

Indigenous Learning Circle

York University Markham Campus

Outside 2nd floor Entrance

Background:

The Indigenous Learning Circle at the Markham Campus is an important Indigenous feature of the campus. It serves as a dedicated space that fosters learning, reflection, and the sharing of Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and cultures. It provides students, faculty, staff, and community members with a respectful, inclusive space to engage in dialogue, workshops, cultural ceremonies, and events that honour Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The space is designed to promote collaboration, allyship, and a sense of community while offering opportunities for participants to deepen their understanding of Indigenous wholistic practices.

Purpose:

The Indigenous Learning Circle will serve the community in numerous ways including:

- **Cultural and Educational Events:** A venue for hosting events that celebrate and share Indigenous heritage, such as teachings, storytelling, drumming circles, and art exhibits.
- **Ceremonial Use:** A sacred space for traditional ceremonies, such as smudging, sharing circles, and seasonal celebrations, with respect for Indigenous wholistic practices.
- **Workshops and Learning:** A place for educational workshops, lectures, and discussions that incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and address issues important to Indigenous communities.
- **Community Building:** A safe, welcoming environment where Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members can gather to strengthen relationships and foster cultural understanding.

Policies for Booking and Use:

1. Eligibility:

The space is open to students, faculty, staff, and recognized Indigenous community groups. Priority is given to events that promote Indigenous learning, culture, or community well-being and support the York University's Indigenous Framework A Guide to Action.

See: <https://indigenous.info.yorku.ca/framework/>

2. Booking Process:

When not booked for an event, community members are encouraged to use the space for their own personal and small group reflections and discussion.

Bookings are required for events, classes and planned ceremonies. Bookings are made through the Temporary Use of University Space (TUSS) preferably two weeks in advance. Information about the process can be found at: <https://www.yorku.ca/tuus/>.

Note: A blackout period for booking will be observed during significant Indigenous days and recognitions, such as Indigenous History Month and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, to honor and prioritize community-led observances and reflections.

TUUS APPLICATION

To book the space and have your event approved, please complete [the TUUS Application](#) as soon as possible. In this application, you will be required to include the event details including a description, date and time, expected number of participants etc.

Indigenous-led initiatives and events will receive priority access to the space.

Should you need any help in completing the form and application, please reach out to Tania Bakshi (taniab@yorku.ca)

Custodians of the Indigenous Learning Circle

The Centre for Indigenous Student Services in partnership with the Office of the Deputy Provost are the Custodians of the Indigenous Learning Circle. They serve as a resource and help to facilitate and review the use of the space.

3. Respectful Use:

The space is to be used in a manner that honors Indigenous traditions and respects the sacredness of the environment. Ceremonies, rituals, and practices should be conducted with cultural sensitivity.

Participants are expected to uphold values of respect, inclusivity, and cultural awareness.

4. Smudging and Open Fire:

Smudging is permitted in the Indigenous Learning Circle. Given the proximity to the building, Open Fires are not permitted in the Indigenous Learning Circle. Open Fires are permitted in The Green,

the outdoor space adjacent to the Indigenous Learning Circle. A separate TUUS application to book The Green that includes an Open Fire Permit secured through the City of Markham is required.

For questions about securing an Open Fire Permit through the City of Markham, please be in touch with Tania Bakshi (taniab@yorku.ca)

5. Accessibility:

The space is fully accessible to all participants. Organizers should ensure that the needs of all attendees, including those with disabilities, are accommodated during events.

6. Cleaning and Maintenance:

Users are responsible for cleaning and/or coordinating the cleaning of the space (through Facilities) after their event and leaving it in the same condition in which it was found. Any materials brought into the space must be removed or properly disposed of.

No permanent alterations or decorations may be made to the space without prior approval.

York University recognizes that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which its campuses are located. We acknowledge that our Markham Campus is situated upon traditional territories of the Anishinaabe [An-ish-in-aabe] Peoples and of the Haudenosaunee [hoh-DEE-noh-SHoh-nee] Peoples. These territories are covered by the Upper Canada Treaties. The First Nations community in closest proximity to the City of Markham are the Chippewas [Chip-ah-waas] of Georgina Island.