela@westelcom.com)

## 8. Language Use in Media

Our Tribal Nation uses our language in all forms of media to increase its relevance in our daily lives.

Use of media and technology can be an effective strategy for documenting and preserving language. Television, radio, newspaper and social media can increase and maintain a language's relevance among diverse age groups, and reach diverse speakers and learners at varying levels of fluency. It is important to learn about intellectual property rights and determine what information is appropriate to share through media.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our language program has identified various forms of media (print, radio, video) to promote our language.
- Our language program has identified potential partners to pursue new media avenues, such as social media, YouTube, websites, radio, and television.
- Our language program is discussing strategies to use media for language learning and entertainment in the language.

#### Development

- Our language program has developed a media plan to develop new, and use existing programming adapted for, and disseminated through, new forms of media.
- Public service announcements promoting our language can be heard, seen and read through various media.

#### Integration

- Our language program has implemented a media plan using various forms of media to promote our language.
- Our language program has evaluated the impact of its media plan and has modified the plan for the future based on what was learned.
- Our Tribal Nation owns and operates media (radio, newspaper, television) and uses the language wherever possible.
- Non-natives acknowledge and respect how and when our Native language, images and culture are used in local media.
- Mainstream media looks to our Tribal Nation and Native-owned media companies to add value to their own offerings.

### Strategies And Practices

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#### Identification

- Look for opportunities to use media that is user friendly, inexpensive and easily accessible.
- Identify media that our ancestors used (newspapers, various art forms, etc.) and develop strategies based on traditional ways of communicating.
- Engage youth in the use of media to use and promote the language.
- Learn about intellectual property rights and identify what is appropriate to share through various media.
- Visit other Tribes that have established media programs to see how they are incorporating language.

## Development

- Develop a media plan that includes re-purposing existing media materials and developing new ones.
- Establish scholarship programs to assist tribal citizens in pursuing media professions.
- Seek resources to develop an infrastructure to support the media plan, including staffing and budget.
- Invest in training opportunities for young people to pursue careers in media.
- Train intergenerational teams to create digital stories in the language.

## Integration

- Evaluate the impact of your media plan and update it as needed.
- Intergenerational teams develop digital stories and print materials that are rich in language and culturally appropriate.

## Resources Needed

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- Youth that want to see their language used in media.
- Funding for communications and media.
- Tribal citizens with formal training and education in various media.
- Policies that define how the language is used or not used in various media.

## Resources Available

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- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) <http://www.indigenous-language.org/> Ancient Voices, Modern Tools: Technology Training to Produce Digital Stories Training
- Institute of American Indian Arts -- <https://iaia.edu/academics/degree-programs/cinematic-arts-and-technology/>
- Silver Bullet Productions -- <http://silverbulletproductions.com/about-us/>
- Indigenous Language Institute (ILI) <http://www.indigenous-language.org/> Developing Culturally Relevant Materials Training

## Community Examples

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### **‘Aha Pūnana Leo Hawaiian Immersion Program**

Namaka Rawlins, Director of Policy  
[namaka@ahapunaleo.org](mailto:namaka@ahapunaleo.org)

## 9. Resources

**Our Tribal Nation successfully garners the resources necessary to sustain our ability to keep our language alive and thriving.**

Identifying resources to build and maintain a Tribal Nation's internal capacity – having the financial resources, staff, and infrastructure – to sustain its language revitalization efforts can be one of the greatest challenges. A Tribal Nation's investments can be supported by external sources through tuition, grants, fundraising, and other charitable activities. It is helpful to build and maintain relationships with funding organizations, federal agencies and individual donors that support your goals.

### Markers

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#### Identification

- Our Tribal Nation understands our strengths, as well as areas that need improvement.
- Our Tribal Nation knows who our Native language experts are, and they are engaged in our activities and ready to expand our programs and activities.
- Our Tribal Nation is aware of financial resources available to support our language goals.
- Our Tribal Nation has identified funders, policy-makers, and relevant agencies; we cultivate relationships with them on an ongoing basis.

#### Development

- Our Tribal Nation's internal capacity to garner financial resources is increasing through partnerships with funding agencies, grant writers and others outside the community.
- Our Tribal Nation has a fund development plan for obtaining diversified sources of financial resources and have begun to implement it.
- Our language leadership is mentoring and building the capacity of the next generation to step into leadership roles to maintain and sustain language revitalization efforts.

#### Integration

- Our Tribal Nation is successfully implementing a fund development plan and reaching our funding targets.
- Our Tribal Nation has the internal capacity to successfully garner the resources to maintain our language.
- Our language program is so well established that funding agencies seek out our community.

### Strategies And Practices

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#### Identification

- Be adept at communication with potential funders without compromising your goals.
- Research and learn about available funding sources for Native language revitalization.
- Communicate the value of investing in a comprehensive and holistic language revitalization effort to Tribal leaders.

## Development

- Work with Tribal Council to pass a resolution to create a permanent budget line to start, sustain and support the language program.
- Seek opportunities to diversify funding sources (e.g. government, private foundations, individual donors, fees for service, and goods (if appropriate)). Do not rely solely on grant funding.

## Integration

- Develop a succession plan today – the next leaders, teachers, grant writers, government liaisons, and others needed to sustain language efforts.
- Have a solid recruitment and staff development program, including community leaders and others invested in sustaining language programming.

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## Resources Needed

- Communicators, writers, message generators/disseminators.
- Templates for consistent communication such as a need statement, “Press Kit” and “elevator speech.”
- Personal relationships with funders and program officers.
- An in-house grant writer.

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## Resources Available

- Administration of Native Americans <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ana/grants>
- Blandin Foundation [www.blandinfoundation.org](http://www.blandinfoundation.org)
- Bush Foundation [www.bushfound.org](http://www.bushfound.org)
- Casey Family Programs [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)
- The Christensen Fund [www.christensenfund.org](http://www.christensenfund.org)
- Doyon Foundation [www.doyonfoundation.com](http://www.doyonfoundation.com)
- Edna McConnell Clark Foundation [www.emcf.org](http://www.emcf.org)
- First Nations Development Institute [www.firstnations.org](http://www.firstnations.org)
- Fremont Area Community Foundation [www.faccommunityfoundation.org](http://www.faccommunityfoundation.org)
- Grotto Foundation [www.grottofoundation.org](http://www.grottofoundation.org)
- Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation [www.fdnweb.org](http://www.fdnweb.org)
- James Irvine Foundation [www.irvine.org](http://www.irvine.org)
- JB and MK Pritzker Foundation [www.bridgespan.org](http://www.bridgespan.org)
- Kalliopeia Foundation [www.kalliopeia.org](http://www.kalliopeia.org)
- Lannan Foundation <http://www.lannan.org/>
- Margaret A. Cargill Foundation [www.macphilanthropies.org](http://www.macphilanthropies.org)
- Minneapolis Foundation [www.minneapolisfoundation.org](http://www.minneapolisfoundation.org)
- National Endowment for the Arts [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)
- National Endowment for the Humanities <https://www.neh.gov/>
- National Science Foundation [www.nsf.gov](http://www.nsf.gov)
- Northwest Area Foundation [www.nwaf.org](http://www.nwaf.org)
- NoVo Foundation [www.novofoundation.org](http://www.novofoundation.org)

- Office of Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oes/oe/index.html?exp=5>
- Potlatch Fund [www.potlatchfund.org](http://www.potlatchfund.org)
- The Reset Foundation [www.theresetfoundation.org](http://www.theresetfoundation.org)
- Sacred Fire Foundation [www.sacredfire.foundation](http://www.sacredfire.foundation)
- Swift Foundation [www.swiftfoundation.org](http://www.swiftfoundation.org)
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation <http://www.wkkf.org/>
- White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education, U.S. Department of Education <https://sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/>



## About MICA Group

MICA was founded in 2006 by a group of forward-thinking women: Chief Wilma Mankiller, first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation, Della Warrior first woman chief of the Otoe-Missouria Tribe, Hon. Veronica Gonzales, former Executive Director of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, Hon. Jackie Knox Brown, former deputy secretary, U.S. Department of Energy, and Rosana Rodriguez, former W.K. Kellogg Foundation program officer and Development Director, Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA).

### Our Vision

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MICA envisions a world in which all cultures have a voice, equitable resources, and the capacity to flourish; where indigenous knowledge systems are recognized as inherently valuable world resources. We envision a just world that honors the dignity of each human being.

### Our Mission

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With our vision at the forefront of our work, the MICA Group's mission is twofold:

*To assist government, communities, and their partners in building social and economic capital and systems of change through innovative, sustainable, and culturally appropriate strategies.*

*To raise awareness about the importance of honoring cultural diversity and indigenous ways of knowing in order to create a just, humane, sustainable world together.*

For more information about the MICA Group, please see [www.micagroup.org](http://www.micagroup.org).

### About the Cultural Resource Fund

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The Cultural Resource Fund (CRF) supports Tribal and State cultural and historic preservation projects for 278 eligible grantees. Since its establishment in 2015, the CRF has awarded 369 grants totaling \$6.7 million. A third round of grantmaking, including a major language initiative, is underway. The Language Landscape document was developed in association with the CRF.

The MICA Group was selected to administer the CRF. An Advisory Board guides and directs CRF grantmaking:

Sam Cata (Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo)  
Walter Echo-Hawk (Pawnee)  
Marshall McKay (Yocha Dehe Wintun)  
Kak Slick (SHPO representative)  
Dick Trudell (Santee Sioux)  
Della Warrior (Otoe-Missouria)  
W. Richard West, Jr. (Southern Cheyenne)

We are grateful to our Advisory Board for showing us the way, ensuring that Tribal sovereignty is at the forefront of everything we do. For more information about the CRF, including grants awarded and eligible grantees, please see [www.culturalresourcefund.org](http://www.culturalresourcefund.org).