



Deborah Green



Karen Restoule



Lanita Ririnui



Jerome Tairi



Jaynaya Winmar

GROUP 4

A GIFT

Connected through the strength of our lands and ancestors. Combining powers for change and accelerating action through collaboration.

GREATER INDIGENOUS FUTURE THOUGHTS

The world is in recovery and response from the vast, long-lasting historical impact of the global colonization of Indigenous Peoples. The intergenerational effects on the generations have been extensive. We are now walking a path of healing and rebuilding our Nations.

Bringing inspirational and symbolic gifts to share, we strive to connect our dreams, leaders, and gifts for the next generations' benefit as descendants of greats and ancestors of the potentially even greater.

We acknowledge that every one of us has something to give, something to contribute, something that benefits those beyond us, and in paddling our waka together to the future.

**Connection to culture and healing is foundational to
Greater Indigenous Future Thoughts (GIFT) and
inspiration for the future.**

**In the following pages, we share some foundational
GIFTS we offer to future generations of Indigenous
leaders.**



SACRED BUNDLES

Bundles are wrapped collections of spiritually significant items and were the focus of most Indigenous spiritual ceremonies in the Plains Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Sacred bundles were given to the Blackfoot tribes by a spirit, usually encountered in dreams or visions, as a means of connection and a way to ask for help from the Creator.

The Haudenosaunee teaching is that you have gifts when you come into this world. You contribute to the collective by sharing these gifts when you grow up. We place our knowledge, faith, and legacies into bundles for future generations.

Knowledge is also symbolic in bundles such as hand drumming, singing traditional healing songs, and creating a world for the next generations that are more healed and decolonized to exist as proud Indigenous Peoples.

Before we can focus on global Indigenous concerns and advocate for change, we must lay the foundation of healing from generations of colonization, intergenerational trauma, and the legacy of residential schools. Only through our sacred teachings, our ceremonies, our languages, and our elders' knowledge can we heal. That healing comes in all forms and is known as bundles.



KIRA (FIRE)

"It is the same word used for an immediate family member. It holds power within our communities and plays a vital role not just in our survival but as an essential tool in educating and passing down stories to the next generation. This would be my gift that I would bring and share on our journey as it will bring us together, guide our paths, warm our bodies and hearts, and give us the ability to cook and purify our water. But most importantly, it will allow us to sit around and connect on our long journey of cultural healing and empowerment.

In our fire ceremony, particularly the Nunga fire ceremony, traditional fire-starting methods are sometimes used as a part of the ceremony. This is included in welcome pantry ceremonies, which we cleanse and allow good spirits and conversations to flow once we've smoked everyone. But then, as we leave, we share the same respect, culture, and beliefs. Some records go back generations if there were clans that used our ceremony types, rituals, and symbols like fire in combatting settlements, arguments, rooming feelings, bitterness, and rival groups."



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

"For centuries, Indigenous economies have centered around land and water, influencing where we lived, how we lived, and how long we stayed there.

This way of living allowed us to trade with other Nations, strengthening our local economies and establishing diplomatic relationships and strengthened alliances.

As European exploration and settlement advanced, many Indigenous Nations found their economies and ways of life disrupted. Despite this, the entrepreneurial spirit has proven to be most resilient, surviving the robust implementation of colonial policies. And giving way to innovative solutions to overcome legacy issues, social challenges, and economic restrictions.

Today, that resilience and power are felt and seen across the globe as Indigenous businesses grow at disproportionate rates, with a reported 60% growth in the past decade alone. Indigenous peoples are reshaping modern economies worldwide. The growth of these economies is rooted in a "way of life" that is unique to Indigenous peoples - balancing economic benefit with environmental sustainability.

Everyone - Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike - wants to position the next generations better economically. What differs is how we will get there, relying on our innate ability to see and understand different values and systems and how these operate in complex networks. For the next generations of Indigenous peoples, **our greatest Indigenous future thought rests within who we are, where we come from, and our way of life.** "

POI

Poipoia te kākāno, kia puawai ki te ao. Nurture the seed, and it will blossom to the world!

"At first sight, the Poi can be described as a ball on the end of a string. For Māori, **Poi is a timeless instrument, the heartbeat of a nation, and an extension of ourselves.** While different types have different protocols, it can transcend boundaries and inspire creativity and innovation. Alone, it can move and beat. Together, they can strengthen, build, entertain, and dazzle with layered effects. Indigenous innovation is a key to global growth - if, like the Poi, it is given the essence to fly with the right knowledge and guidance.

So, how does this GIFT of Poi apply? By taking it back to the origins and understanding that like the poi, who came from the earth, so too did we, and WE ARE the seeds for the future; By our leaders investing and connecting the right knowledge, people, and relationships to nurture and grow; By our communities building spaces and places to harvest the gifts that create innovation while also looking after the core foundation.

The Trust economy is equally relevant, if not more important, than the fiscal economy right now. We are descendants of Papatūānuku, Earth mother, connected to the harakeke (flax plant) and the Poi. In this connection, we innovate magic into the space around us, reaching the heavenly Sky Father of Ranginui above."

"Ko te whakapapa te whakautu - the answers are in the ancestry."





WATER

"The water gourd is the gift I want to offer to the next generation to take forward into the future.

This hollowed-out matured fruit was provided into vessels of water for Māori in former years.

We see fresh water as a taonga that connects all life, regardless of culture, regardless of what generation you come from, and regardless of location; wherever you are, whether you're urban, rural, or living on the marae, **fresh water connects us all.**

Water. It's **powerful enough to carve through rock**, and yet it **nourishes our babies.**

It's this stuff that we need to realize the power of. "

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

"There is a **need to connect** among us. Many have felt it across generations that have carried on ahead of us and those about to face it. Through my professional engagement with over 500 young people, it is telling from their behavior what motivates them, what they're driven to do, and what they are driven to achieve. These can be seen within three distinct groups:

The first group is **reactive**, tending to be motivated by **unmet physiological, safety, belonging, and esteem needs**. There is a feeling of hopelessness and a lack of control.

The third group is **proactive** and motivated for higher achievement levels through a **growth mindset**. They see future success as their responsibility and within their control.

The middle group is **neutral**, where there is a growing concern. They lack drive and motivation. They **do not understand who they are** and have no sense of belonging."

"We must do all we can to help Indigenous youth feel confident and empowered."



WE LOOK TO THE NEXT GENERATIONS...

**As proud global Indigenous peoples, we
will carry and pass on our GIFTS to future
generations.**

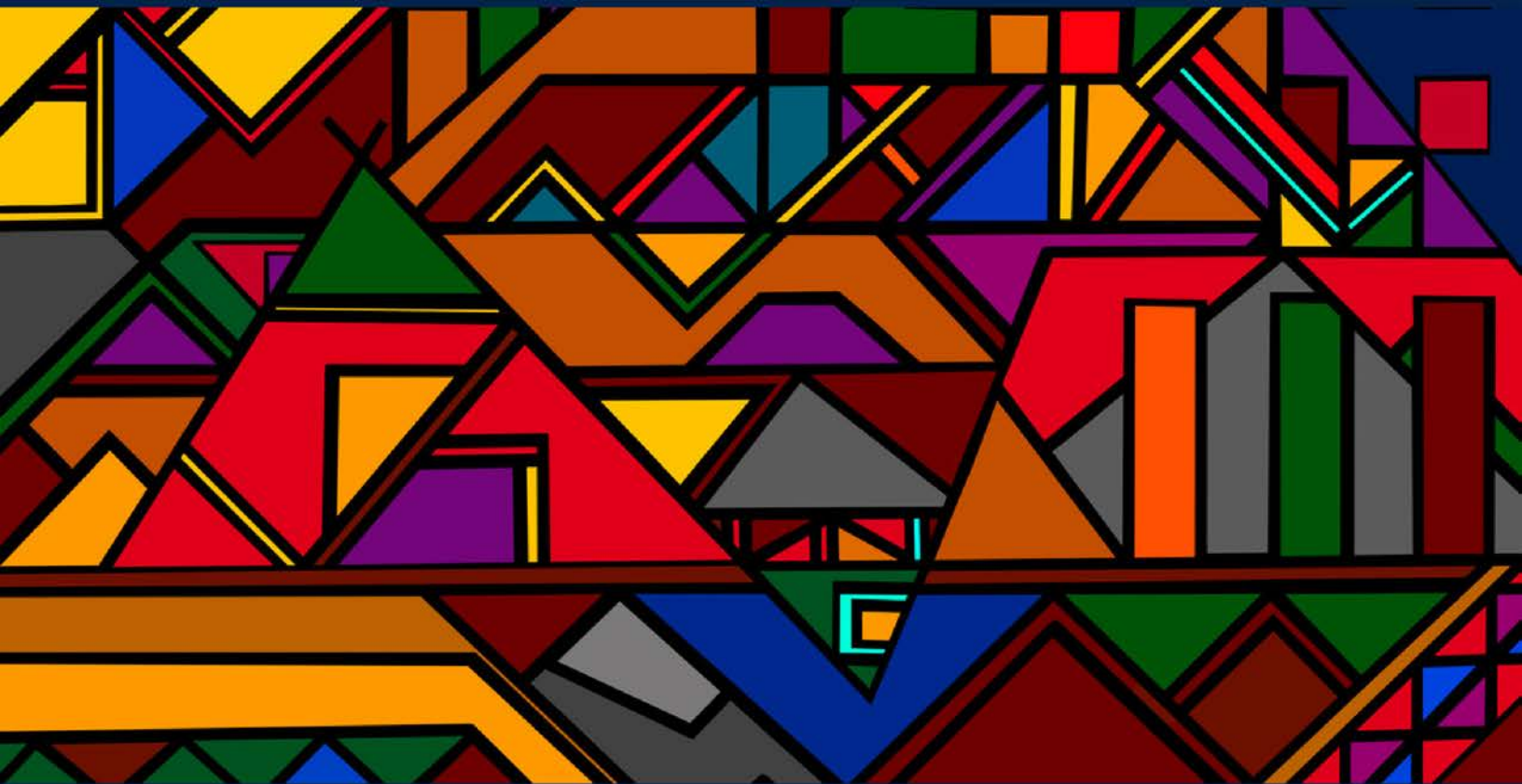
**Together, we can create a future of pride
and sustained culture, healing, and
traditions. In the spirit of reconciliation,
the following is recommended for
government action...**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Indigenous people must continue to **seek out Elder teachings** and guidance, learn our languages that were taken from us, make ceremonies a balancing and healing occurrence in our lives, sing the sacred songs, drum the drums of mother earth, and reclaim our rights to living and existing as proud Indigenous people.
- 2 Indigenous peoples use Kira (Fire) as a spiritual and practical tool. The **principles carried by the Kira should be upheld and respected by governments.**
- 3 **Federal policies should be focused on leveling the playing field,** ensuring Indigenous peoples have what is needed to revitalize Indigenous economies in a way that upholds Indigenous self-determination.
- 4 Finance, encourage, and support the creation of opportunities to **build connections with our own cultures and other Indigenous cultures worldwide,** including international events for Indigenous Rangatahi and Elders to connect, learn, and share knowledge and resources.
- 5 Invest in community vision to **build spaces and places to harvest the gifts that create innovation** while ensuring financial support for the core foundation.

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AND TO APPLY TO JOIN THE NEXT COHORT
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