

## Request for Proposals

### *Key themes and outcomes of this work*

Development of Indigenizing conservation learning journey  
Trust building, repatterning for healing and transformation  
Content development and facilitation consultancy

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) invites proposals from experienced and reputable consulting firms to develop and facilitate content for live and virtual trainings for TNC leadership and staff to advance Indigenous and Community Leadership in Conservation. We see this initiative as critical for addressing climate, biodiversity and humanitarian crises by building TNC's capacity to support efforts to 'indigenize conservation' practices through respecting and upholding Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and ways of knowing and being.

### Context

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#### **Opportunity**

The Nature Conservancy recognizes the relationship and reciprocity Indigenous Peoples share with their traditional territories, lands, freshwaters and seas as unique and essential to their rights and leadership in conservation. This recognition is fundamental for TNC to formulate and enact an equitable approach, including building the capacity to understand, respect and elevate Indigenous rights, authority, leadership, visions, sovereignty, spirituality, knowledge and wisdom.

#### **Challenge**

Colonialism has shaped global conservation practices and ideologies. The exclusionary conservation model displaces Indigenous Peoples locally to globally. Power dynamics which have become enshrined within western conservation and science systems have driven decision-making and allocation of resources resulting in policies and practices which threaten local caretakers and Indigenous Rights holders.

*"We do not beg, we demand an end to colonial conservation ... Our trauma, our rights, and our wish to be Africa's primary natural resource conservators should not be, once again, swept under the rug."*

- Indigenous voices at Africa Protected Areas Congress 2022<sup>1</sup>

*"In the culture of the Māori people of New Zealand, humans are deeply connected with nature; the two are equal and interdependent, even kin. The idea is reflected in the Māori word '[kaitiakitanga](#)', which means guarding and protecting the environment in order to respect the ancestors and secure the future."*

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<sup>1</sup> People-to-People Declaration at Laboot of the East Africa Assemblies  
Indigenous Peoples of East Africa Declaration on 'Conservation'

*The Māori's intimate relationship with their lands and the natural world is shared by many other Indigenous Peoples around the world, and highlights why these often marginalized groups are gaining recognition as vital stewards of our environment and its fast-depleting resources.*

*The world's 370 million indigenous people are only 5 per cent of the total population but they officially hold 18 per cent of the land and lay claim to far more. Their home areas across 70 countries from the Arctic to the South Pacific include many of the planet's biodiversity hotspots.*

*Their traditions and belief systems often mean that they regard nature with deep respect, and they have a strong sense of place and belonging. This sustains knowledge and ways of life that match up well with modern notions of nature conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources." -UNDP Indigenous people and nature.<sup>2</sup>*

## **Solution**

The Indigenizing Conservation initiative aims to enhance TNC's support for holistic, place-based approaches in community visioning, conservation planning, governance, decision-making, legal frameworks, policy making, advocacy, and resource mobilization. We seek to collaborate with Indigenous- and community-led organizations to Indigenize and decolonize biodiversity and climate change framing within TNC's work, ensuring a do-no-harm approach that respects the political identities, sovereignty, and relationships of Indigenous Peoples to healthy lands and waters.

We are committed to learning from Indigenous epistemologies and framing solutions in ways that uplift and advance Indigenous knowledge systems, such as:

Kaitiakitanga - guarding and protecting the environment in order to respect the ancestors and secure the future (Māori, New Zealand)

iksiksrautiqāñiq Iñuuniagvigmun - Respect for Nature (Iñupiatuñ, Arctic Alaska)

We are also committed to ensuring our conservation work is informed by diverse voices. This includes, but is not limited to, our work with Indigenous Peoples, Tribal nations, and others with customary and traditional ways of life as valued partners, often with district legal rights and sovereignty. We know that we make better decisions, see greater innovation, and achieve stronger, more lasting conservation outcomes when we respect and learn from a variety of experiences and ways of thinking.

## **Focus Areas**

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### **Geography**

The Indigenizing Conservation Learning Journey will have a global focus and reach. Focal geographies include all regions TNC conducts business *Africa, Asia, Europe, India, Latin America, North America, the Caribbean, Oceania and the Pacific.*

For more information, visit <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/indigenous-people-and-nature-tradition-conservation>

### Learning Journey Content Areas

- Colonialism in Conservation: historical to modern contexts [e.g. fortress conservation, disposition, displacement, criminalization], challenges to fortress conservation, and calls to end colonial models
- Indigenous Peoples' Rights: unique and inalienable rights, local, national and regional contexts
- Political status, sovereignty, place-based governance and territorial management systems
- Indigenous Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)
- Cultural and spiritual values of earth's natural systems, reciprocal relationship with nature
- Participatory, community-led conservation with intergenerational and inclusive models
- *Desired* Regenerative and Indigenous economies and kinship systems
- *Desired* Role of healing and transformation for long-term, durable conservation outcomes for people and the planet

### Impact

The Indigenizing Conservation Learning Journey must deliver measurable impacts toward enhancing TNC's support for holistic, place-based, and Indigenous approaches to conservation. This journey aims to:

- Equip TNC staff and leadership with the knowledge and skills to respect and uphold Indigenous Peoples' rights and sovereignty.
- Provide insights and direction on how to respectfully and appropriately learn from TEK to inform TNC's conservation practices – or help to identify resources.
- Promote participatory, community-led conservation models that are inclusive and intergenerational with examples to share.
- Create safe spaces to help illuminate, challenge and transform colonial conservation models, fostering a more rights-based and respectful approach in the spirit of Indigenous Right Relations.
- Support regenerative and Indigenous economies, emphasizing kinship, the cultural and spiritual values of nature, and the role of individual and collective healing and values transformation.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and transformation, ensuring long term, durable conservation outcomes that benefit people and the planet. Facilitate action planning upon completion of training, to support directly implementing lessons learned in an environment where accountability is actionable and transparent.

By achieving these impacts, TNC staff and leadership will be better prepared to lead and support effective, rights-based, and sustainable conservation partnerships and efforts.

### Scope of Work

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The selected consulting firm will be responsible for collaboratively developing and delivering content including but not limited to:

- **Content Development & Advising**
  - Advise and identify new materials that need collaborative creation

- Develop engaging, dynamic and multi-media content for in-person trainings and virtual content for online learning platform
- Explore potential for future events
- Work collaboratively with TNC & the third-party firm (retained) that hosts the online learning platform.
- Consultancy will retain intellectual property of any pre-existing content used for the learning journey. Newly developed content will have shared intellectual property with TNC and possible third-party, pending agreement, though consultancy can continue to market and distribute for their own use.
- **Introductory and Capstone Facilitation Support**
  - TNC aims to launch the training with a live, leadership training in spring/summer 2026, concluding the first round of training with a Leadership Capstone event [date TBD].
  - The consultant will advise TNC on facilitation needs and support the development of in-person and live training content.
  - The consultant will also assist TNC in exploring future live and virtual events for continued learning around these key themes.

## Qualifications

The consulting firm should demonstrate:

- Proven experience successfully designing, delivering, and facilitating engaging and educational content on Indigenous rights and sovereignty, Indigenous and/or community-led conservation, equitable conservation and related themes.
- Multimedia experience in order to create dynamic learning materials
- Lived experience and/or a proven track record of respectfully working within Indigenous communities.
- Expertise in Indigenous rights and sovereignty, especially with the legal, cultural, and human rights frameworks (e.g., UNDRIP) that protect the rights of Indigenous peoples across diverse global regions in conservation contexts.
- Familiarity with participatory and Community-Led Conservation, including a clear understanding of the holistic worldviews as they relate to traditional ecological knowledge, cultural and spiritual values of nature.

## Submission Details

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Interested consulting firms should submit a written proposal **no later than end of day May 15, 2025**, that includes the following elements:

- A statement of interest and portfolio demonstrating relevant experience and qualifications.
- Proposed approach and workplan including methodologies, activities, deliverables and timeline.
- Description of the team that will conduct the work, including subcontractors, if applicable. Any subcontractors must be identified along with the work they will perform and the rationale for using a subcontractor.

- Budget and proposed payment terms. TNC will not reimburse consultants separately for travel expenses, so any anticipated travel should be included in the proposed budget.
- Basic information on the proposing organization, including name, office locations, geographic scope or focus areas, number of employees, any past business relationship with TNC, and annual sales and revenues over the past three years.
- Completed and signed Conflict Disclosure Form (see Annex).
- Samples of relevant work, if available, may be included as annexes.

**Please address all proposals to Iñuraaq Evans, project manager of the Indigenizing Conservation Learning Journey, at [inuraaq.evans@tnc.org](mailto:inuraaq.evans@tnc.org).**

## Selection Process

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Consultant selection will be based on the following steps:

- Assessment of proposals based on qualifications described above and the proposed workplan, methodologies, timeline and budget.
- Interview with highest rated consultancy submissions.
- Select preferred consultant and negotiate contract to be finalized with Global Director of Indigenous Rights and Sovereignty.

TNC conducts its procurement activities in a nondiscriminatory manner with fair treatment given to all submissions. TNC reserves the right to reject offers for any reason whatsoever, to waive technicalities, and to pursue purchasing in a manner that is in the best interest of the organization.

It is the policy of TNC to identify actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in any situation in which TNC has a significant business interest. To assist TNC in complying with this policy, we request that all individuals and/or organizations that submit proposals for this engagement complete our Conflict Disclosure Form. This relates to people who will be working, directly or indirectly, to respond to this RFP as well as people who may be doing the resulting work if selected as the preferred partner or consultant. Please complete the attached Conflict Disclosure Form and send with your RFP response.

## Timeline

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Work will begin as soon as a final consultant is selected. All deliverables must be completed and approved before June 2026, *with the potential for project extension*.

## Administrative Information

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The main point of contact for this consultancy will be Iñuraaq Evans. Additional staff will collaborate in the development of the work and will participate in deliverable review and approval.

TNC will provide up to two rounds of feedback on each deliverable and the consultant will incorporate all feedback, or provide reasonable rationale if feedback is not incorporated, before the deliverable is considered final. Payments will be made upon completion of deliverables. If the consultant is unable to complete a deliverable for any reason, or if a deliverable is unsatisfactory, the consultant and TNC will

make necessary modifications to the contract, which may include updating deliverables, timelines and payments or terminating the contract.

For additional information or clarifications, please contact Andrea Akall'eq Burgess.

## Annex: Conflict Disclosure Form

Interested consultants must complete and return the following form with their RFP response:

### CONFLICT INQUIRY FORM

STEP 1: DESCRIPTION OF PARTIES & TRANSACTION	
Name of individual or organization entering into transaction with TNC:	
Legal identity of individual or organization* entering into transaction with TNC (select one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> For-Profit Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organization
<small>*"Organization" includes a for profit corporation, partnership, trust, estate, joint venture, limited liability corporation, professional corporation, an unincorporated entity, a foundation, public board, commission, 501(c)(3) or other charitable organization.</small>	
Type of Transaction (select one):	<input type="checkbox"/> Contract for Services Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase Order Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Transaction <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If you selected "Other" or "Real Estate," include description here (for real estate, describe property, size, and type of deal (sale, gift, lease, etc.)):	

### STEP 2: DEFINITIONS & QUESTIONS (Complete **only** the section relevant to your organization)

- (1) **TNC Key Employees and Board of Directors:** Please refer to the **attached list** of Key Employees and members of Board of Directors (includes individuals who have left relevant TNC positions within the past five (5) years).
- (2) **TNC Trustee:** Individuals serving as a Trustee or Advisor to TNC.
- (3) **Substantial Contributors:** Individuals or organizations who have made total aggregate contributions to TNC of (i)  $\geq$  US \$5 million during the current fiscal year or (ii)  $\geq$  US \$25 million within the last five (5) fiscal years. Fiscal years run from July 1st through June 30th.

- (4) **Family Members and Close Relatives:** Family members of any individual listed above, such as spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, dependent, other progeny and ancestors.

ON 1. INDIVIDUALS (explain any “yes” answers in Step 3):	Ye	No
a. Are you now, or have you been in the last five (5) fiscal years, (i) a TNC “Key Employee” or (ii) a member of the TNC Board of Directors?		
b. Are you now, or have you been in the last twelve (12) months, (i) a TNC Employee, (ii) a Chapter Trustee, or (iii) a member of a Country Program Advisory Council or a similar advisory group?		
c. Are you a Substantial Contributor to TNC?		
d. To your knowledge, are you a family member or close relative of any individual identified in paragraphs a, b, or c above?		

ON 2. FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (explain any “yes” answers in Step 3):		
a. Is your organization a Substantial Contributor to TNC?		
b. Now, or at the time of the proposed transaction, to the best of your knowledge, do any of the following (individually or collectively with other such persons) (i) own more than <u>35% of the stock or value</u> of your organization (directly or indirectly) and/or (ii) have a controlling influence over the organization’s management or policies (ex. key management or board member): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNC employee (or former employee who left within the last twelve (12) months);</li> <li>• TNC Key Employee;</li> <li>• TNC Board Member;</li> <li>• Substantial Contributor to TNC;</li> <li>• TNC Chapter Trustee or Advisory Council Member for TNC or TNC’s related entities (or former trustees/members who left within the last twelve (12) months); and/or</li> <li>• Family members or close relatives of the above individuals.</li> </ul>		
c. Now, or at the time of the proposed transaction, have or will any TNC Key Employees or members of the Board of Directors serve in the following positions of your organization? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer, director, trustee, key employee, or partner;</li> <li>• Member (if your organization is a limited liability corporation); and/or</li> <li>• Shareholder (if your organization is a professional corporation).</li> </ul>		
<b>SECTION 3. NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (explain any “yes” answers in Step 3):</b>	<b>Ye s</b>	<b>No</b>

<p>a. Now, or at the time of the proposed transaction, do any of the following (individually or collectively with other such persons) have the ability to influence management of the entity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TNC employee (or former employee who left within the last twelve (12) months);</li> <li>• TNC Key Employee;</li> <li>• TNC Board Member;</li> <li>• Substantial Contributor to TNC;</li> <li>• TNC Chapter Trustee or Advisory Council Member for TNC or TNC's related entities (or former trustees/members who left within the last twelve (12) months; and/or</li> <li>• Family members or close relatives of the above individuals.</li> </ul>		
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**STEP 3: COMMENTS (Explain any "yes" answers checked above. Attach additional pages as necessary.)**

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**STEP 4: NOTICE OF TNC CODE OF CONDUCT & SIGNATURES**

TNC expects itself and everyone with whom it does business to conduct themselves in ways that are consistent with TNC's Code of Conduct found at [www.nature.org/codeofconduct](http://www.nature.org/codeofconduct). Anyone (whether a part of TNC or not) may contact the TNC Helpline (anonymously, if desired) with questions, concerns, or suspected violations at [www.nature.org/tnchelpline](http://www.nature.org/tnchelpline).

**The undersigned certifies the information in the inquiry form is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.**

<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Printed Name:</b>	
<b>Title (if for an organization):</b>	



<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Date of Signature:</b>	

<b>TNC COVERED PERSONS</b> The following are individuals who are currently or have been, during the preceding five (5) fiscal years, a TNC "Key Employee" or a member of the Board of Directors.			
List Current as of January 17, 2023			
<u>Current Key Employees</u>	<u>Former Key Employees</u>	<u>Current Board of Directors</u>	<u>Prior Board Members</u>
Nathalie Augustin David Banks Matt Brown Jan Glendening Katharine Hayhoe Tom Neises Michael Sweeney Leonard Williams	James Asp Mark Burget William Ginn Wisla Heneghan Steve Howell Brian McPeck Hugh Possingham Mark Tercek	James Attwood, Jr. Amy Batchelor John Bernstein Michelle DePass William Frist Harry Hagey Margaret Hamburg Fred Hu Shirley Ann Jackson Sally Jewell Nancy Knowlton Edwin Macharia Claudia Madrazo Jennifer Morris Douglas Petno Sergio Rial Vincent Ryan Brenda Shapiro Kent J. Thiry Kevin Weil Ying Wu	David Blood Shona L. Brown Gretchen C. Daily Steven A. Denning Laurence Fink Joseph H. Gleberman Andrew Liveris Jane Lubchenco Jack Ma Craig McCaw Thomas J. Meredith Thomas Middleton Ana M. Parma Stephen Polasky Rajiv Shah Mark Tercek Thomas J. Tierney Moses Tsang Frances A. Ulmer P. Roy Vagelos Margaret C. Whitman
TNC's <a href="#">Related Entities</a> (If applicable)			
Key Employees (members of Related Entity leadership team):		Current Fiduciary Board Members, if applicable:	



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