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A Community Agreement: Our Interconnected Values and Sacred Ways of Being

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A Community Agreement

Our Interconnected Values and Sacred Ways of Being

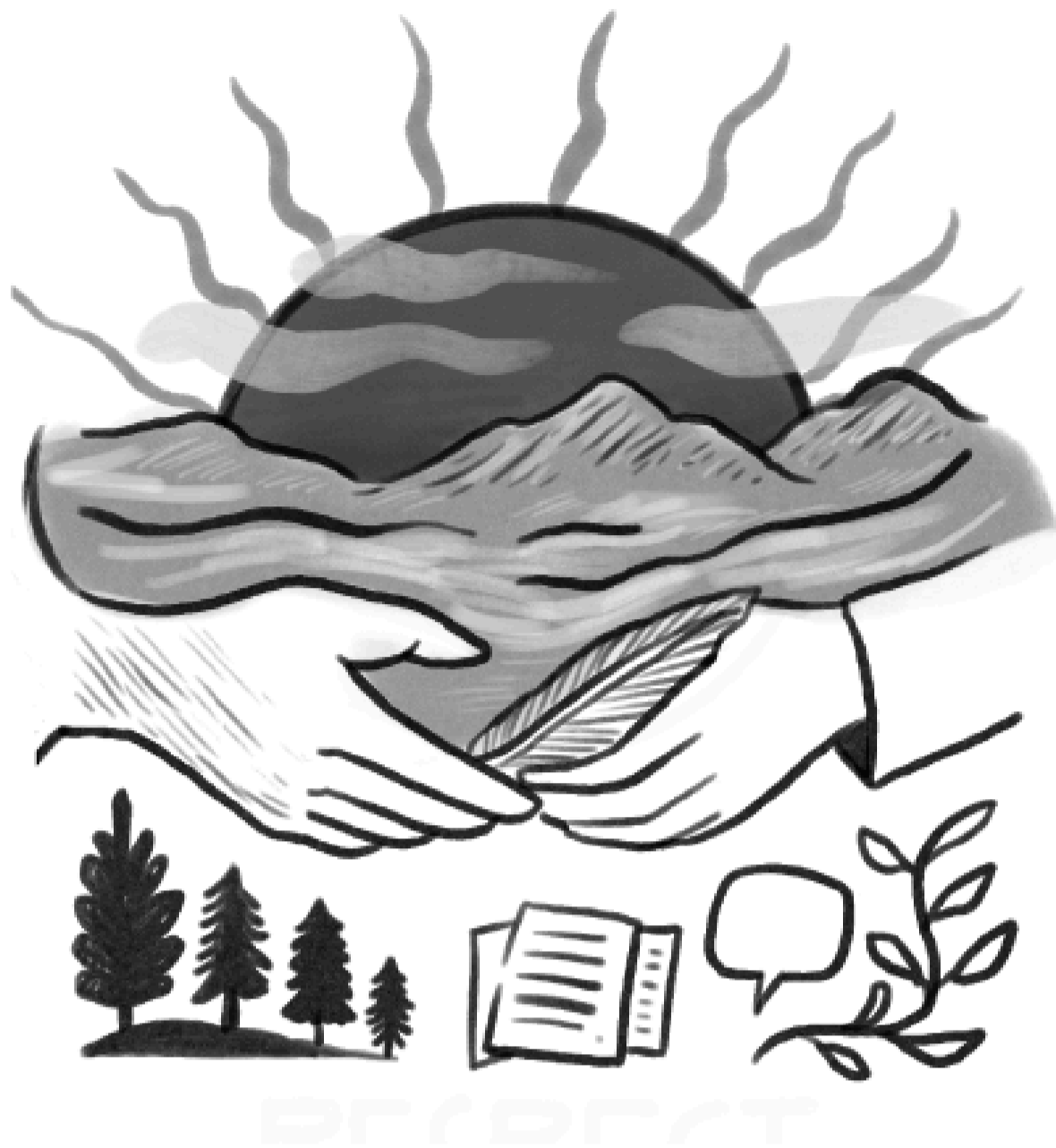
Ethical approaches to research are the foundation of our work at NSF CBIKS. The Ethics Working Group has produced a collective values statement – an evergreen statement of values that conveys what NSF CBIKS stands for, and how we guide ourselves in decision making and in practice. This statement was distilled from the Protocols of Care developed at the December 2023 and May 2024 All-NSF CBIKS Gatherings, and then, through focus group discussions among NSF CBIKS membership in fall 2024 and spring 2025, including the External Advisory Council. The Values are organized around Five Rs – **Relationality, Respect, Representation, Rightful Redistribution, and Sacred Responsibility.**





Relationality

- Cultivate and activate good relations with each other and our extended relatives, kin, ancestors and descendants
- Build strength through shared commitment and solidarity
- Center our hearts and emotions in our work / heart-centered practices
- Bring your whole person – see the whole person
- Build opportunities for healing
- Nurture practices of kindness, to ourselves, one another, and the communities we work with
- Welcome productive conflict, dialogue and action to create positive outcomes
- Practice deep listening and attunement to all individuals and communities
- Operate from a place of gratitude and mutual understanding for all our relations – human and more-than-human



Respect

- The inherent sovereignty of Indigenous nations, and the sovereignty derived through government-to-government relations
- Connections with all beings, including those considered inanimate by Western science
- Relations and boundaries, multiple accountabilities, different capacities and contributions
- The integrity of multiple ways of knowing and types of knowledge
- The diversity of Indigenous ways of knowing, as a challenge and a strength
- Indigenous language- and place-specific forms of expression
- The value of spaces where ideas can be shared in Indigenous languages
- Indigenous protocols and practices of ownership and attribution, and of ceremony



Representation

- Engage diversely – across generations and cultures.
- Ensure intergenerational participation; empower youth and honor the wisdom of elders
- Honor our ancestors, and those who have gone on, in our decisions and actions
- Acknowledge who is missing from our conversations and work to bring in muted/stolen voices
- Build and support national, global, and indigenous-led networks
- Recognize the power of voice when many work together



Rightful redistribution & reciprocity

- Reciprocity: obligations rooted in long-term relationships with human and more-than-human beings, through kinship and through relationality
- Redistribution: obligations to rebalance historically broken and dysfunctional relations that marginalize the perspectives and representation of indigenous peoples
- In the context of western science: ensure an equitable balance of power, resources, educational opportunities, grounded in a recognition and acknowledgement of everyone's contributions and of the authority of indigenous knowledge holders
- In indigenous contexts: ensure that all members are in balance, that everyone is included and taken care of, and that research upholds the spiritual practices of indigenous communities, centers heart and spirit, gives back in ways that sustains meaningful action



Sacred responsibility

- To care for, love, and consider in our decision-making and practice the well-being of all our relations (human and more-than-human), of Indigenous cultures, lands and waters, and future generations
- To care for the Elders, and the Elder you will become
- To those who will be affected by and contribute to CBIKS work
- To those beings who can't speak for themselves
- To climate wellness, heritage places, food sovereignty and security
- To honor seven generations principles and a care perspective in creating and curating knowledge

[Additional Resources on Sacred responsibility](#)

[+](#)

NSF Center for Braiding Indigenous Knowledges and Science

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