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The CalArts Land Acknowledgment as Endorsed by the Fernand^eño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, the First Peoples of Santa Clarita

THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT

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STATEMENT HISTORY

For three years, the California Institute of the Arts has been building its relationship with the Fernand^eño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians—the First Peoples of Santa Clarita.

They are among more than 600 distinct tribal communities who have maintained their lifeways and cultural traditions despite the ongoing—and unrelenting—colonial project. Indigenous nations and communities require more than words and gestures from allies: They deserve substantial, tangible action.

CalArts–Fernand^eño Tataviam collaborations include a Community Arts Partnership (CAP) youth program, which is helping Fernand^eño Tataviam K-12 students to cultivate their own art practices and secondary students to prepare for post-secondary arts education. Other joint efforts feature campus engagements with Fernand^eño Tataviam leaders in cultural presentations and dialogue, providing CalArtians a stronger sense of their place as guests on Fernand^eño Tataviam lands. The Institute is exploring ways to give a permanent area to the Fernand^eño Tataviam on campus.

As this relationship continues to grow, the Institute introduced in November 2022 a Fernand^eño Tataviam–endorsed land acknowledgment for use by the CalArts community. Combined with meaningful engagement and actions, land acknowledgments reorient community thinking about place and about occupied lands.

STATEMENT USE

CalArts developed the land acknowledgment in close collaboration with Fernand^eño Tataviam leaders and encourages its use in email signatures and as an opening statement before campus events, presentations, and performances.

While the use of the acknowledgment is not mandatory, it's worth remembering that successful relationship-building hinges on full community support and buy-in. The Institute is grateful for CalArtians' commitment to this effort and for their contributions to a long, healthy bond with the First Peoples of Santa Clarita.