

ROOTS OF CHANGE:

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

Patrick Harper*, Program on the Environment, University of Washington
Site Supervisor: KL Bentrup & Lauren Moore, Friends of the Conservatory
Faculty Advisor: Brittany Johnson, School of Environmental & Forest Sciences

BACKGROUND

-Plant Knowledge Institutions (PKIs)* provide access to global & local plant knowledge through direct interactions with plant species with goals of education and preservation.

-Although, PKIs often only include Western-science based research methods and classifications which instill harmful colonial ideologies that contribute to the erasure of Indigenous Knowledges.

-PKIs have the potential to approach research efforts and projects that advocate for more perspectives & cultural inclusion within their institutions.

*Institutions known as botanical gardens and plant conservatories

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What current steps are being taken by PKIs to include Indigenous Knowledges?

What research methods can be utilized to provide plant knowledge in culturally inclusive ways?

INTERNSHIP & METHODS

Interned with Friends of the Conservatory, a non profit organization supporting the Volunteer Park Conservatory

Created and distributed a survey regarding cultural inclusivity within PKIs & synthesized 59 responses

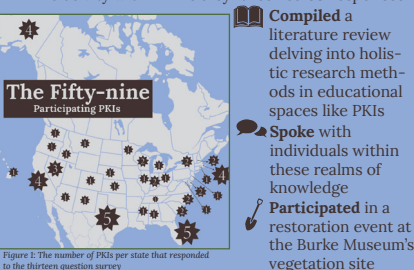


Figure 1: The number of PKIs per state that responded to the thirteen question survey

RESULTS

I. ANALYZING CURRENT STEPS BEING TAKEN

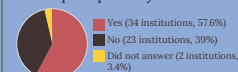
PKIs are making efforts to include Indigenous Knowledges within these spaces, yet a majority of these institutions have not explicitly mentioned steps taken for direct collaboration efforts. (See fig. 2)

II. INCLUDING PERSPECTIVES & ENSURING CULTURAL INCLUSION THROUGH NEW RESEARCH METHODS

1. Prioritize the direct involvement of Indigenous nations and communities when creating projects/ including Indigenous Knowledges within PKIs with the direct approval from community members.

2. Establish conversations about intellectual property rights regarding documentation and distribution of cultivated Indigenous Knowledges within these institutions.

"Has your institution made efforts to include Indigenous Knowledges and history about the plant species in your collection?"



Of the 21 institutions that responded with specific measures taken to include Indigenous Knowledges within their spaces:



What specific measures were taken within the 21 institutions to include Indigenous Knowledges?

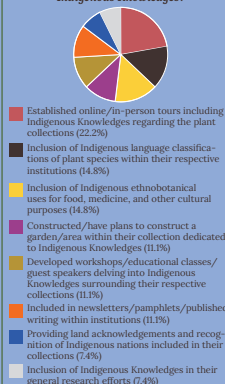


Figure 2: Responses from the survey sent to 217 PKIs asking for measures taken to include Indigenous Knowledges within their projects and research efforts.

RESULTS, CONTINUED:

3. Apply research methods that advocate for the co-production of knowledge and methods that reflect the cultures of the involved communities such as the Multiple Evidence Based (MEB) approach and the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method. (See fig 3)

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Efforts are made to fortify mutual understanding and empower consensual knowledge-sharing

Actions taken to ensure a safe, respectful place is created for individuals/communities to share their knowledge

The involved members are included in how the research is conveyed and expressed

Figure 3: Utilized in Lantieri's research delving into Indigenous research frameworks, the following three descriptions of PAR highlight the main inclusionary efforts of this research method.

SIGNIFICANCE & TAKEAWAYS

-Sharing these current actions taken by PKIs to include more perspectives within these spaces could potentially inspire more PKIs to adopt similar practices

-Continue to investigate alternative research methods that advocate for more inclusionary, non-extractive measures in project collaboration efforts

-Further research should be compiled to ensure that these research methods are beneficial for each one of the involved individuals & communities

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