

ONTARIO PRESENTS

ONTARIO PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTING NETWORK

Guiding Principles for Presenting Indigenous Work

Ontario Presents and its member presenting organizations recognize the importance of presenting Indigenous artists, stories and culture as part of its presenting practice. Historical experiences and cultural differences require that this work be presented in a respectful way that engages both our Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

In order to support the presenting of Indigenous work, the following guiding principles should be respected:

Learn about your community's Indigenous peoples and practices

Each community is unique in its Indigenous territory. Reach out to local Councils or Cultural and Friendship Centres to learn more about your local community, their cultures, history and practices and how the Indigenous work you consider presenting can engage local audiences of all cultures.

Avoid cultural appropriation

Indigenous stories need to be told in a way that reflects an Indigenous perspective and voice. Ensure that the work you present includes Indigenous artists in the creative, decision-making and performance aspects of the work.

There is no one "Indigenous Culture"

Make no assumptions about the artist or work you are presenting. Take time to learn and ask questions to have a clear understanding of the context of the work and of the artists creating it.

Develop mutual understanding with the artist

Presenting Indigenous work requires more than a transactional approach. Ensure that all parties understand the expected performance content (including any expected community outreach), intentions and expectations of each other before formally contracting the event.

Promotion and marketing campaigns need to reflect the artist's vision and intentions

Promotional materials including images, descriptions of the work and vocabulary to be

used will be developed in consultation with the artist to ensure it is consistent with their intentions.

Foster respect for different creative processes and practices of the artist throughout your organization

Ensure all staff and volunteers in the organization have awareness and respect for cultural practices of the local Indigenous audience as well as flexibility and respect for cultural practices of artists.

Acknowledgement of territory

As part of recognition and respect for Indigenous Peoples, acknowledging territory at the beginning of events and gatherings should be done in a way specific to the lands and host communities in the area. Language suitable for each community should be developed through involvement of local cultural leaders or councils and respect local protocols, knowledge and preferences.

These principles are intended to be a living document and should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect lessons learned and best practices in the presenting field.

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