



PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

ROOTS OF CHANGE: ACTIONS PLANT CONSERVATORIES & BOTANICAL GARDENS CAN TAKE TO SHARE PLANT KNOWLEDGE IN MORE CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE WAYS

Session A, Breakout Room #: 5

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Botanical gardens and plant conservatories, Plant Knowledge Institutions (PKIs), provide many educational enrichment opportunities for visitors, curating plant collections focused on preservation. However, PKIs have harmful histories based on colonist ideologies that have uprooted native plants from their endemic regions around the world, contributing to the erasure of Indigenous Knowledges within the realm of plant sciences. The purpose of the study was to develop ways PKIs could adopt more inclusive and ethical research methods to include more perspectives, knowledge, and history within these spaces. For my research efforts, I interned with Friends of the Conservatory creating informative profiles on plant species within their collection. Moreover, I compiled a list of 217 PKIs across America and created a survey to inquire about the efforts they have undertaken to foster cultural inclusivity and information accessibility within their institutions. I sent the survey to each institution and received a total of fifty-nine responses. PKIs included their efforts to increase information access to their collections: creating online tours and webinars, planning community programs with local organizations, and producing published resources throughout their institutions. Additionally, I compiled a literature review that delved into projects undertaken by Indigenous scholars that highlighted research methods utilizing Indigenous Knowledges-based research methods. Establishing knowledge-sharing ethical practices within PKIs such as PAR (Participatory Action Research) and MEB (Multiple Evidence Based) research methods could be an important step to ensure that Indigenous Knowledges are included within PKIs with the approval and collaboration of the Indigenous communities that Indigenous Knowledges originate from.