

## Land History

The 2026 ASOR Annual Meeting convenes in the city now known as Chicago, on the traditional homelands of the Neshnabék—the Bodéwadmi (Potawatomi), Ojibwe (Chippewa), and Odawa (Ottawa) Nations, known together as the Council of Three Fires. Many other Native nations also know this region as home, among them the Myaamiaki, Wea, Sauk, Meskwaki, Ho-Chunk, Kickapoo, Mascouten, Menominee, and the nations of the Inohka Confederation. This area, which connects the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River watershed, has stood as a crossroads for Indigenous nations and served as a center of travel, trade, cultivation, diplomacy, and healing since time immemorial.

We acknowledge that the United States acquired this land through decades of treaty-making that was fundamentally unequal and through outright force, and that the mass removal of Native nations from Illinois after the 1833 Treaty of Chicago was neither the beginning nor the end of that dispossession; it was preceded by nearly forty years of cessions and followed by more than a century of federal policies of allotment, termination, and relocation, designed to sever Native people from their lands and dissolve their nations. Today, Chicago is home to one of the largest urban intertribal communities in the United States: people who returned to their homelands after removal, families brought here by federal relocation policies, and others who came on their own, representing dozens of Native nations across North, Central, and South America.

As a society of scholars devoted to the histories and cultures of West Asia, the Mediterranean world, and North Africa, we are attentive to how peoples' relationships to land, memory, and heritage endure through violence and displacement. We recognize, too, that our own field developed within, and often benefited from, colonial structures of power and collecting, and that critically addressing this history remains ongoing work. An acknowledgment of the land is therefore not a conclusion but an obligation: we invite all Annual Meeting attendees to learn the histories of the nations named here, to support Chicago's Native communities during our time in the city, and to bring the same ethical care we ask of ourselves abroad to the Indigenous histories of Chicago.

**Learning more.** The organizations and projects below are led by or developed in collaboration with Chicago's Native community, and offer places to begin:

[American Indian Center of Chicago](#) — Founded in 1953 and among the oldest urban Native centers in the country, the AIC offers cultural programming, workshops, a gallery devoted to Native artists in and around Chicago, and community events open to the public.

[Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative](#) — A coalition of Native-led organizations and programs working across education, health, the arts, housing, and public policy in the Chicago area.

[Indigenous Chicago](#) — A collaboration between the Newberry Library, Chicago's Native community, and tribal nations with ancestral ties to this place, featuring a research-based curriculum, digital resources, interactive maps, and oral histories.

[Archive Chicago: Indigenous Art, Activism, & Place Making](#) — A place-based, digital project comprising essays examining the work of Native artists and activists.

[Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum](#) — A Native-led museum in Evanston, formerly the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, focused on the nations of the Great Lakes region and on Chicago's Native community.