



NIA TERO

Thriving Peoples. Thriving Places.

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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Thriving Peoples. Thriving Places.

As we bring our fourth year as an organization to a close, we're reflecting on the importance, as well as the strides and successes, of Indigenous guardianship across the world. Nia Tero honors the diverse ways people understand this term. For us it demonstrates the ability of Indigenous peoples' sovereign right to govern and manage collective territory; it is linked to cultures, languages, and practices as connected to thriving land, water, and place; and it has a vital intergenerational dynamic. We hope as you read through these pages, you will see the importance of Indigenous guardianship woven throughout. We thank you for joining us!





**NOTES FROM
LEADERSHIP**

Notes from Leadership

In the annual report that follows, you will be exposed to the exceptional work of our young organization. Please study the following pages carefully, and join us in our efforts to support Indigenous peoples to fight for their rights, retain and transmit their cultures, and sustain the deep wisdom and the vibrant health of their vast, globally significant, territories.

Vicky Tauli-Corpuz

Kankanaey Igorot

Chair of the Board of Directors, Nia Tero



NOTES FROM LEADERSHIP

In 2014, when I began my work as the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, there were only a few hundred determined Indigenous leaders working at the global level to elevate an awareness of the threats facing Indigenous peoples, and the urgency for action.

Today, some eight years later, these threats continue. In fact, this past year, over 100 Indigenous leaders were murdered defending their home territories from outsiders seeking to continue colonization.

Today however, the number of Indigenous leaders working at global, regional, and national levels has expanded. Now there are hundreds, if not thousands of Indigenous leaders, including Indigenous youth, demanding recognition of individual and collective rights; protection of cultural heritage; respect for their territorial, land, and resource rights; decolonization of education and respect for the right to self-determination; as well as direct access to the financial resources needed to achieve all of this and more. And they are not alone. Allies have arrived to support our efforts.

One of our great allies is Nia Tero, an organization that I am proud to serve as Chairperson. Our team of Advisors, staff, and Board represents a diversity of cultures and peoples with great skills, relationships, and wisdom committed to doing whatever it takes for our Indigenous partners to have their rights—articulated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples—respected, protected, and fulfilled.

I am delighted with the progress that Nia Tero has made in their work during the past year, despite the continued harshness of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the annual report that follows, you will be exposed to the exceptional work of our young organization. Please study the following pages carefully, and please join us in our efforts to support Indigenous peoples in their determined efforts to fight for their rights; retain and transmit their cultures, knowledge and values; and sustain the deep wisdom of their cultures and the vibrant health of their vast, globally significant, territories.

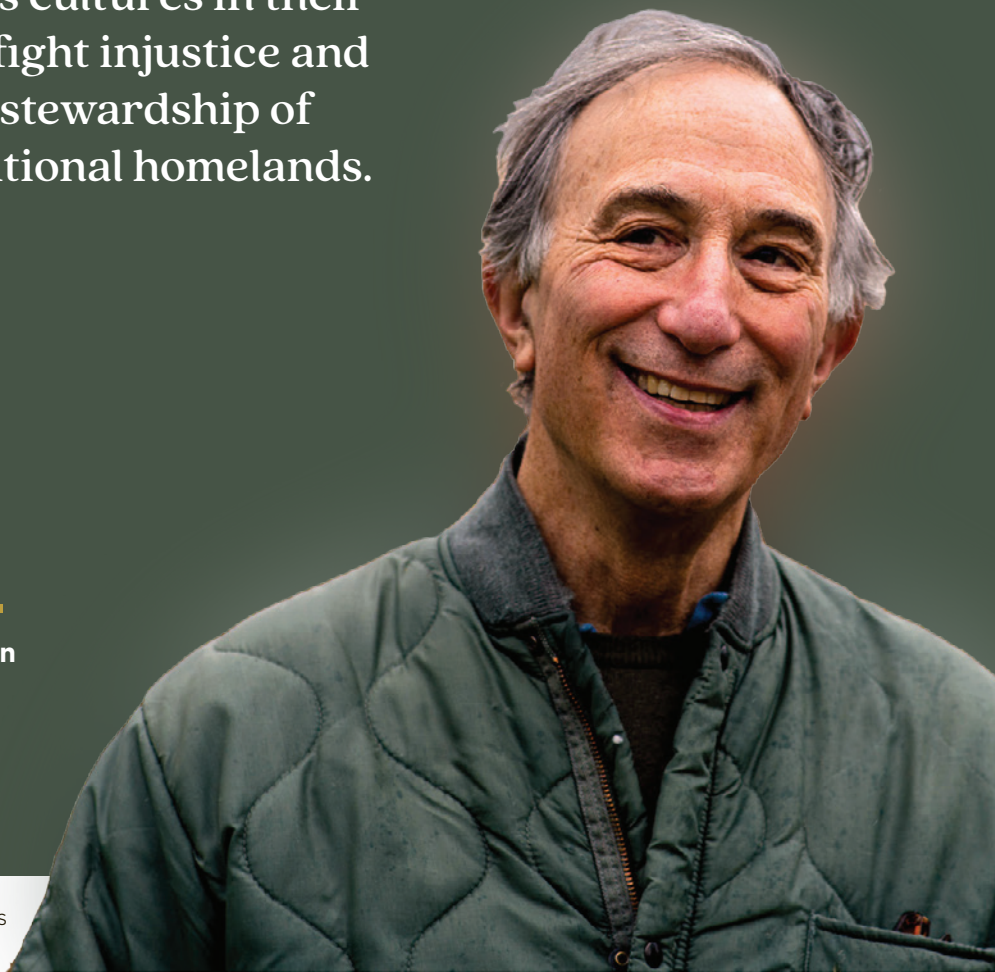


Vicky Tauli-Corpuz

Notes from Leadership

Our Earth, and all of humanity, benefits from supporting Indigenous cultures in their efforts to fight injustice and remain in stewardship of their traditional homelands.

Peter Seligmann
CEO, Nia Tero



NOTES FROM LEADERSHIP

Nia Tero's rationale is straightforward: there is a direct correlation between the destruction of Indigenous cultures and ways of life, and the extreme volatility of the Earth's climate and destruction of its ecological vitality and health.

Our Earth, and all of humanity, benefits from supporting Indigenous cultures in their efforts to fight injustice and remain in stewardship of their traditional homelands. Indigenous peoples make up five percent of the human population, yet inhabit and have rights (in varying degrees) to over one third of the planet. Half of our intact tropical forests, 25% of all forest carbon, 80% of all biodiversity, and over 40% of remaining global lands in good ecological condition exist on this portion of our planet—each of them irreplaceable places that are essential to a vibrant Earth.

We are a bridging organization that nurtures deep and trusted relationships with Indigenous peoples who are rooted in a sovereign vision for their homelands and waters. Our Board is 60%

Indigenous, we are guided by an Indigenous Advisory Council made up of respected Indigenous leaders from around the world, and our leadership team is 44% Indigenous. We have purposefully built capacity to work across multiple cultural divides, to lend long overdue recognition and support to Indigenous peoples for their contributions in confronting the intersecting crises of threatened climate, biodiversity, and health.

The Indigenous communities Nia Tero partners with are making collective decisions about their territories, many of which are under direct assault from external forces acting outside of the law, encouraged by lax or complicit local and national authorities. Yet there is clear and mounting evidence that when Indigenous peoples' sovereignty is respected, they are determined advocates for the health of their territories and fierce defenders who consistently outperform in the face of external threats to protected areas—lands managed by Indigenous peoples emit six times less carbon than publicly protected lands, and 36 times less

NOTES FROM LEADERSHIP (CONTINUED)

than privately owned lands. Our mandate is to meet Indigenous peoples on their own territories, to respect their cultures, and to support their commitments to control and protect their territories from all harm, including invasion and destruction.

To date, we have demonstrated very strong results thanks to established partnerships with over 200 Indigenous communities whose collective territories include more than 100,000,000 hectares. These agreements, although varied in specifics, have the straightforward ambition of ensuring that these important, ecologically rich territories are protected from invasion and destruction. We're taking a regional approach to upholding the ability of specific Indigenous peoples to protect the high priority ecological systems that they call home. Focal territories lie principally within three regions of the world where Indigenous peoples sustain some of the most important large-scale land and seascapes remaining on Earth: the western Pacific (New Caledonia,

Vanuatu, New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, etc.), the Boreal forests of Canada, and the northern Amazon (Suriname, Guyana, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Brazil).

Increasing awareness of the essential role that collectively controlled Indigenous territories play in the security of all humanity is a final aspect of our strategy. We have put together a team of award-winning storytellers, including a community of Indigenous Fellows. The common thread through all of their works is the powerful connection between Indigenous peoples and their territory. For those millions of Indigenous peoples whose voices and cultures have been suppressed and whose territories have been colonized, sharing their deep relationship with the Earth with others, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, provides a unique opportunity to show the world how to cherish Earth and all of the beings that share the planet with humanity.

2021 has been a challenging year for communities across the world. Stresses of

We're taking a regional approach to upholding the ability of specific Indigenous peoples to protect the high priority ecological systems that they call home.

climate change, poverty, marginalization, and injustice proliferate. Thanks to Indigenous leadership, including elders and youth, the tide seems to be shifting in important ways. Nia Tero is in the midst of this movement, working tirelessly with partners across all sectors of government, philanthropies, media, civil society, the private sector, and Indigenous and local communities to ensure that the rights of Indigenous peoples are respected, their lands are secure, and that the benefits of thriving places uplift the prospects for all of humanity.

Our Annual Report highlights the progress made in 2021. Thank you for your support and engagement. Please share with us your inspirations and your counsel.

Peter Seligmann





Regions

We are committed to working alongside Indigenous peoples in geographies central to the wellbeing of all humanity. Our initial regions include the Pacific Islands, Amazonia, and the North American Boreal Forest of Canada, where we work with Indigenous peoples who share a collective territory and have strong governance systems in place to protect their lands and waters.



PASIFIKA
AMAZONIA
BOREAL

Pasifika

Strengthening Indigenous guardianship of islands and ocean

25%

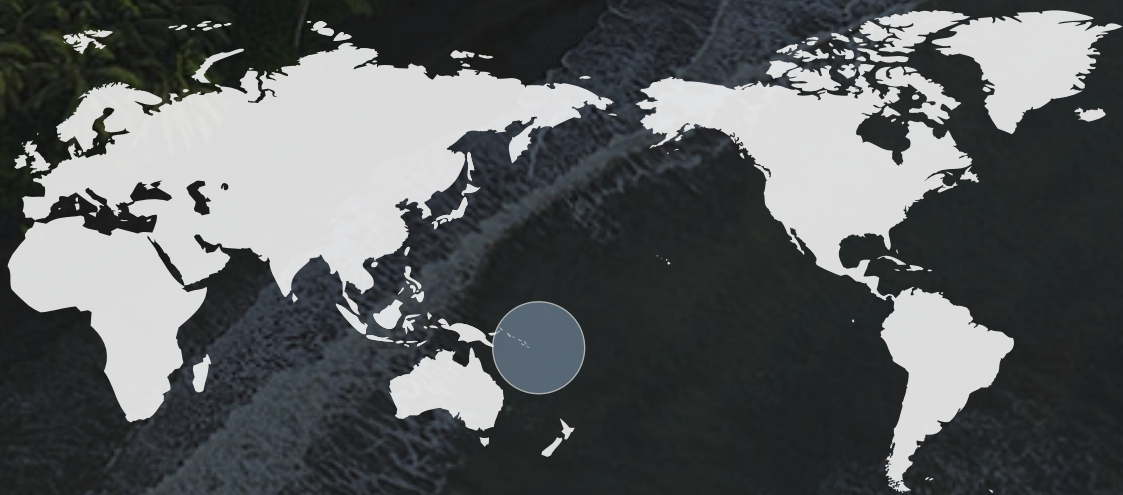
(1,500) of all global
languages spoken
occur in the Pacific
Islands region

30%

of the Earth's surface
is covered by the
Pacific Ocean

25K

islands are in the
Pasifika region



Indigenous guardianship of islands and ocean is vital to the health of the region. Nia Tero is committed to elevating the influence of Pasifika identity in shaping policy and action on guardianship.

PASIFIKA

In 2021, Sky Islands Pledge efforts in the Solomon Islands expanded to adjacent archipelagos to nurture both previous and new partnerships, engaging over 50 customary land holding groups who are upholding over 40% of Sky Islands areas.

Beyond Solomons, **Sky Islands efforts** prevented logging in Santo, Vanuatu and Kanaky (New Caledonia), and the Mt Panie protected area was expanded—a final stronghold for the exceptional and intrinsic biodiversity of sacred Kauri forests.

Islands work extended the Sky Islands concept to remote and thriving atolls across Hatohobei (including Helen Reef) in Palau. Mala I Tolo Indigenous Guardianship Trust is now established as the mechanism for durable finance and educational reform in Malaita Province, Solomon Islands. In the Autonomous Region of Bougainville

we established a partnership with a key Indigenous-led organization and are poised to engage additional partners across over a quarter-million hectares of Sky Islands in 2022.

Oceans work in 2021 furthered the Tāua e Moana voyage in the Cook Islands throughout all 15 Pa ‘Enua (outer islands) by supporting Korero o te Orau, Te Ipukarea Society (TIS), and Cook Islands Voyaging Society. The voyage is essential in realizing the 50 nautical mile marine reserve area around all islands. Nia Tero’s Ocean Guardianship Working Group commenced work to improve ocean



In the Solomon Islands, the Government's Sky Island Pledge protects forested areas above 400m (20% of land area).

governance through Indigenous concepts of kinship with the living world. The group guided support to the Centre for Environmental Law and Community Rights (CELCOR) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and its key Australian ally, the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO), to employ ocean kinship framing in precedent-setting cases across the Bismarck and Solomon Seas.

Work to elevate Pasifika Identity in support of guardianship established the Pasifika Regional Voyagers Network, enabling place-anchored voyaging communities across the

whole of Pasifika. The North Pacific Indigenous Ways Education Pilot Project expanded Indigenous learning centers in Pohnpei and Kosrae. In PNG and Solomon Islands, Legal Guardians work elevating customary sovereignty is underway. Lastly, in Oro Province, PNG, CELCOR is collaborating with the Save the Sepik Campaign and the Oro Provincial Government to combat illegal logging, protecting more than 600,000 hectares of thriving and biodiverse customary forests for future generations.

Amazonia

Securing 60 million hectares of thriving forest landscape

50%

of the Amazon is managed and protected by Indigenous peoples

10%

of the planet's known biodiversity is contained in the Amazon

8M

square kilometers of tropical rainforest



The Amazon is the world's largest tropical rainforest, more than 8 million square kilometers (3 million square miles) and larger than the 48 contiguous United States. An estimated 80% of the Amazon is forested and includes some 3,000 Indigenous territories, covering over a third of its area.

AMAZONIA

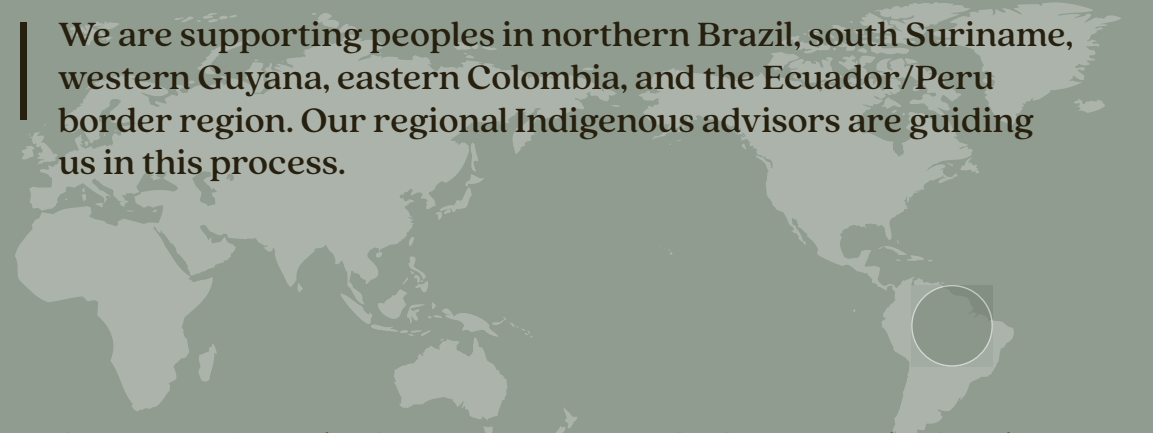
In 2021, we contributed to implementation of the self-determined vision of 23 Indigenous organizations and their trusted partner NGOs.

The implementation of the vision for Indigenous partners included advancing the protection and monitoring of their territories. Indigenous partners from the Tumucumaque, Zo'é, Javari, Raposa Serra do Sol Indigenous lands in Brazil, South Rupununi District Council in Guyana, and Yaigojé Apaporis Indigenous Reserve in Colombia established or strengthened existing Indigenous monitors, patrolling teams, and firefighting teams thus increasing the protection of their lands.

Nia Tero's partners also worked on **maintaining strong cultural practices** crucial for maintaining vibrant cultures and healthy territories. For example, Tropenbos worked with knowledge-

holders of the Yurupari in the Colombian Amazon, in the transmission of knowledge to 11 youth groups composed of men and women eager to re-learn traditional ceremonies, songs, and skills. Our partners' work also focused on skill-building opportunities for Indigenous organizations in communications.

This year we **continued to support legal action** of Indigenous peoples in the region. An important milestone was the submission of the Indigenous Land Rights Bill to the National Assembly of Suriname, which is now going through a review process by lawmakers and is being followed up closely by the Association of Traditional Chiefs of



We are supporting peoples in northern Brazil, south Suriname, western Guyana, eastern Colombia, and the Ecuador/Peru border region. Our regional Indigenous advisors are guiding us in this process.

Suriname (VIDS). Another important landmark on this front is related to multiple achievements of the Indigenous lawyers of the Articulation of Brazilian Indigenous Peoples (APIB), who during 2021 won several cases including a decision of the Supreme Court to ban missionaries from Indigenous lands with peoples in voluntary isolation, as well as depositions for the Supreme Court to reject the Marco Temporal thesis.

In addition, we focused on the implementation of **Nia Tero's organizational strengthening strategy**. This included providing support to Indigenous organizations in assessing their current situation, identifying their strengthening priorities, and advancing their

organization's strengthening plan. We also launched the second round of our Leadership Fellows Program in the Amazon, as well as the Policy Trainees Program. Both programs are for Indigenous participants from our key geographies.

Finally, recognizing the threats to Indigenous peoples in the region, **we continued supporting rapid response funds** for Indigenous peoples in Colombia and Peru who are under threat. These funds actively respond to community and organizational urgent security needs.

Boreal

Supporting Indigenous efforts to secure guardianship of the Boreal

70%

of Indigenous communities
in Canada are located in
the forested regions

28%

of the world's Boreal zone
is in Canada: 552 million
hectares

14%

of Earth's land is located
in the Boreal forest



The Boreal forests of North America's northernmost regions are among the world's most expansive, containing over one-quarter of Earth's remaining intact forests and massive stores of carbon.

BOREAL

In 2021, the world became increasingly aware of the planetary importance of both the Boreal forest, and the Indigenous peoples who have safeguarded that forest since time immemorial.

Because of this region's critical role, **Nia Tero works in solidarity with and in support of the Boreal's Indigenous guardians.** Our close Indigenous partner organization in Canada is the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI). We also support the Sahtu Dene First Nations guardianship of their lands.

Over 100 nations, including Canada, made a collective commitment to halt deforestation by 2030 at this year's COP26 conference in Glasgow. This pledge will impact Boreal forests, as they are a critical key to our planet's health—these forests hold even more carbon than tropical forests, and potentially include a quarter of the world's

soil-stored carbon. Our supported Indigenous partners continue to make the case that Indigenous knowledge regarding care of the Boreal is crucial to keeping that carbon safely in place. In August 2021, the Canadian federal government—again thanks in part to the advocacy of our Indigenous partners—announced \$340 million of new funding over five years towards support of Indigenous guardianship. ILI leader Valerie Courtois noted:

“This is the largest federal investment in Indigenous-led stewardship to date, and we welcome the Government of Canada's commitment to partnering with Indigenous Nations on



The Boreal forests are all within the territories of Indigenous peoples who interweave identity, culture, and guardianship of thriving communities of life at a continental scale.

conservation and stewardship... The biggest, most ambitious plans for sustaining lands and communities are coming from Indigenous Nations. This investment is a tangible demonstration that Canada has placed Indigenous-led conservation at the heart of its strategy to protect nature and achieve biodiversity goals."

who work closely with Indigenous communities and guardians in the Boreal, with strong leadership from ILI. This PFP will be generated by and with First Nations and other key Indigenous leaders. These groups will hold virtual visioning gatherings for PFP planning in early 2022.

Separately, a number of funders continue to focus on the Boreal, making progress with the Canadian federal government on **a long-term funding model called Project Financing for Permanence, or PFP**. The PFP will ultimately be a series of agreements among public and private funders



Crosscutting, Amplification, & Scaling

At Nia Tero, our work in crosscutting, amplification, and scaling is about implementing the most effective methods in support of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous action. Strategies that enable this appear through storytelling, policy, infrastructure, program related investments, and network-building initiatives. As we continue to develop and move forward in this work, these are just a few ways crosscutting exists to support, elevate, and amplify Indigenous knowledge, action, and sovereignty.



**STORYTELLING
POLICY
PARTNERSHIPS**

Storytelling

Uplifting and
amplifying
Indigenous
peoples through
storytelling



STORYTELLING

2021 was an incredibly productive and dynamic year of storytelling for Nia Tero, with some great highlights...



0'S60' (*What They've Been Taught*), by Brit Hensel, at Sundance Film Festival

The Storytelling Team continues to center Indigenous-made content, nurture partner relationships, and focus on deepening our quality of work.

Our Storytelling Team launched **three successful print and digital campaigns**, designed **two completely new Nia Tero websites**, produced a **dynamic presence at COP26** both on the ground and virtually; and our reach across all social media platforms has doubled to **reach new audiences across the world**. We are currently in pre-production and production of **10 new short films**, researching **book ideas**, writing **learning materials** for our Reciprocity Project films, and we're developing an Indigenous Storytelling Advisory Council.

In 2021, we expanded our team to 11 people on staff, including an Associate Director of Marketing. Working with a strong and creative web development team, we built a new, expansive, and

engaging main Nia Tero website with a focus on spotlighting our programs and initiatives, as well as a dynamic secondary website and digital media campaign covering the events and highlights of COP26 in Glasgow.

The Storytelling Team continues to center Indigenous-made content, nurture partner relationships, and focus on deepening our quality of work while upholding Indigenous guardianship. At the core of this work are the hopes and concerns for future generations while we continue our work together as a collective movement through 2022 and beyond.

Initiatives

Nia Tero storytelling initiatives build community, creative partnerships, fellowships, grantmaking, media training, and communications with an emphasis on establishing reciprocal relationships with Indigenous peoples and organizations.

22

SEEDCAST
podcasts created
reaching over
300,000 listeners

50+

film festival
screenings
globally

48

original
short films



RECIPROCITY PROJECT

Reciprocity Project seeks to embrace the value of reciprocity through Indigenous perspectives via storytelling, film, podcasts, and other creative mediums. This initiative is a co-production between Nia Tero and **Upstander Project** in association with REI Co-Op Studios. Season One wrapped post-production in the fall of 2021. **All seven films have been selected to a dozen film festivals** in early 2022, including the short, *O'S60* (*What They've Been Taught*), at Sundance Film Festival.



PASIFIKA STORYTELLING

Vaka Pasifika is a Nia Tero Storytelling initiative, aimed at supporting the ongoing movement of people and communities who are working towards a society rooted in the concept of human reciprocity with all beings and a living planet. To support the growth and flourishing of this network, the Pasifika Storytelling team successfully created and **hosted virtual spaces for gathering and discussion** throughout 2021.

STORYTELLING

INITIATIVES



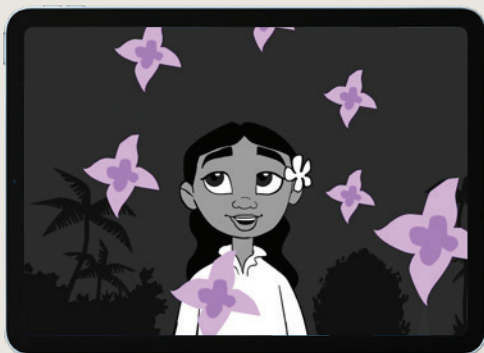
SEEDCAST

We've completed a total of **22 podcasts** in one year which reached over **300,000 listeners**; and included a partnership with NPR. In addition, we've supported a dozen written stories for publication by Indigenous creators, and have finalized **12 artist portraits** for broadcast on PBS.



KIN THEORY

Kin Theory is a database for Indigenous creatives. Our goal is to foster community with other creatives while increasing visibility, hiring opportunities, and collaborations in global media industries. In 2021, we launched the website and organized **24 Kin Theory events**.



ORIGINAL CONTENT

We create, amplify, and uplift stories, art, and music rooted in our key regions and from around the world. Our original content includes a broad range of media such as film, radio, podcasts, journalism, posters, murals, policy assets and digital media. We've made **48 original short films** in two years, and these short films have screened in **50+ film festivals globally**.



Creative Fellowships

The work and impact of Nia Tero's Creative Fellowships is best told in numbers, images, local networks, innovative digital exchanges, and personal stories.

The Creative Fellows suite amplifies Indigenous creatives working on innovative projects rooted in culture, environment, and story. **The Fellows then have access to a world stage** to amplify the global narrative about the critical role of Indigenous peoples in the wellbeing of the planet and our collective humanity. **In 2021, Nia Tero added 34 new members to the Creative Fellowship family.**

CREATIVE FELLOWSHIPS

Storytelling as a strategy to address climate change is something that I have been intentionally doing for the past decade. This is my vocation. I believe that this Fellowship is the reset I need, the gift offered to help reignite something I am so passionate about and it will/has also dared me to reimagine.

Fenton Lutunatabua

Fenton Lutunatabua
Suva, Fiji
Storytelling Fellow (Cohort 2)



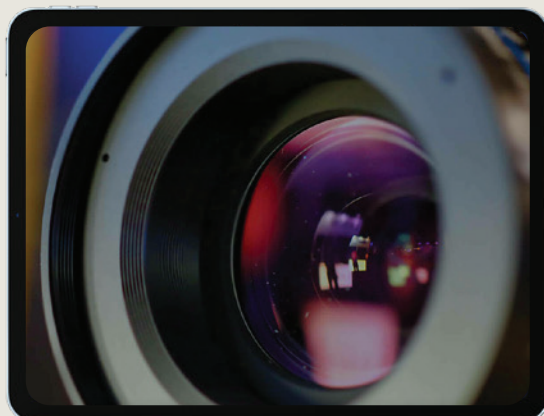
STORYTELLING

CREATIVE FELLOWSHIPS



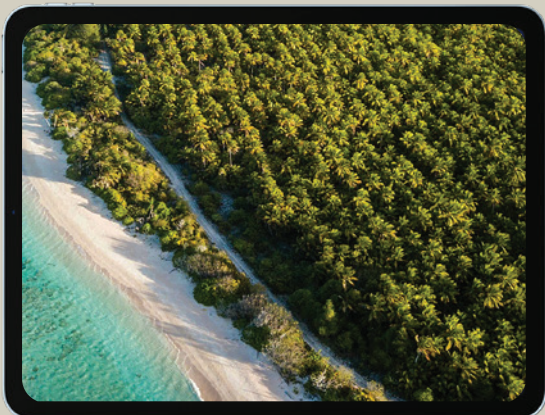
STORYTELLING FELLOWS

The Storytelling Fellowship is a yearlong program which aims to support and amplify the work of extremely talented and seasoned, Indigenous storytelling creatives (of multiple mediums) within Nia Tero's priority regions (Pasifika, Amazonia, and Boreal) as well as globally. The Storytelling Fellows program builds capacity for Indigenous creatives as individuals and for their communities and for the visibility of Indigenous leadership in storytelling.



4TH WORLD MEDIA LAB

The 4th World Media Lab provides Indigenous creators a progressive immersion into film learning and film exploration ranging from storytelling basics and pitching, to presentation and marketing, to distribution and industry networking. The lab includes residencies at Camden International Film Festival in Maine, Big Sky Documentary Festival in Montana, and Seattle International Film Festival in Washington State.



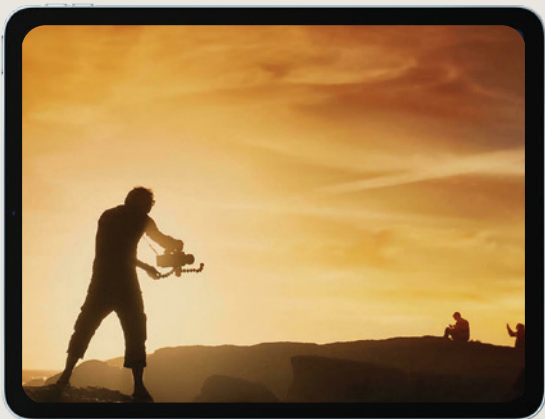
PASIFIKA JOURNALISM FELLOWS

2021 saw the launch of the inaugural Pasifika Journalism Fellowship to support Indigenous-led news reporting in the Pacific Islands. The first cohort consists of nine journalists who identify as Pacific Islander, who are covering stories about Pasifika peoples and their care of land and sea.



PNW ART FELLOWS

Nia Tero's Pacific Northwest (PNW) Art Fellowship brings together creatives working in many visual disciplines, from diverse international Indigenous affiliations, across varying stages of their artistic development. Nia Tero is proud to provide this opportunity for professional and personal support to Indigenous artists working in the Pacific Northwest of Turtle Island.



NATIVESTAND

The NATIVE Stand Fellows Programme is an international professional development opportunity for Indigenous producers to attend the European Film Market (EFM) in Berlin with 1 to 2 market-ready feature film projects.

Nia Tero is proud to be a NATIVE Fellows Sponsoring Partner with other institutions such as: FILM.GL, Indigenous Media Initiatives, Indigenous Screen Office, International Sámi Film Institute, imagineNATIVE, Pacific Islanders in Communications, Sundance Institute, Vision Maker Media, and Winda Film Festival.





A close-up, low-angle shot of a sailboat's mast and a large, white, slightly tattered sail. The boat is moving across a dark, choppy body of water, creating a white wake. The sky is a pale, overcast blue. The overall mood is serene yet powerful, suggesting a journey or a quest.

CROSSCUTTING, AMPLIFICATION & SCALING

Policy

Policy and advocacy to sustain collective territories



POLICY

2021 brought a significantly accelerated urgency to solve the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity collapse. Global support of ambitious proposals gained momentum, such as nature-based decarbonization and goals to protect 30 percent of the world's lands and seas by 2030 (30x30).

30x30

The Protect Our Planet Challenge: international commitment to protect 30 percent of the world's lands and seas by 2030

COP26

Nia Tero sustained high level visibility of Indigenous voices, presence, and leadership both within and beyond the meeting venue



Though global attention like this appears to be good news, Indigenous peoples continue to remain cautious and vigilant, as similar global policy efforts have historically inflicted devastating colonization, extraction, genocide, and abject denial of Indigenous peoples' rights and sovereignty. If there is any hope of achieving just and effective solutions, the world must address these historical ongoing injustices and embed the rights, participation, and roles of Indigenous peoples moving forward.

POLICY

Nia Tero helped ensure that effective Indigenous leadership and voices were present at key 2021 global policy processes; including the **World Conservation Congress**, virtual negotiations of the **Biodiversity Convention** on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the **COP26 Climate Conference**. In spite of the hiatus from in-person negotiations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Nia Tero helped strengthen the technical and policy advocacy capacity of Indigenous caucuses, partners, and policy apprentices. As a result, Indigenous peoples' proposals and rights were strongly reflected in outcome documents.

Finally, at the **International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress in Marseille**, Nia Tero helped support an influential group of Indigenous leaders, resulting in a significant and powerful Indigenous presence at the Congress. These voices contributed toward momentum and support for strong Indigenous rights language in the global biodiversity framework.

Nia Tero mounted a significant and impressive presence at the COP26 Climate Conference in Glasgow, backing a large contingent of Indigenous partners. As a result,

We believe that there should be no decisions made about Indigenous territories without Indigenous peoples' agreement and deep engagement.

COP26 marked a striking departure from prior climate conferences through a pronounced and sustained high level visibility of Indigenous voices, presence, and leadership both within and beyond the meeting venue. Indigenous leaders spoke at the World Leaders Summit, sharing the stage with presidents, prime ministers, and royalty. Many Indigenous leaders, especially women, were prominent voices on panels and deliberations throughout COP26.

Significant multi-billion dollar funding pledges from governments and philanthropies were announced at COP26, such as the “Protecting Our Planet Challenge” and a commitment to help Indigenous peoples prevent deforestation. **Outcome documents and key decisions at COP26 specifically included Indigenous peoples' rights and roles in climate and biodiversity action.** In 2022 and beyond, we need to make sure that these commitments are carried into action.



CROSSCUTTING, AMPLIFICATION & SCALING

Partnerships



LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Leadership Fellows program was established in 2019 to strengthen emergent leaders from Nia Tero's place-anchored partnerships, focusing on three specific priority regions: Amazonia, Pasifika, and Boreal.



PARTNERSHIPS

Modeled after Indigenous teaching methods and concepts of leadership, communities work to enhance leadership development and succession, thereby contributing to local durable support and guardianship of territories. This program also provides Fellows with the necessary soft skills to strengthen their ability to share messages outside their territories, while connecting them to networks of Indigenous leaders and other communities more broadly.

THE LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM PROVIDES SEVERAL MEANINGFUL PURPOSES:

A focus on the needs of Fellows and their communities

Strengthening of Indigenous culture and spirituality

Promotion of intergenerational and intercultural exchanges

Support of local facilitators and individualized mentors

Participation of regional cohorts and peer groups

A learning-by-doing approach, where learning is shared in return with the community

LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

In 2021, Nia Tero successfully completed the co-design of regional curricula in the Amazonia, Pasifika, and Boreal regions.

Though COVID-19 continues to impact the program's development, we still made progress and were able to fully execute the **Amazonia Leadership Fellows** program entirely online. This facilitated a more localized approach, allowing Fellows to learn from local leaders while conducting a diverse set of exercises in their communities. The Amazonia Fellows are now in the final stage of the program, and initiating the design phase of their project of choice in close consultation and coordination with their local leadership.

In 2021, additional results of the Amazonia program have included the use of **mother tongue education**, the provision of **seed funding** for project implementation, and support to Fellows and communities with much-needed **telecommunications infrastructure and equipment** for easy internet access. It is our hope that in 2022, as travel restrictions ease across the world, we will be able to conduct the Pasifika and Boreal Leadership Fellows programs unhindered and in-person within each region.

Our core, grounding principle is to start all work with the self-defined guardianship aspirations of our Indigenous partners.



2019 LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

Enhancing leadership development and succession for guardianship of territories



Jupta Itoewaki

Mulokot Foundation
Suriname



Liam Kokaua

Cook Islands



Ryan Hawley

***Ant Atoll
Biosphere***
Federated States
of Micronesia



Mandy Bayha

***Déljine Got'ine
Government***
Canada

WAYFINDERS CIRCLE

Wayfinders Circle was founded through a joint effort with Nia Tero, Pawanka Fund, and the Council of Spiritual Elders as a network dedicated to unleashing the transformative potential of Indigenous lifeways; inspiring all people to re-imagine development, conservation, and the way they relate to each other and to Mother Earth.

The Wayfinders Circle currently includes 12 Indigenous peoples from around the world, including: the Heiltsuk Qqs Project Society (Canada), Warddeken (Australia), the Native American Land Conservancy (USA), the Blackfoot Confederacy (US/Canada), the Achuar Nation (Ecuador), the Wampis Autonomous Government (Peru), the Mayangna

Nation (Nicaragua), Sungai Utik (Indonesia), the Udege People (Russia), Sámiid Riikkasearvi (Sweden), and Rapa Nui (Chile); and we expect future partnerships will form. **All Wayfinders Circle members maintain strong guardianship of their territories, are eager to learn from each other, and influence decision-makers through policy and storytelling.**

The Wayfinders Circle is dedicated to unleashing the transformative potential of Indigenous lifeways.



In 2021, the Wayfinders Circle conveners—Pawanka Fund, Nia Tero, and the Council of Spiritual Elders—**developed a governance report** with input and validation from all Wayfinders Circle members, as the first joint report of the initiative. In

addition, it **gathered information on communications and policy aspirations of the Wayfinders Circle members**, as a key step to advance with the implementation of future activities.





WAYFINDERS CIRCLE (CONTINUED)

The individual Wayfinders Circle members also worked on one or more of the following activities with the support of the initiative: protecting and monitoring their territories, strengthening internal governance processes, strengthening Indigenous-led organizations, advancing legal cases to secure their rights, improving access to education, improving food security, working with youth, and maintaining or revitalizing cultural practices. Some specific examples include the Wampis Nation going through the first transition of their autonomous government and establishing better communications infrastructure within the territory; the Qqs Projects Society advancing their food security, youth, and community cultural programs; and Warddeken focusing their Wayfinders Circle support on their ecological monitoring program.

Altogether, the Wayfinders Circle initiative contributed to the efforts of its 12 members to maintain and strengthen guardianship over 37 million hectares.

We are optimistic that 2022 will be an exciting year for Wayfinders Circle members advancing specific actions to strengthen their territories, cultures, and self-determination. In addition, **we expect to start sharing narratives of individual members** through communications and storytelling, and of the overall initiative through reports and the participation of the Wayfinders Circle in key international fora for members to share and discuss key issues.

PARTNERSHIPS

INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATION



INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATION

Our Infrastructure & Innovation strategy continued its focus on transportation and energy, supplemented by a newer engagement in telecommunications and a second, highly successful Technodigenous event.

All of our work centers on the collaboration and co-design of infrastructure and technology prototypes with Indigenous and technologist partners, as well as our infrastructure and regional teams.

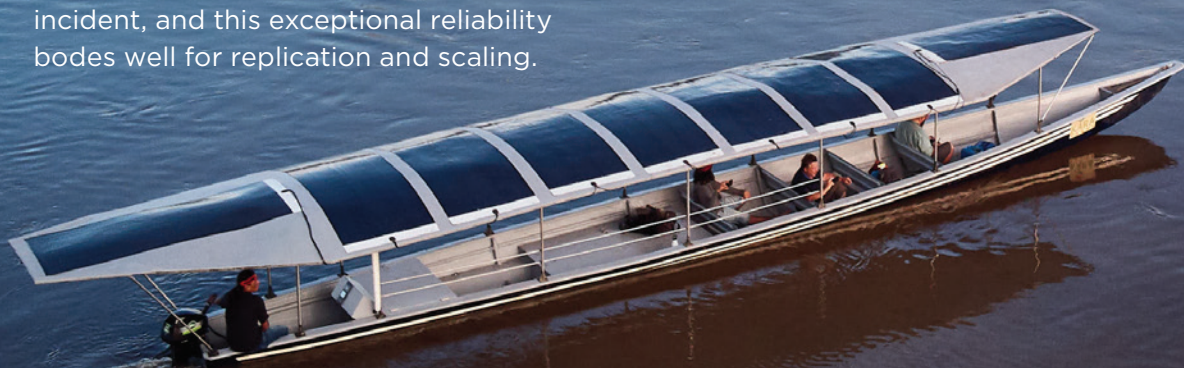
A core, grounding principle is to start all work with the self-defined guardianship aspirations of our Indigenous partners. These aspirations are then scaled via iterative prototyping into practical solutions which have the potential to be deployed by Indigenous communities at scale across multiple territories.

INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATION (CONTINUED)

SOLAR-ELECTRIC TRANSPORTATION:

Nia Tero continued its engagement with Ecuador's Kara Solar in the form of financial support and technical/entrepreneurial assistance. Our partnership amplified Kara Solar and the Achuar people's efforts to expand the Achuar's fleet of solar-electric canoes from two initial prototypes to five solar-electric canoes. The canoes are operated and maintained by a fully autonomous Achuar team. 250 trips have been accomplished without incident, and this exceptional reliability bodes well for replication and scaling.

Supplemental to this, throughout 2021 co-design conversations took place between Kara Solar, the Achuar and six other Indigenous partners in Brazil, Suriname, and the Solomon Islands. Detailed plans and construction schedules have been finalized to prototype deployment of six new electric boats in 2022.



PARTNERSHIPS

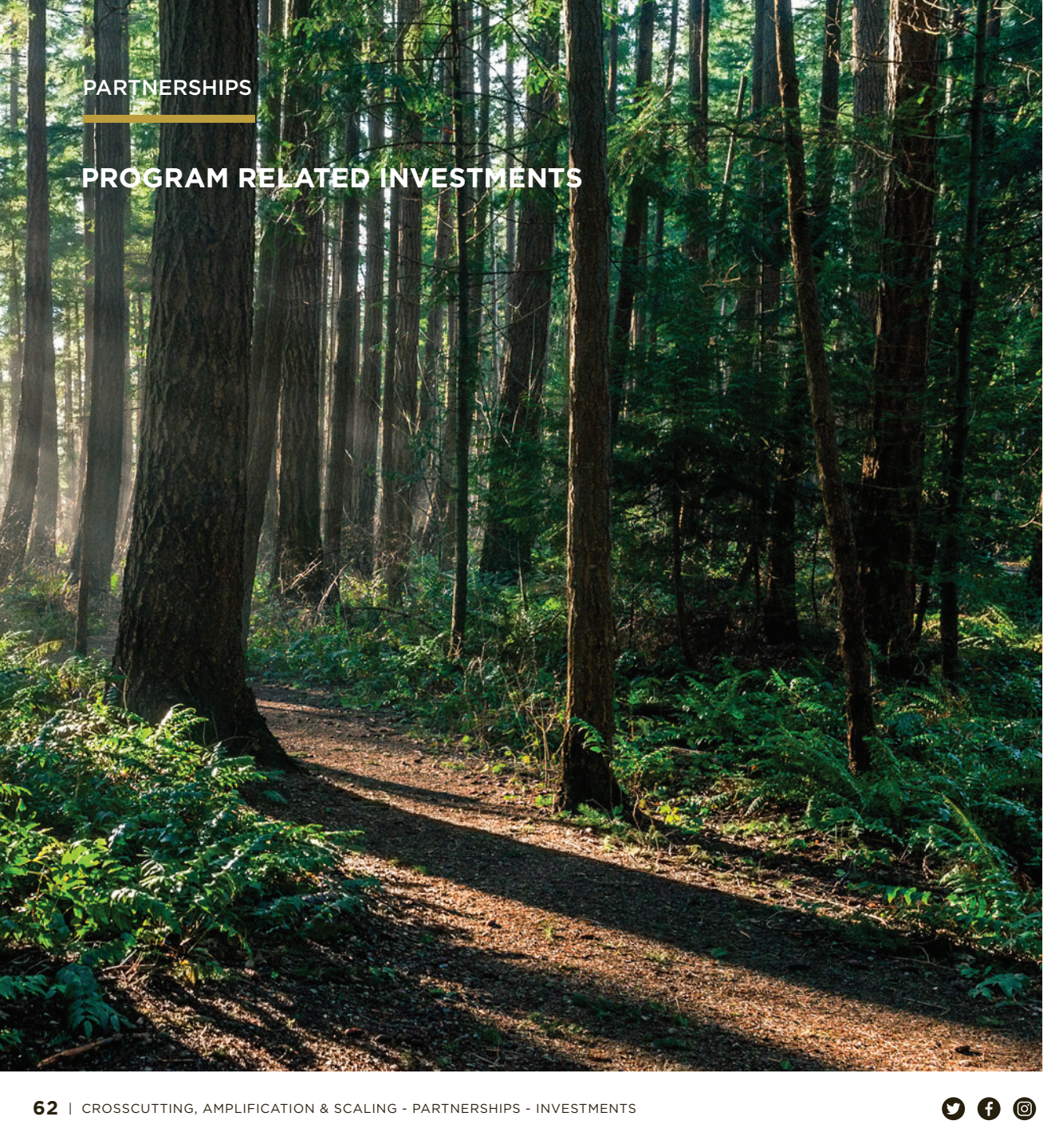
INFRASTRUCTURE & INNOVATION (CONTINUED)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS:

Following a similar methodology as the solar canoes, **Nia Tero funded work by Rhizomatica to accelerate design and deployment of eight, suitcase-size telecommunication devices (Hermes boxes) to Indigenous partners in Amazonia.** These economical and robust devices enable the sharing of digital content over the analog network of radio stations, which are ubiquitous across the region. The Hermes boxes are much more affordable and reliable than satellite internet options (where this option may exist), and yet expand bandwidth from traditional radio-based communication. We look forward to learning together with our partners as this work progresses in 2022.

TECHNODIGENOUS:

In May 2021, Nia Tero and the Tenure Facility held the **second ever 3-day Technodigenous event** with the theme of “Diversity of Tenure and Technology”. The global convening fostered rich learning between Indigenous practitioners and non-Indigenous technologists, including case studies and co-design work sessions.



PARTNERSHIPS

PROGRAM RELATED INVESTMENTS

PROGRAM RELATED INVESTMENTS

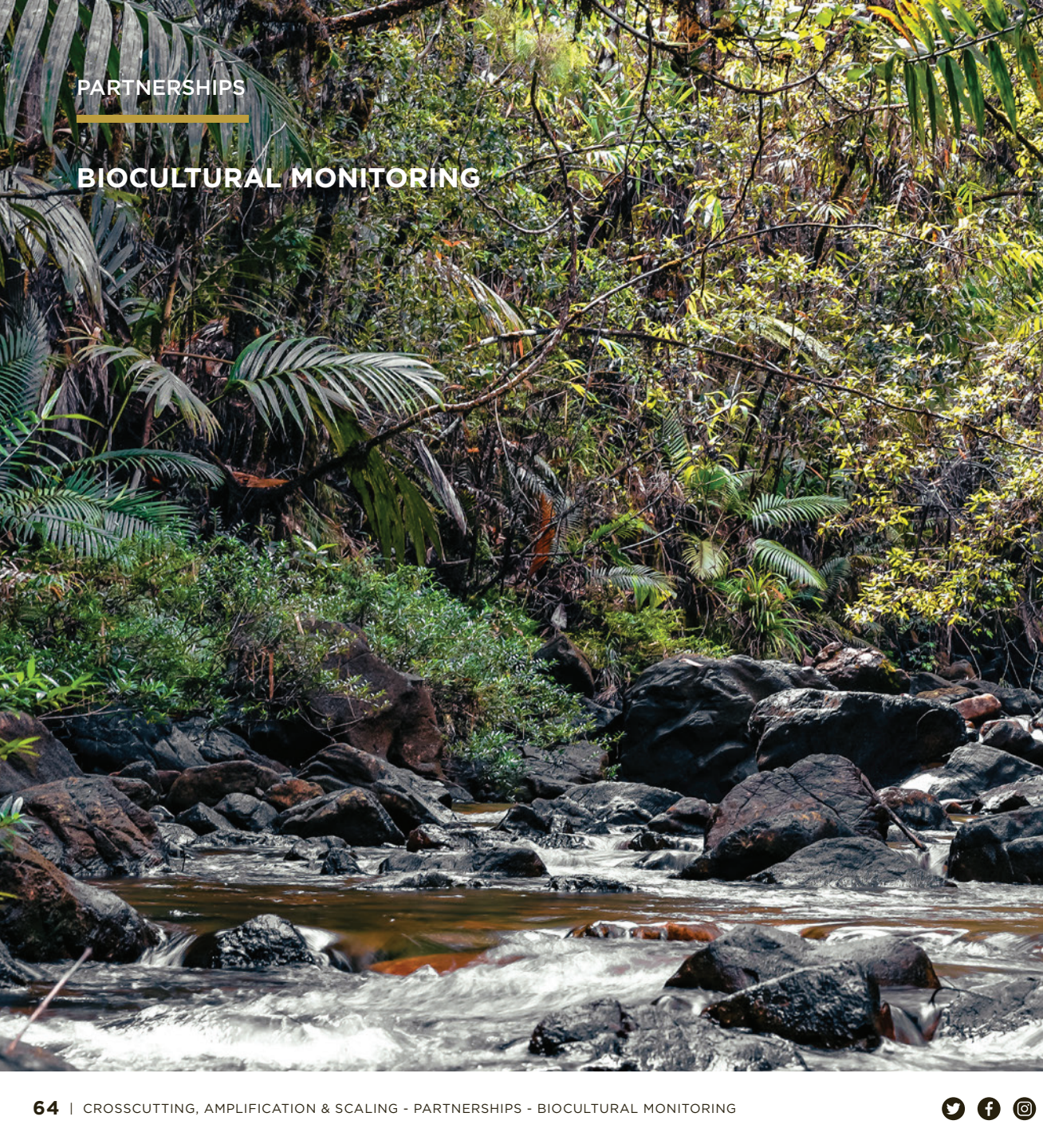
Our program related investment (PRI) activity focused on maturing a co-investment with the MacArthur Foundation in the Raven Impact Investment Fund, a partner of Raven Indigenous Capital.

The fund invests in Indigenous-led enterprises in Canada and has two central theories for premises of change:

That empowering Indigenous entrepreneurs (and, by association, Indigenous communities) with access to capital and capacity building support is critical to building a vibrant reconciliation economy

That an Indigenous-led and owned intermediary is necessary to "de-colonize" the investment process and ensure cultural safety for all parties.

Our second focus area has been **deepening our partnership with Raven Indigenous Partners Foundation and supporting the development of their Impact Measurement framework** to include an indicator related to territorial guardianship. Our investment has funded the development of an Impact Management Strategy and the hire of a lead Indigenous Impact Practitioner, and supports capacity building within the Impact Measurement community. Sharing of our findings and the guardianship indicator will happen in 2022.

A photograph of a tropical forest scene. In the foreground, a stream flows over dark, wet rocks, creating white rapids. The water is a brownish-yellow color. The background is filled with dense, vibrant green foliage, including various types of ferns and tropical plants. The lighting is bright, suggesting daylight. The overall mood is natural and serene.

PARTNERSHIPS

BIOCULTURAL MONITORING

BIOCULTURAL MONITORING

Indigenous peoples deserve and require the best possible, and most timely, information about their homes and their lands.

One way to help meet these needs is to develop a new, world class, culturally appropriate, and secure **information platform designed expressly in collaboration with, by, and for Indigenous peoples and their organizations.**

When fully implemented, this powerful capability will both empower guardians and their allies and enable collaboration on real time guardianship activity, which then assists Indigenous leaders as they inform policy making.

Since the end of 2019, Nia Tero has been working with Conservation Metrics, Terras App, the Center for Biodiversity Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History, and Tui Shortland—a Māori expert on biocultural metrics—on the development of a mission-aligned monitoring system for our place-anchored partnerships. This system follows an approach that begins with connecting cultural perspectives to place-based values, knowledge, relationships, and needs; and recognizes mutual interdependence between ecological states and human wellbeing.

BIOCULTURAL MONITORING (CONTINUED)

In 2021, Planet and Digital Democracy joined the effort to increase Indigenous partners' access to key data gathering technology and high-quality satellite information. Nia

Tero's efforts focused on testing the system with two Indigenous partners in the Amazon. One of the partners focused on testing the monitoring system for protection of their lands from invasions by illegal gold miners and fishermen. The other partner focused their efforts on mapping their territory and the development of their priorities to gather wellbeing data.

In addition, land cover information was processed for eight additional territories where Indigenous organizations have expressed interest in having their own monitoring system.

In 2022, we look forward to focusing our efforts on increasing the number of Indigenous partners accessing and testing the monitoring system, so we can continue refining these systems based on our partners' priorities and needs.





Strategy & Organization Capacity

**2021 FINANCES
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD**

2021 Finances

Despite year two of a pandemic and ongoing global challenges, in 2021 the vast majority (81%) of our \$25 million annual budget focused on our program work to uphold a network of place-anchored partnerships to secure Indigenous guardianship in Amazonia, Pasifika, and Turtle Island (inclusive of the Boreal Forest region in northern Canada and the US).

This budget also facilitated our program work to expand recognition and support for guardianship through our Policy, Storytelling, and Science & Learning strategies. The remaining 19% supported our management, administrative, and fundraising capacity.

25M

Annual Budget

81%

Used to secure
Indigenous guardianship
in our three key regions

19%

Management, fundraising,
and administrative
expenses



2021 FINANCES

TOTAL GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

We were pleased to distribute a total of 136 grants and 30 fellowships, totaling \$13.7 million, to our partners. Additionally, with strict COVID-19 safety protocols we were able to get team members and Indigenous partners to key global convenings including the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress in Marseille, and COP26 in Glasgow. What we learn from that investment will help us navigate similar opportunities in 2022.

136

Total Grants

30

Total Fellowships

13.7 MILLION

Total Amount Granted

PLACE ANCHORED PARTNERSHIPS

 SHARED COMMITMENTS **73 GRANTS**

 DURABLE SUPPORT **9 GRANTS**

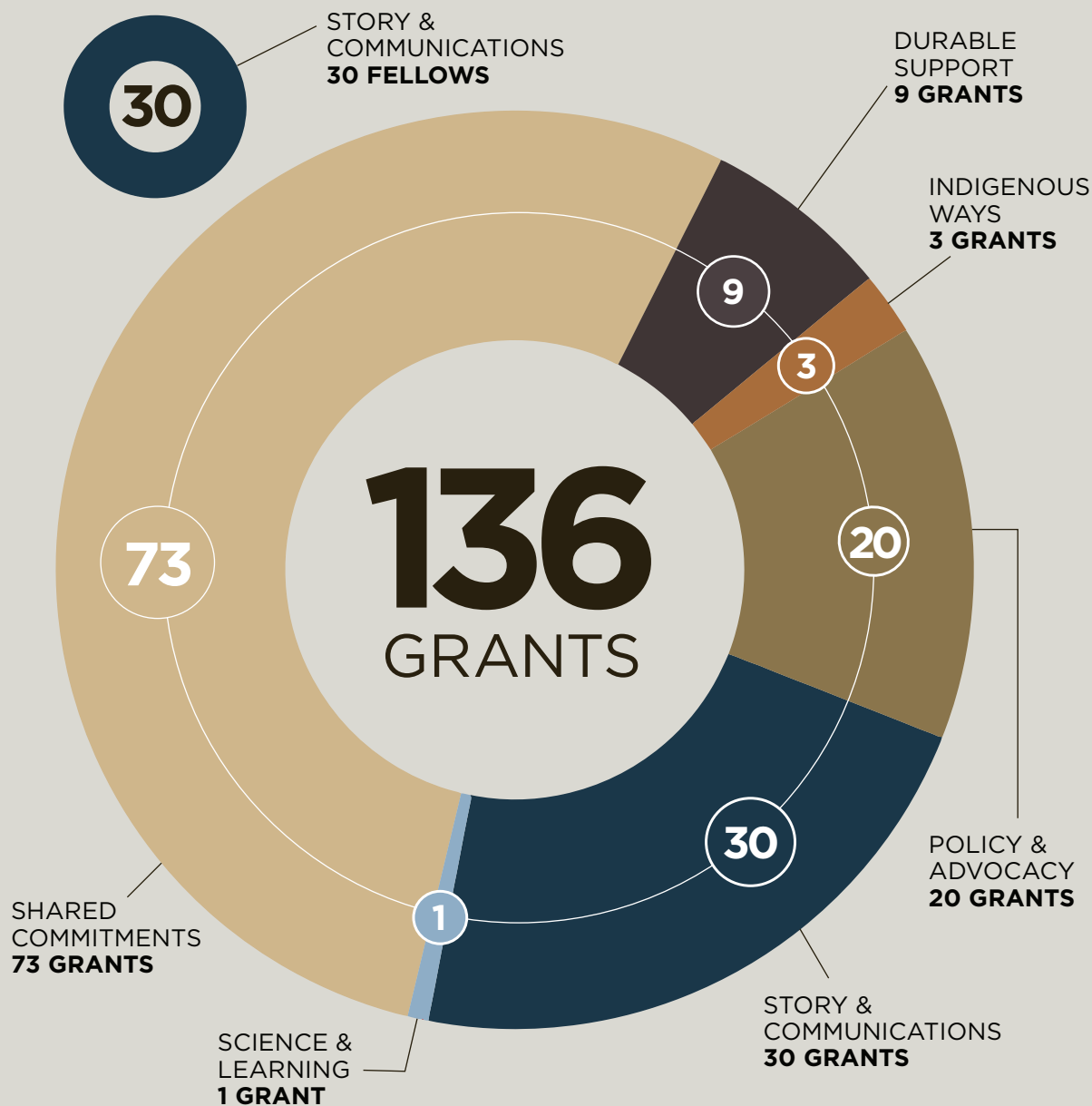
AMPLIFICATION & SCALING

 INDIGENOUS WAYS **3 GRANTS**

 POLICY & ADVOCACY **20 GRANTS**

 STORY & COMMUNICATIONS **30 GRANTS & 30 FELLOWSHIPS**

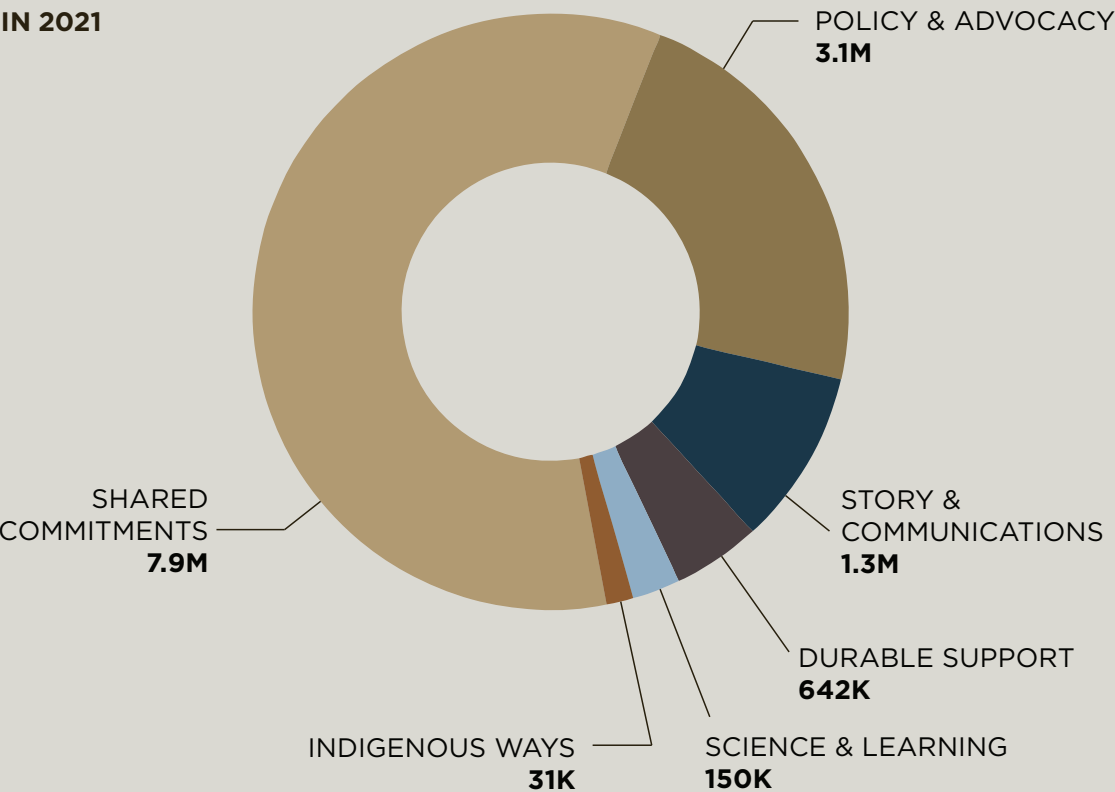
 SCIENCE & LEARNING **1 GRANT**



TOTAL GRANTS IN US DOLLARS

13.7 MILLION

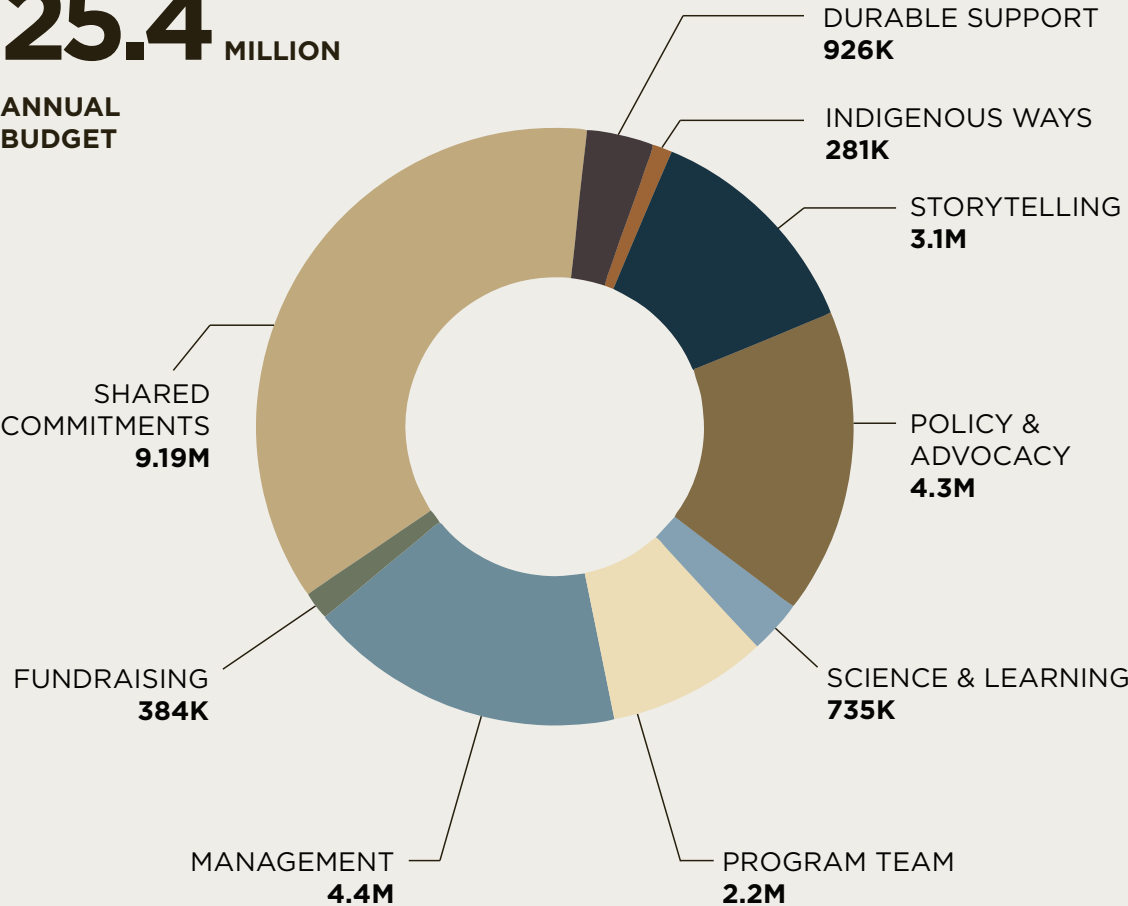
DISTRIBUTED
IN 2021



TOTAL SPENDING IN US DOLLARS

25.4 MILLION

ANNUAL
BUDGET



Team Demographics

At Nia Tero, we've stated our commitment to grow our team to majority Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to truly reflect not just our work, but our world, as well.

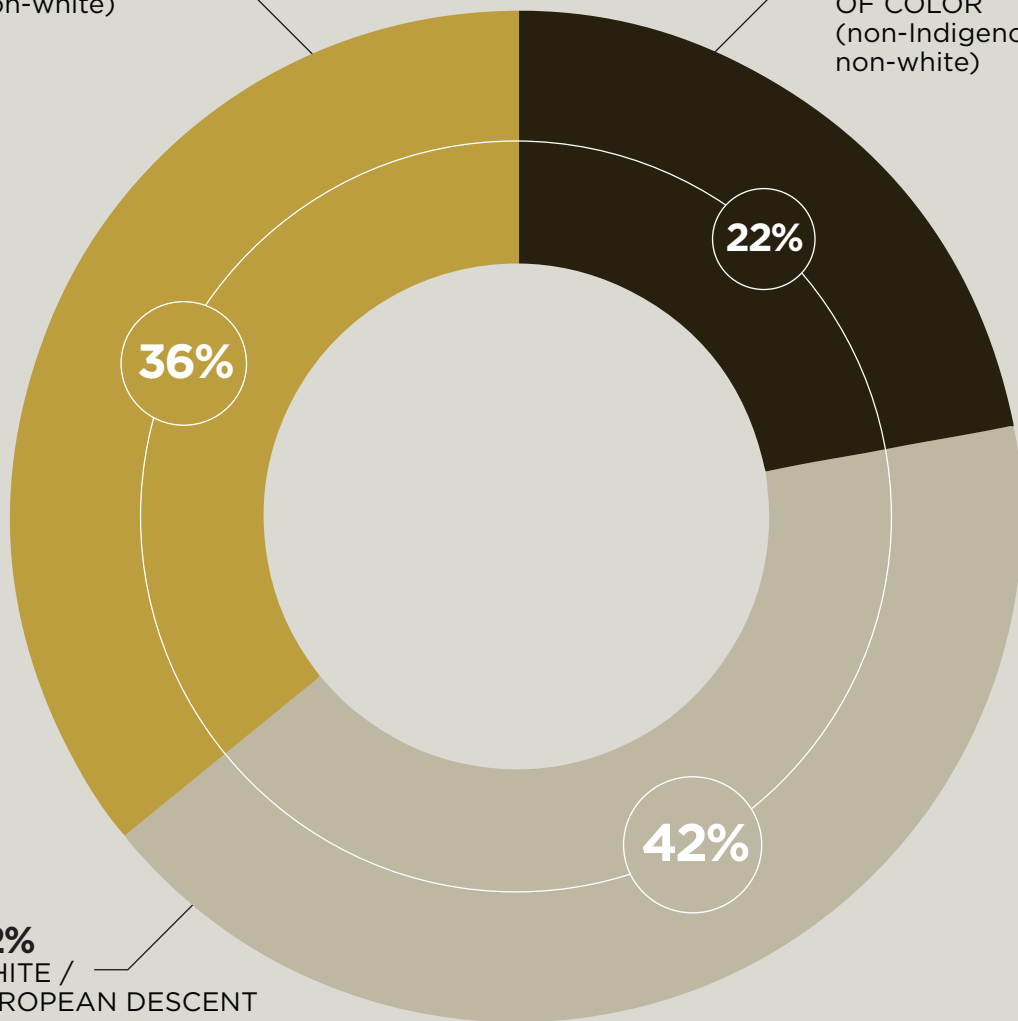
Therefore it is part of our strategy and organization capacity to expand and diversify our team, and follow through in this work. Diversity at Nia Tero also includes race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, class, sexual orientation, spirituality, culture, and more. Through illustrating a snapshot of the demographics of our team in this annual report, we are committing to transparency and accountability in detailing who the people are who make Nia Tero what it is today.

RACE & ETHNICITY

- BLACK & PEOPLE OF COLOR (non-Indigenous, non-white) **22%**
- INDIGENOUS (non-white) **36%**
- WHITE / EUROPEAN DESCENT **42%**

36%
INDIGENOUS
(non-white)

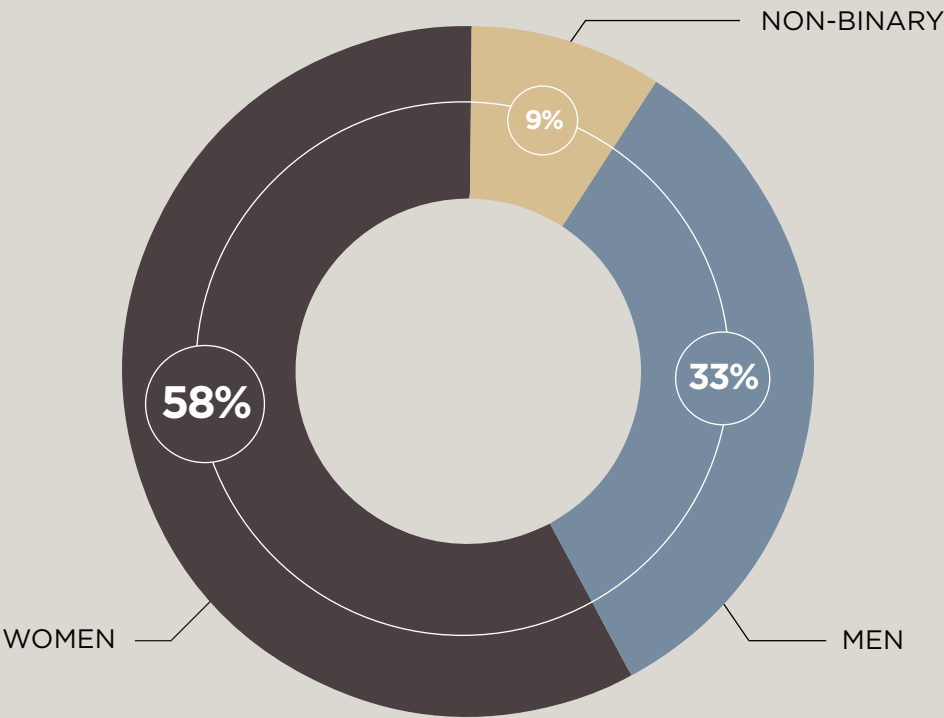
22%
BLACK & PEOPLE
OF COLOR
(non-Indigenous,
non-white)



42%
WHITE /
EUROPEAN DESCENT

TEAM DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER



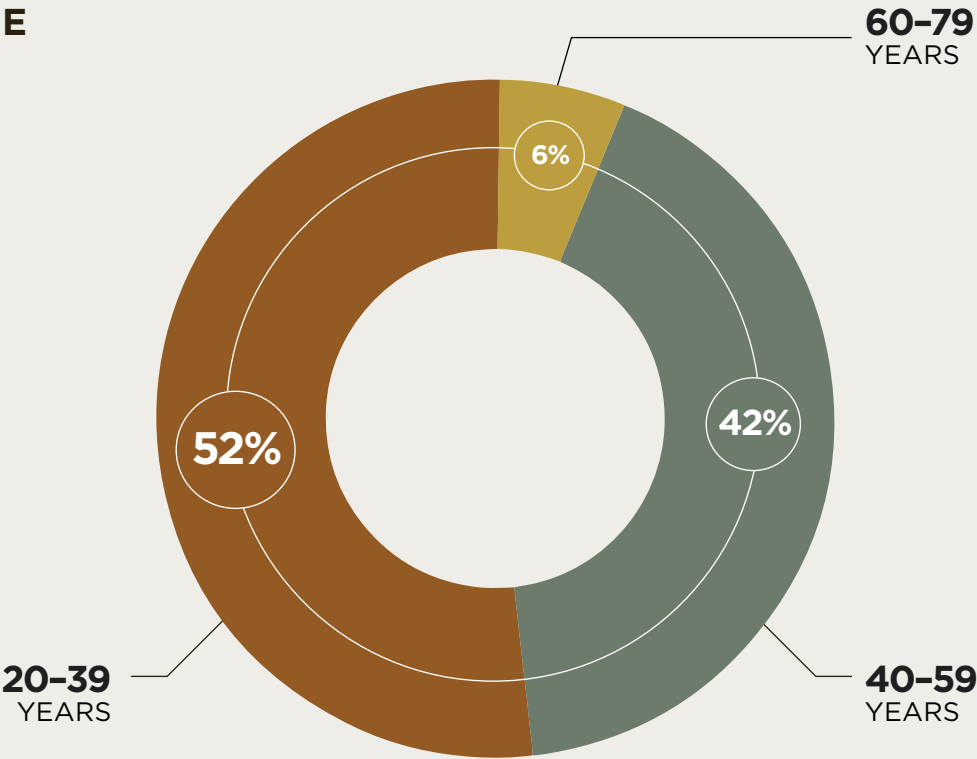
GENDER

- WOMEN 58%
- MEN 33%
- NON-BINARY* 9%

**A non-binary person is someone who does not identify as exclusively a woman or a man.*

TEAM DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE



AGE

- 20-39 years **52%**
- 40-59 years **42%**
- 60-79 years **6%**

Development

Nia Tero exists to amplify and support Indigenous peoples' outsized contributions to the health of the Earth's climate and biodiversity.

We are succeeding in attracting new resources to this cause, thanks in part to growing consensus among funders that addressing the climate crisis is the result of a lack of timely action—not a lack of cost-effective, scalable solutions.

Since its founding five years ago, Nia Tero has expanded its support to 102 million hectares of sacred lands, which sequester 25.2 gigatons (Gt) of carbon. This scale has been made possible by the trust our board and staff have built over decades with our Indigenous partners. **Nonetheless, threats are mounting and we are on the verge of permanently losing these vulnerable yet manageable areas, as**

well as the people who care for them. Unlawful and unethical incursions are resulting in ongoing violence against Indigenous peoples, catastrophic climate change, and the world's sixth mass extinction of biodiversity.

With this urgency and sense of responsibility in mind, Nia Tero funders committed a total of \$16 million of new funding in 2021. They did so because they acknowledge that centuries of evidence demonstrate how **Indigenous guardianship: 1)** provides the most durable and robust form of conservation on Earth, including in the boreal peatlands, the tropical rainforests of the Amazon, and the

We hope that alliances like these inspire collective momentum and reveal the scale of the task at hand, and we thank all of our supporters for investing in this vision alongside us.

dense forests found in Pasifika, **2)** is much more cost-effective than other carbon solutions that can achieve similar scale, and **3)** is a grossly under-funded investment opportunity.

To this end, in 2021 Nia Tero joined with eight private foundations in committing to invest \$5 billion to protect 30% of Earth's land and ocean by 2030. Announced in September as the **Protect Our Planet Challenge**, this alliance marks the largest private funding commitment ever for the safeguarding of our shared planetary home, with the leadership and guidance of Indigenous peoples.

It is through Indigenous guardianship of vital ecosystems that we stand a chance to push back against climate destruction. We hope that alliances like these inspire collective momentum and reveal the scale of the task at hand, and we thank all of our supporters for investing in this vision alongside us.



Board of Directors



FIRST ROW

Mandy Bayha (*Sahtúgot'ine, Great Bear Lake, Turtle Island/Canada*)

Dr. Michael Crow

Laurene Powell Jobs

Myrna Cunningham Kain (*Miskita, Nicaragua*)

SECOND ROW

Paul Klingenstein, Vice Chair

Brenda Toineeta Pipestem (*Eastern Band of Cherokee, Turtle Island/USA*)

Nemonte Nenquimo (*Waorani, Ecuador*)

Yo-Yo Ma

THIRD ROW

Peter Seligmann, CEO

Kevin Starr

Vicky Tauli-Corpuz, Board Chair (*Kankanaey Igorot, Philippines*)

Nainoa Thompson (*Kanaka Maoli, Hawaiian Islands*)

Justice Joseph Williams (*Māori, Aotearoa/New Zealand*)

Advisory Council



FIRST ROW

Dominique Bikaba (*Bashi Tribe, Eastern Congo, DRC*)

Joji Carino (*Ibaloi-Igorot, Philippines*)

Viviana Figueroa (*Omaguaca-Kolla, Argentina*)

Laura Hattendorf

Ole Kaunga Mali (*Laikipia Maasai, Kenya*)

SECOND ROW

Aroha Te Pareake Mead (*Māori, Aotearoa/New Zealand*)

Sherri Mitchell Weh'na Ha'mu Kwasset (*Penawahpskek, USA*)

Stephanie Platz

Ralph Regenvanu (*Uripiv of Malakua Island, Vanuatu*)

Gunn-Britt Retter (*Saami, Norway*)



Appendix



**ABOUT US
CONTACT
GRATITUDE**

About Us

Nia Tero is a US-based non-profit working in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and movements worldwide.

Our governing bodies, leadership and staff are of diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous identities and life experiences. We view this diversity as a source of our strength as a bridging organization, committed to Indigenous self-determination and an inclusive culture guided by Indigenous wisdom, practices, and protocols.

Nia Tero provides lasting support to Indigenous peoples to protect their homelands from colonization and destruction, and we share Indigenous methods of care for the land with non-Indigenous communities.

MISSION

Nia Tero works in solidarity with Indigenous peoples who sustain thriving territories and cultures to strengthen guardianship of Earth and all beings.

VISION

Our vision is of an Earth where Indigenous guardianship of thriving homelands and waters is ENABLED everywhere possible on Earth.

ASPIRATIONS

Over the next decade we will UPHOLD a network of place-anchored partnerships with Indigenous peoples that demonstrate the power of Indigenous guardianship to sustain a vibrant Earth. Building upon and working alongside this network, we also EXPAND recognition and support for Indigenous guardianship globally.

RECIPROCITY STATEMENT

Nia Tero views reciprocity as the way of life that centers mutually beneficial exchange and sharing between all beings; past, present and future; human and nonhuman; seen and unseen; on Earth, our only home.

Social / Contact / Credits

SOCIAL MEDIA

 @Twitter
 @Facebook
 @Instagram

 @Vimeo
 @LinkedIn

CONTACT

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info@niatero.org
niatero.org

GRATITUDE & CREDITS

Photography: Pablo Albarenga, Amazon Frontlines, Felipe Contreras, Valérie Courtois, Filipe Frazao, Getty, Taylor Hensel, Daniel Kakadi, Ciara Lacy, Lehuauakea, Daniel Lin, Laszlo Mates, Christina Mittermeier, Zahiya Namo, The Palmer, Landon Parenteau, Douglas Pikacha, Tracy Rector, John Reid, Kili Yuyan.

Design: Chad Anderson, Annie Brulé

Copy Editing: Sharon Arnold

THANK YOU

**Yakoke • Ahé'héé • Gunalchéesh
Tagio Tumas • Klecko Klecko • Háw'aa
Welálin • Musicho • Pinamaya • Wneeweh • Tig^wicid
Guneshcheesh • Miigwetch • Mahsi'Choo • Kukstemc
Yontonwe • T'ooyaksim' N'iisim' • Lim Limt • S'gi
Nt'oyaxsn • Wliwni • Maketai • Ngā mihi • Giitu
Meegwetch • Huy chexw • Ck'wálidxw
Hay cep' qa • Nitsíniyi'taki**



NIA TERO