

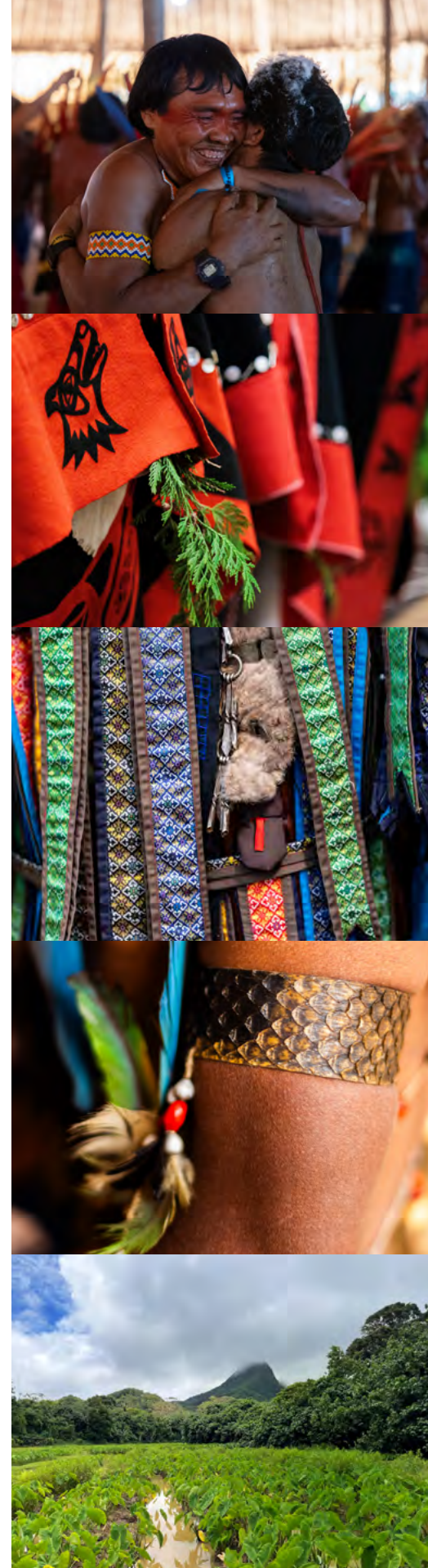


2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Nia Tero is proud to work with Indigenous Peoples globally who sustain thriving territories and cultures to strengthen guardianship of Earth and all beings.

Abau • Abelam • Achuar • Adara • Aipipa • Ajië (Yanëkuyë) • Akawaio • Akuriyo • Alablak • Alugu • Amara • Ambulas • Anuta • Arama • Aramayana • Arapaso • Are • Arecuna • Arosi • Aruop • Awara • Awin-Pah • Awiyaana • Aziana • Baeggu • Baelelea • Baniwa • Banoni • Bará • Barasana • Baré (Warekena) • Berekasi • Barupu • Berik • Bipi • Biwat • Blablanga • Blackfoot • Boiken • Borong • Buna • Bunan • Buruwai • Busa • Carijona • Caruma • Caviyari • Cèmuhi (Central East) • Chambri • Chinamiru • Chini • Cofán • Cook Island Maori • Coripaco • Daakie • Dalabon • Daonda • Desana • Dow • Drehu (Lifou) • Drubea • Dyapa • Eduria • Eivo • ella Lavella • Ese • Fagani • Fagani • Fagauvea (West Uvea) • Fanamaketa • Fataleka • Gabbra • Gants • Gao • Gapapaiwa • Gari • Gaua • Gela (a.k.a. Ghari) • Gogodala • Gona • Gwaia • Halia • Hanahan • Hano • Hatohobei • Heiltsuk • Helong • Hin Lad Nai • Hiw • Hixkaryana • Hote • Huarani • Hupda • Iaai • Iatmul • Imia Masa • Ingarikó • Inkariyana • Ipiko • Itano • Iwam • Jawe • Jawoyn • Jeañara • Ju/'hoansi (Nyae Nyae) • Kahiana • Kalam • Kambaramba • Kambot • Kamula • Kanamari • Kandas • Kaningra • Karafawyana • Karapaña • Karawari • Karaxana • Karon Dori • Karra • Katuenaya • Kaxuyana • Kayan • Kele • Kembra • Keriaka • Kewa • Koiari • Korafe-Yegha • Korubo • Kotiria • Kove • Kubeo (Cubeo) • Kula • Kulina (Pano) • Kunbarlang • Kuni • Kuni-Boazi • Kunimaipa • Kunwinjku • Kusaghe • Kwaio • Kwanga • Kwara'ae • Kwato • Kwényii (Kunie) • Kwoma • Langalanga • Lantanai • Larevat • Lau • Lavukaleve • Lele • Lengo • Letuama • Lewo • Lhoba • Liabuku • Liki • Lo-Toga • Lolo • Longana • Lonwolwol • Lopi • Löyöp • Luaniua • Makolkol • Maku • Makuna • Malango • Manambu • Manusela • Marienberg • Marubo • Matapi • Matis • Mavea • Mawase • Mawayana • Mayagna • Mayoruna (Matsés) • Mian • Minidien • Minpoyana • Miraña • Mirity – Tapuya • Mok • Motuna • Mundugumor • Nadöb • Nagovisi • Nali • Nali-Pileni • Nasioi • Nauna • Ndom • Nemi (Tiri) • Nend • Nengone (Maré) • Ngala • Ngelima • Nifiloli • Niman • North Efate (Nakanamanga) • Notsi • Nukuma • Nukumanu • Nupani • Nusa Roviana • Nyelâyü • Okoymoyana • Oirat • Orokaiva • Owa • Pahi • Paici (Pwêédi Wiimiâ) • Paici-Maka (Southwest) • Pamosu • Parukwoto • Patamona • Patpatar • Pileni (Vaeakau-Taumako) • Pira-tapuya • Pireuyana • Pirititi • Piropo • Ponam • Port Vato • Raga • Ramayana • Ramoaaina • Ramoaaina • Rapa Nui • Reef Islands • Rembarrnga • Rerep • Rotokas • Roviana • Roviana • Sa • Saami • Sahamalaza • Sakita • Sanima • Santa Cruz • Sapara • Savo • Savosavo • Sepik Iwam • Siane • Siekopai • Sika • Simbo • Sinaugoro • Siona • Siriano • Siwai • Solos • Sonsorolese • South Efate (Ifira-Mele) • Suena • Sukurum • Sulka • Sungai Utik • Ta'a • Tabriak • Tahalê (Fwâi) • Taiwano • Tajio • Talise • Tambunum • Tanema • Tanimuka • Tariana • Tatuyo • Taurepang • Terei • Tikopia • Tinputz • Tirio (Trio) • To'abaita • Toga • Toisapu • Torau • Tsohom • Tukano • Tukuca • Tulu • Tulu-Bohuai • Tunayana • Tuyuca • Txikiyana • Udege • Uitoto • Uruava • Utupua • Vaeakau • Vaeakau-Taumako (known as Pileni) • Vaghua • Vangunü • Vanikoro • Vera'a • Vonavona • Vurës • Wahgi • Wai-Wi • Waimiri Atroari • Wala • Walalangi • Wampis (Shuar) • Wano • Wapichana • Wardaman • Wayana • Wuvulu-Aua • Xârâcùù (North) • Xerew • Xowyana • Yanomae • Yanomami • Yatxkuriyana • Yauna • Ye'kuana • Yimas • Yuhupde • Yujup • Yukuna • Yuruti • Zabana • Zazao • Zo'é



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Welcome

Our partners have many different words for their homelands, and the waters, lands, and beings within these places, which are some of the most bioculturally diverse in the world. Yet these places, cared for by Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial, are continually impacted by threats and pressures from outside forces.

Scientists report about 40% of the world's remaining large, intact ecosystems are found within Indigenous Peoples' territories. Our shared future on Earth depends on Indigenous Peoples' long and continued guardianship of their homelands and waters.

Nia Tero exists to support the self-determined needs of Indigenous Peoples who sustain thriving territories and cultures.



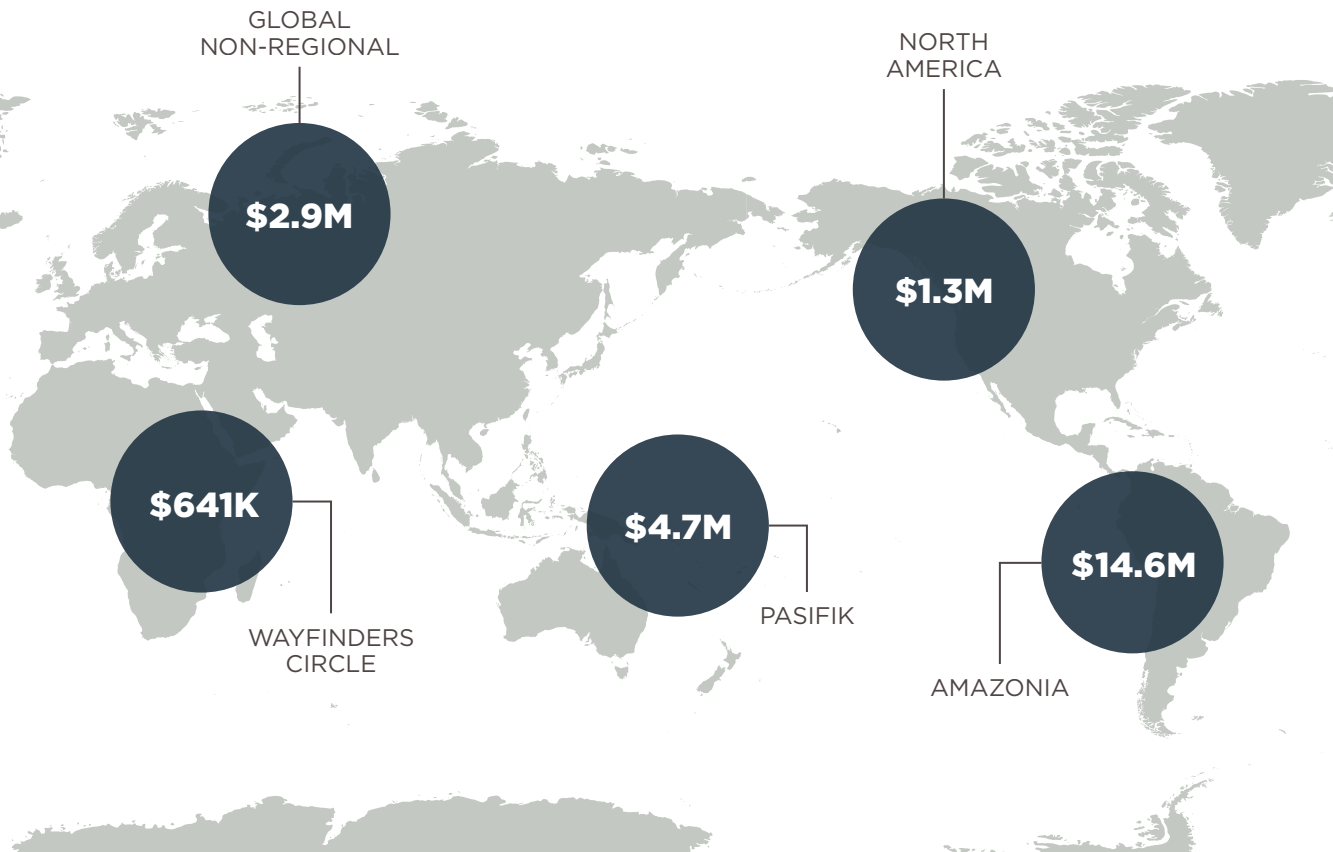
We are proud to share our 2024 annual report, highlighting our work in partnership with Indigenous guardians globally.



2024 Highlights

Our partnerships are collaboratively designed with Indigenous Peoples' organizations and their trusted allies.

We provide funding, training, and access to networks for our partners, contributing to strengthening Indigenous Peoples' guardianship globally.



*Unaudited 2024 amounts

117
TOTAL GRANTS
(including multi-year grants)

\$24.1M
TOTAL AWARDED

WE PROVIDED GRANTS TO



274
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
GLOBALLY



82
ORGANIZATIONS
GLOBALLY

OUR SUPPORT HELPS PROTECT



+130M
HECTARES OF
LANDS AND WATERS



33
BIOCULTURAL
SETTINGS



24.4
GIGATONS OF
CARBON SEQUESTERED

Letter from Our CEO



Buffalo grazing near Chief Mountain | Blackfoot Confederacy, North America | Whitney Snow (Blackfoot)



**Earn trust. Be honest. Share experiences.
Learn from each other. Reinforce each other.
Stand by each other. Seek new pathways when
the old ones are blocked. Ensure that there
is a connection between local and global.
Forgive each other for inadvertent gaffes.
Learn how to listen to intent.**

This 2024 annual report presents highlights of Nia Tero’s work over the past year, a period that marks my last cycle leading this organization that I helped found in 2017. I am very proud of what we have accomplished over these seven years and especially this past year. We have built partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, funders, and other allies around the world so that Indigenous territories and cultures can thrive and help us all dream of a better future.

From the very beginning, when we were still discussing the structure and operation of Nia Tero, on a solar eclipse day at a dear friend’s ranch in Wyoming, I said that I could be the organization’s first CEO, but that my term would have a certain end and would be succeeded by an Indigenous leader. At the end of November 2024, we announced that ‘Aulani Wilhelm was unanimously selected by our Board of Directors as the new CEO of Nia Tero, effective January 1, 2025. I could not be happier with this appointment and I am certain that ‘Aulani is the right person to lead the organization in the years to come.

This transition marks an important moment for Nia Tero. It strengthens the opportunities ahead for our vision – of Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship to be enabled everywhere possible on Earth – to be increasingly shared and valued in different spaces and segments of society while also influencing important decisions in the fields of philanthropy and policy.

In the following pages, you will read about the work of our team and partners around the world in support of Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship globally. It is with deep gratitude that I have the honor of presenting and sharing this work with you all as we turn the page on this chapter of Nia Tero.

This moment has arrived, and with it a myriad of emotions and memories of everything we have done so far. There is much to be proud of over the past year and since our founding; growing from our first partnerships in the Amazon, Pasifik, and North America, to our ongoing policy and advocacy at the United Nations, to working with donors of various pledges to strengthen the role of Indigenous Peoples in the protection of homelands and waters that are essential to reversing the interconnected climate and biodiversity crises.

All this work allows me, now, to continue supporting the organization through my role on the Board of Directors. I take with me a deep sense of gratitude to the people who supported me in growing as a person and a leader since Nia Tero’s founding. Thank you all for your years of working alongside me and the team at Nia Tero in this deeply important mission, and I look forward to continuing alongside you all in this new capacity.

Sincerely,

PETER SELIGMANN
CEO (2017-2024)

Letter from Our Chair of the Board



Pacific Ocean as seen from the Solomon Islands | Pasifik | Lauren Guzauskas

“ I don’t own the land;
I belong to the land.
The land owns me.

2024 was a decisive year for Nia Tero. As we celebrated our seventh anniversary, we continued to fulfill our commitment to support the management and protection of territories by Indigenous Peoples across geographies globally.

Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship centers on the idea that the relationship between us and the planet is one of reciprocity. It is a deep cultural and legal, even constitutional, core value of Indigenous Peoples all over the planet.

Several emblematic events and meetings took place throughout the year, leading to the strengthening of our partners’ work at regional to international levels. Through promoting knowledge exchange, increasing capacity for grantmaking, and consistently centering the self-determined priorities of our partners, we have much to be proud of as we reflect back on 2024, and much on the horizon as we carry this work forward in 2025 and beyond.

From the historic meeting of Nia Tero’s Amazonian partners in Bogotá, Colombia, to partners coming together from across the Pacific during FestPAC in Hawai’i, to the global gathering of Wayfinders Circle members in Mongolia, to our participation during NYC Climate Week and COP16 in Cali, Colombia, 2024 was a dynamic and energetic year, filled with newer and ever-stronger bridges built between and amongst Indigenous Peoples and their non-Indigenous allies.

In 2024, Nia Tero also took two very important steps towards its new cycle of support for Indigenous Peoples: 1) we finalized our new 5-year strategic plan, which we look forward to sharing in early 2025, and 2) we prepared for the first leadership transition in the history of the organization.

Our co-founder and friend, Peter Seligmann, passed the baton to ‘Aulani Wilhelm, whom we as a board unanimously selected for the role after an extensive international search. ‘Aulani, who is Kanaka ‘Ōiwi, born and raised in Hawai’i, is uniquely qualified with her breadth of experience, knowledge, and deep commitment to the mission and values Nia Tero stands for. I’m excited for our Nia Tero community to welcome her in this new capacity. I also look forward to continuing to collaborate with Peter on our board. He has our infinite gratitude for the service he provided during the first seven years of Nia Tero.

As we look back on the year past and look ahead to our next five years and beyond, thank you for being part of this work with us. We can only do this work together with you all, our partners, our allies, our supporters, our team.

With appreciation,

JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Nia Tero Chairman of the Board

About Nia Tero



Coastal Guardian Watchmen flag | Heiltsuk Nation, North America | Alex Robinson (Nansemond)

Nara Baré and Felipe De Rosa Tumucumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)



Our Vision

Nia Tero's vision is to contribute to a world where Indigenous Peoples' guardianship of thriving homelands and waters is enabled everywhere possible on Earth.



Our Mission

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



What We Do

Nia Tero establishes and nurtures long-term, trust-based partnerships with Indigenous Peoples to support their guardianship of collective territories. We do this by providing direct funding via grants and contracts to Indigenous Peoples' organizations, networks, and trusted allies worldwide. We also work to increase recognition and support of the vital role of Indigenous Peoples in maintaining a healthy planet – through their leadership, knowledge systems, and longstanding cultural practices.

Nia Tero does not work alone. We acknowledge that Nia Tero's work with Indigenous Peoples and their organizations is complementary to the many diverse and longstanding Indigenous movements that have existed for hundreds of years. We and those who have come before us and after us must join to meet this moment, and we are committed to sharing our approaches to partnership to make this happen.



Our Partnership Model

Nia Tero aims to build partnerships with Indigenous Peoples that respect their self-determination and foster mutual trust. To achieve this, we have developed a model based on guidance from our advisors. Our approach responds to diverse priorities based on the goals of our Indigenous partners, and is adaptable, as we provide support based on each partner's requirements and needs during a grant cycle and respond to evolving relationships with other stakeholders. This approach has taught us the importance of funding Indigenous Peoples' organizations in a manner that suits their needs.

Our partnership approach has also demonstrated the value of flexibility and openness to each organization's unique needs. Adaptability fosters transparent communication, allowing our partners to share their needs and concerns openly, strengthening our relationships and enhancing our collaboration's effectiveness. Through this model, we build durable partnerships resulting in the ability of Indigenous Peoples to carry out their self-determined goals.



Guiding Principles

Implicit in our vision and mission is recognizing and prioritizing Indigenous Peoples' rights, sovereignty, self-determination, and cultural vitality within and beyond their homelands and waters.

With this in mind, all our work adheres to the following principles:

Follow and respect the collective rights and self-determination of Indigenous Peoples.¹

Respect the diverse ways and means of Indigenous Peoples in how we work.²

Take guidance from Indigenous Peoples, and their kinship with the Earth.

Recognize the wisdom and value of the full diversity of life.

Work in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in everything we do.

¹ [The U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is our starting point for all work and partnerships.](#)

² Our structures and working practices explicitly reflect an intention to listen to both descendants and ancestors, and patiently build relationships and trust. We refer to this intention as Indigenous Ways and Means. Indigenous Ways and Means refers to wisdom, knowledge, practices, and relationships with the more-than-human reality, developed by societies with long, uninterrupted interaction and co-evolution with their natural environments.



Mongolian Traditional Clothing | Mongolia | Daniel Lin

Indigenous Peoples' Guardianship



Hutukara Yanomami Association celebration
Yanomami, Amazonia | Bruno Kelly



Heiltsuk fishing boats | Heiltsuk Nation, North America
Alex Robinson (Nansemond)

Indigenous Peoples' guardianship of territory has existed since time immemorial, and Indigenous Peoples' knowledge systems can inform critical decisions being made today.

Science points to Indigenous Peoples' guardianship as the only time-tested way for peoples and places to thrive. We define "guardianship" as the ability of Indigenous Peoples to act upon an inherent right and acceptance of responsibility to govern and manage territory using their own laws and values.

Nia Tero honors the diverse ways in which people understand this term; for us, it is linked to cultures, languages, and practices that have developed in tandem with thriving lands, waters, and places, and has a vital intergenerational dynamic. Mounting studies show that healthy ecosystems around the world are thriving because of Indigenous Peoples and their guardianship. Indigenous Peoples provide the most robust defense for all of humanity against climate change, deforestation, mining, biodiversity loss, and other ecological threats. For example, in Amazonia, Indigenous Peoples protect forest carbon more effectively than any other landholders in the region, and Indigenous lands in Brazil are proven to be more effective than protected areas in reducing deforestation.



OVER

476M

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
GLOBALLY



LIVING IN

90

COUNTRIES ACROSS
THE WORLD



COMPRISED OF
MORE THAN

5,000

DISTINCT GROUPS



CARING
FOR

1/4

OF LAND ON EARTH



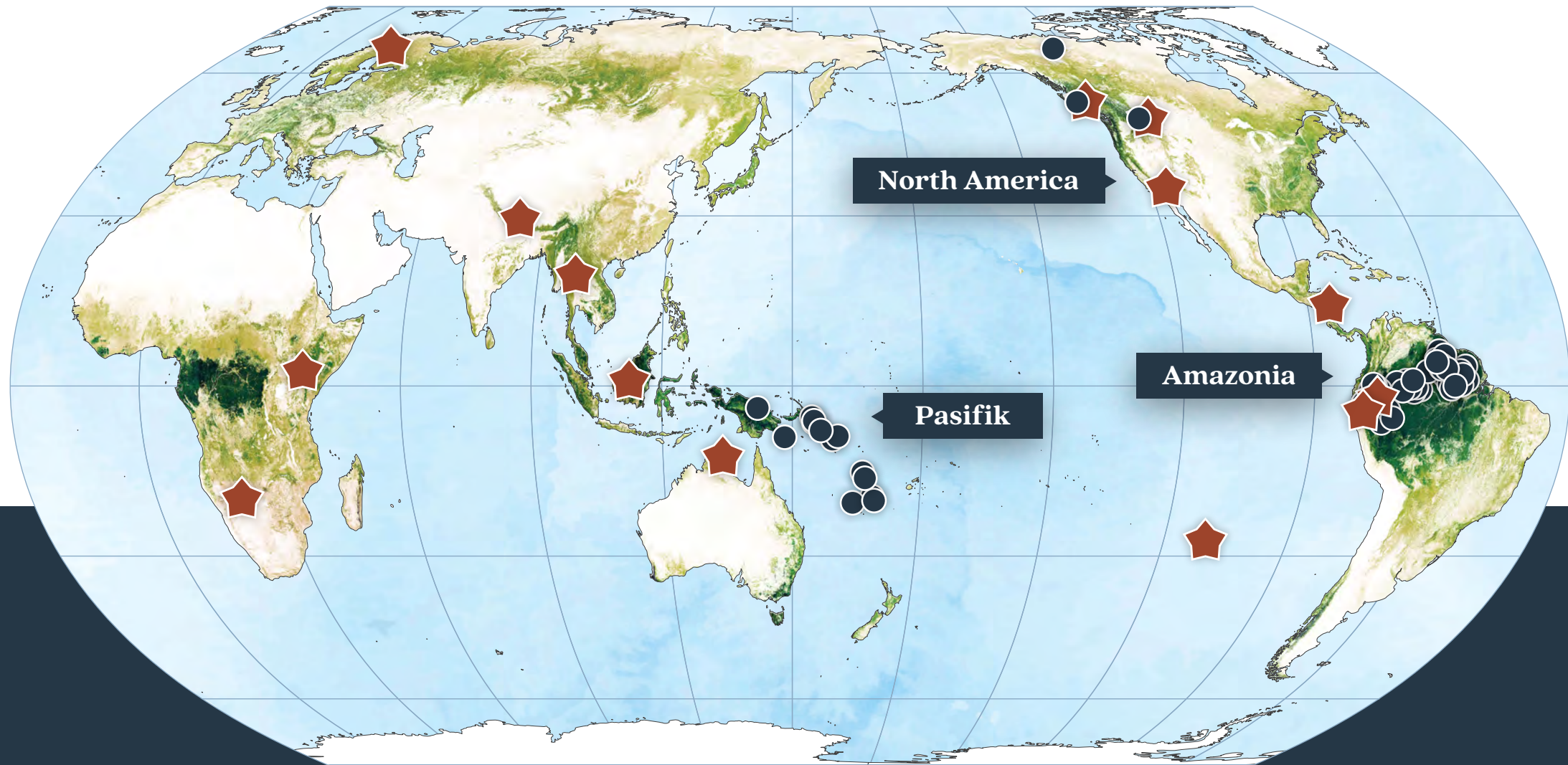
Kurupohpano village | Tumucumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

Where We Work

● **TERRITORIES NIA TERO SUPPORTS**
Across Amazonia, North America,
and Pasifik

★ **WAYFINDERS CIRCLE**
Initiative supported by Nia Tero,
Pawanka Fund, and the World Union
of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners

■ **BIOMASS**



The key regions where Nia Tero partners with Indigenous Peoples are the Pacific Islands, Amazonia, and North America, with plans to expand partnerships in Africa in 2025.

Through the Wayfinders Circle, we also collaborate with Indigenous Peoples from 15 territories around the globe, connecting communities who are dedicated to protecting their lands, waters, and territories.



OUR WORK

OVERVIEW

GLOBAL GATHERINGS

BUILDING STRENGTH

AMAZONIA

NORTH AMERICA

PASIFIK

WAYFINDERS CIRCLE

AFRICA

POLICY

BIOCULTURAL MONITORING

Our Work

Overview

Working in concert with our Indigenous partners, Nia Tero provided funding and technical guidance to our partners and their initiatives in 2024 to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' guardianship globally.



Missão Nova village | Tumucumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

Our partnerships had a substantial global impact in 2024 through:

DIRECT FUNDING

There was significant progress in the creation of direct funding to Indigenous Peoples in 2024. In Canada, a historic agreement was signed by 22 First Nations governments, federal authorities, and other allies, providing \$375 million to fund one of the largest Indigenous-led land conservation initiatives in the world. In Brazil, Indigenous Peoples living in the Parque do Tumucumaque e Rio Paru d'Este Indigenous lands created a new Indigenous Fund, the Pakará, selecting its first executive committee and team. This was an important step toward their long-term vision plans and in securing additional funding for their lands.

TERRITORIAL PROTECTION

In 2024, we provided grants to 82 organizations, securing Indigenous Peoples' guardianship in 33 biocultural settings covering an area three times the size of California. Our partners in Brazil, Suriname and the Solomon Islands have advanced their biocultural monitoring efforts to protect their territories. This work focuses on ensuring their sovereignty around data management and their ability to use the information for communications and advocacy purposes.

STRENGTHENED NETWORKS

Throughout the year, we focused on strengthening regional and global networks of Indigenous guardians. Inspired by the successful model established by the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) in Canada, we supported uniting organizations to formalize the U.S. Indigenous Guardians Network. Hosted by the World Union of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners, the Wayfinders Circle gathered in person in Mongolia, strengthening their global network as communal, vocal protectors of their lands and lifeways. Nia Tero also held a historic gathering in Colombia with partner organizations from across Amazonia.

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Across the globe, our partners are working to protect the rights and customary tenure of Indigenous Peoples. At COP16, they contributed to a decision made by 196 countries to establish a subsidiary body prioritizing Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and practices – the first of its kind among multilateral environmental agreements. We also coordinated the training of 2,305 Indigenous individuals from seven global socio-cultural regions in coordination with the U.N. Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, and funded the participation of partners at various global forums. Indigenous rights advocates and environmental defenders from Peru celebrated the official establishment of a large Indigenous reserve – a critical move safeguarding Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation. In Colombia, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples held territorial meetings and national dialogues, gathering details to report on human rights violations affecting Indigenous Peoples. The Colombian Supreme Court also ruled on a landmark decision recognizing the Amazon rainforest as a subject of rights, ordering the government to take measures to protect it by curbing deforestation.

Global Gatherings



Dancing at Wayfinders Circle Origins Event at UNPFII Lenapehoking, North America | Linda Dutan (Cañari)

Opening Ceremony of UNPFII 2024 Lenapehoking, North America | Linda Dutan (Cañari)

Throughout 2024, we organized and participated in events bringing together Indigenous leaders, allies, and supporters to elevate Indigenous narratives, increase direct funding to Indigenous Peoples, and strengthen policies in favor of Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship.

Each of these gatherings directly integrated with our overall programmatic goals in support of Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship everywhere possible on Earth.



Amazonia Partners meeting participants | Colombia, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

MARCH

Reciprocity Project Season Two Premiere at Māoriland Film Festival

Season Two of the Reciprocity Project had its world premiere on opening night at the Māoriland Film Festival. The films embrace Indigenous value systems, revealing the connection and reciprocal relationship with Earth and all beings. Rounding out our support for this initiative, the films were made in partnership with Indigenous storytellers and their communities worldwide, and co-produced by Nia Tero and Upstander Project, in association with REI Co-Op Studios.

APRIL

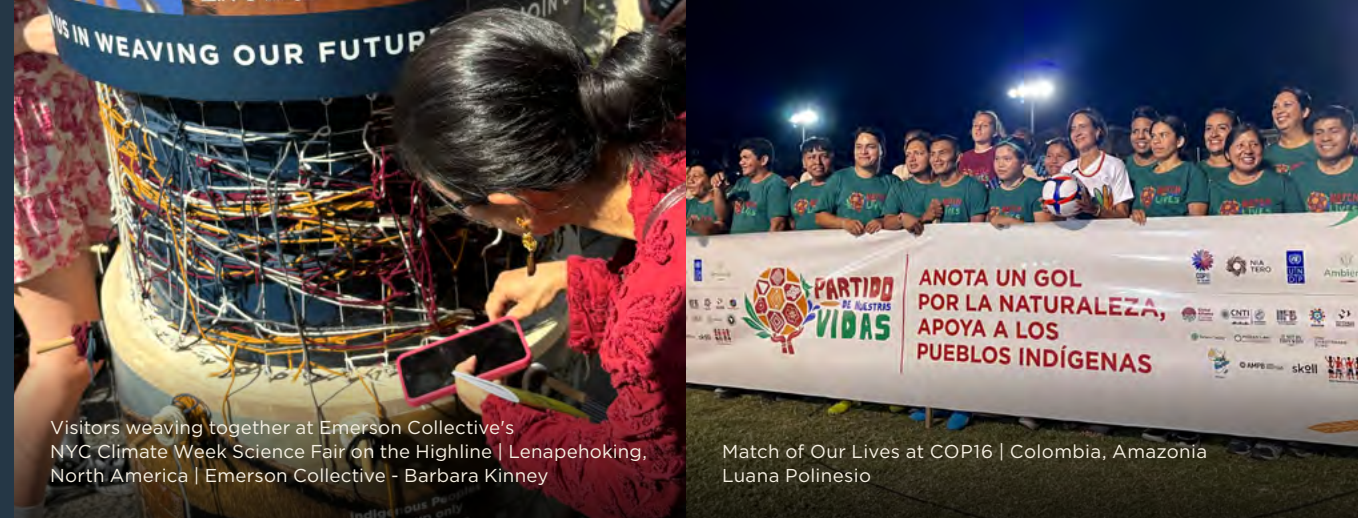
Amazonia Partners Gathering

Nia Tero held a momentous gathering in Bogotá, Colombia, bringing together representatives from 44 partner organizations from across Amazonia supporting Indigenous Peoples from Brazil, Suriname, Guyana, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. The 120 attendees exchanged experiences and collaborated on developing solutions, including regional collaboration through networks and exchanges.

U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

A highlight of our time at the UNPFII in New York City was the intergenerational “Origins” event celebrating the vital transmission of knowledge from elders to future generations. During this event, which was hosted by the Wayfinders Circle and the World Union of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners (WUISP), Indigenous Peoples and allies from across the globe gathered through joyous and powerful cultural expressions via arts, food, and stories.

Global Gatherings



Visitors weaving together at Emerson Collective's NYC Climate Week Science Fair on the Highline | Lenapehoking, North America | Emerson Collective - Barbara Kinney

Match of Our Lives at COP16 | Colombia, Amazonia Luana Polinesio

JUNE

Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC)

Nia Tero's Pasifik partners, global team, Board members, and Advisory Council members came together at FestPAC in Honolulu, Hawai'i, as peoples from across the Pacific joined in an exchange of reciprocity, cultural heritage, and Indigenous wisdom, emphasizing that protecting their cultures means protection of the land and seas. This was the first time our Board and Advisory Council gathered in person. During the week, the Wayfinders Circle held the Rapa Nui community film screening of "Te Pito o Te Henua" at the Honolulu Museum of Art. We also gathered at Board member Nainoa Thompson's home with partners and allies supporting ocean guardianship, volunteered at Ho'okua'āina, and shared songs, stories, and meals throughout. We additionally garnered press attention, elevating the critical role of Indigenous Peoples' guardianship at FestPAC through a variety of interviews with Nia Tero Board members, leadership, and partners.



Rapa Nui dancers at Te Pito o Te Henua screening | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin

SEPTEMBER

Climate Week New York City

During Climate Week in New York City, three Wayfinders Circle films premiered to a sold-out and enthusiastic crowd at the American Museum of Natural History, amplifying stories of Indigenous Peoples' guardianship and self-governance from the plains of North America, the forests of Indonesia, and Australia's Northern Territory. Additionally, as part of the Emerson Collective's Climate Science Fair, Nia Tero hosted an interactive booth on New York City's highline, with our team directly engaging with the public to advocate for supporting Indigenous Peoples' guardianship as a critical solution to climate change.

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER

16th Conference of the Parties (COP16)

During the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity's COP16 in Cali, Colombia, Nia Tero hosted and participated in several events and engagements elevating Indigenous Peoples' guardianship, and launched the "Promise" campaign alongside the Achuar Nation of Ecuador and its partners, as well as the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, If Not Us Then Who, the Tenure Facility, and the Comisión Nacional de Territorios Indígenas de Colombia. The campaign, which included the release of the "Promise" film and corresponding web hub offering ways to take actions, highlighted the critical role of Indigenous Peoples' guardianship in achieving biodiversity conservation targets.

As part of the campaign, we co-sponsored "The Match of Our Lives," a soccer game between Indigenous Peoples and professional women soccer players from Colombian national teams, bringing attention to Indigenous Peoples' vital contributions to environmental stewardship. We also hosted a Nature House event, engaging Indigenous leaders with allies in a discussion about biodiversity solutions.

Building Strength Together

A priority goal of Nia Tero’s work is increasing recognition of Indigenous leaders, organizations, and narratives, and supporting Indigenous Peoples’ inclusion across spaces of influence – from policy to media and beyond.

We are proud to celebrate the following wins alongside our Indigenous partners, highlighting their strength-building, recognition, and growing spheres of influence.



Solar boats on the Kapawi river | Achuar Territory, Amazonia | Kara Solar

Highlights

Amazon Frontlines Awarded for Humanitarian Work

Amazon Frontlines, co-founded by environmental defender and Nia Tero Board member Nemonte Nenquimo (Waorani), received the Hilton Humanitarian Prize as the first organization to promote a scalable, proven model of Indigenous-led conservation operating exclusively in South America. This is the highest global humanitarian award recognizing worldwide nonprofits dedicated to alleviating human suffering. Together with the Ceibo Alliance, Amazon Frontlines is showing innovative pathways to strengthen Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

U.N. Prize for UNIVAJA

Our partners at União dos Povos Indígenas do Vale do Javari (UNIVAJA) were awarded the 2024 Equator Prize by the U.N. Development Programme for safeguarding the biodiversity of the Javari Valley, Brazil’s second largest Indigenous land, home to many Indigenous groups living in voluntary isolation. The award was presented at the UN Conference on Biodiversity (COP16) in Colombia. Nia Tero has supported UNIVAJA’s territorial monitoring efforts from their inception, and seen it grow to a sophisticated model led by an increasing force of Indigenous protection agents who deploy early detection and monitoring systems using digital technology and satellites, in addition to river and ground patrols. Their efforts are closely coordinated with public enforcement and intelligence agencies, ensuring greater protection for a territory that is similar in size to Portugal.

Nia Tero Incoming Board Member

The Mulokot Foundation’s founding president, Jupta Itoewaki (Wayana), a former Nia Tero Leadership Fellow and TED Salon speaker, was named an incoming Nia Tero board member, beginning in late 2024.

Achuar Leadership in Solar-Powered Transportation

In Ecuador, Nia Tero grantee Fundación Kara Solar decided to transition the solar boat company’s leadership to the Achuar People, passing it from founder Oliver Utne to Achuar engineer Nantu Canelos. Canelos was a Nia Tero Fellow, and is committed to ensuring that Kara Solar will grow and thrive while remaining rooted in Achuar traditions.

New Home for Kin Theory Indigenous Media Makers Database

Nia Tero created Kin Theory as a global Indigenous media makers database supporting narrative sovereignty and cultural vitality. In 2024, Kin Theory transitioned to its new home with imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, where it can continue to grow and thrive with the world’s largest presenter of Indigenous film and media arts.

Yanomami Film Premiere at Cannes Film Festival

“The Falling Sky” film – a production inspired by the best-selling book *The Falling Sky* by David Kopenawa and Bruce Albert – premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2024. The film, which highlights the cosmologic vision of the Yanomami People, was selected for more than 60 festivals worldwide and has received 13 awards so far. Nia Tero is a proud supporter of the film’s production.

Seedcast Podcast Honored by Webby Awards

Two of our Seedcast podcast episodes were recognized with honorable mentions by the 2024 Webby Awards. “The Omen Birds Still Sing in Sungai Utik” received an honorable mention in the Best Podcast, Arts & Culture, Individual Episode category. “Wolastoqey Sounds Like This: Jeremy Dutcher - Live On KEXP” received honorable mention for Best Podcast Collaboration or Partnership.

Amazonia

Across Amazonia, Indigenous Peoples have made remarkable strides in defending their rights, strengthening their organizations, and amplifying their voices on local, national, and global stages.

Our strategy of bolstering the capacity of local and regional organizations aided in strengthening Indigenous Peoples' guardianship in the region, including the protection of more than 69 million hectares (266,410 sq. miles), home to approximately 115,000 Indigenous People across 73 territories in six countries who are caring for the region's unique biodiversity.



Luiz Baniwa and Mário Felício Joaquim during the Japurutu dance by the Baniwa People at the opening of the FOIRN assembly Rio Negro, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)



Uitoto Elders of the Monifue Uruk Indigenous Cabildo Colombia, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)



Casava flour | Tumucumaque, Amazonia Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)



Paiman, traditional house of the Tiriyo people | Tumucumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

Amazonia



Aerial view of Yakeplaopi Community Yanomami, Amazonia | Bruno Kelly



Kiju and Awapo'i Zo'é point their fingers to the sky Tumucumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

Highlights

During our inaugural Amazonia partners gathering in April in Bogotá, Colombia, representatives from Indigenous organizations across the Amazon gathered for a pivotal meeting to share strategies for defending their territories against ongoing threats. Leaders from diverse nations exchanged experiences on land demarcation, legal battles, and community-led environmental monitoring, emphasizing the importance of collective action to protect nature and their communities.

Discussions highlighted the growing pressures from illegal mining, deforestation, and extractive industries, as well as the need for stronger alliances with national and international advocacy groups.

CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Elders and youth alike voiced the urgency of preserving traditional knowledge while learning to use digital tools, such as satellite monitoring, to safeguard their ancestral lands. The meeting concluded with a renewed commitment promoting joint action, reinforcing that the Amazon's Indigenous Peoples remain steadfast in their role as guardians of the forest and of healthy ecosystems.

In Brazil, Nia Tero supported Indigenous Peoples' guardianship of 46 Indigenous territories covering 46.6 million hectares (179,924 sq. miles), including many groups in voluntary isolation. We partnered with the Fundação Nacional dos Povos Indígenas (FUNAI), Brazil's federal agency for Indigenous affairs, in their efforts to expand and train new staff joining the Agency. Our funding was critical to ensuring FUNAI could hold the training sessions, which covered Indigenous rights, cultural sensitivity, and environmental protection. The sessions also included field visits to Indigenous territories, where new civil servants engaged with communities to better understand their different realities.

In Colombia, the President and head of Environment and Interior departments signed a historic Decree that recognized Indigenous Peoples as environmental authorities over their territories, considering their ancestral knowledge and traditional management practices. The involvement of our partner, Organización Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonia Colombiana (OPIAC), was essential in this process, ensuring proper consultation with Indigenous Peoples. The decree places Indigenous Peoples at the helm of decision-making on environmental licensing, planning, funding, and in setting environmental regulations to protect their territories.

In a major victory after nearly two decades of pressure from Indigenous Peoples and ally human rights and environmental defenders, the Peruvian government officially established the Sierra del Divisor Occidental Indigenous Reserve, covering nearly 515,000 hectares (1,988 square miles). The reserve is critical to protecting Indigenous Peoples living in voluntary isolation, including the Remo (Isconahua), Mayoruna (Matsés and Matis), and Kapanawa communities. The new reserve brings renewed hope for protection of a region facing multiple threats from illegal logging and infrastructure development. Collaborative efforts between Indigenous organizations, governmental agencies, and conservation groups are ongoing and led to the Loreto Regional Government canceling 72 forestry concessions that overlapped with Indigenous reserves – a victory for Indigenous Peoples and their relatives in voluntary isolation.

In Ecuador, Nia Tero has been supporting Fundación Kara Solar and the Achuar People since 2019 in growing a fleet of electric boats as an alternative to gasoline-operated transportation. After more than 3,000 trips and 10,000 hours of reliable transport, the boats are increasingly seen as an affordable and desirable alternative to gas-polluting vessels.

In Suriname, the Wayana People have been building and refining a biocultural monitoring system supported by Nia Tero to advance territorial rights and advocate for the protection of their lands. The Wayana developed indicators to guide monitoring efforts and updated their maps using GIS tools for cultural resource management. The system helps protect the Wayana's ancestral lands from illegal invasions, including gold mining extraction and deforestation. Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname (VIDS) and the Mulokot Foundation also engaged in Suriname's First National Indigenous Congress, focusing on Indigenous Peoples' fundamental rights. During the 2024 Congress, participants developed human rights proposals to submit to national authorities.

North America

In 2024, Nia Tero deepened its partnerships across North America by supporting First Nations, Tribal Nations, and Indigenous-led organizations committed to strengthening their guardianship.

Through direct support, collaboration, and advocacy, this year saw Indigenous leadership propel significant conservation achievements, cultural revitalization efforts, and self-determined policy advancements. From the plains of the Blackfeet Nation to the shores of the Heiltsuk Nation, our partnerships reflect a commitment to Indigenous-led solutions – securing thriving lands, waters, and cultures for the next seven generations.



Heiltsuk Big House | Heiltsuk Nation, North America | Alex Robinson (Nansemond)



Dancers at Iinii (Buffalo) days | Blackfoot Confederacy, North America | Whitney Snow (Blackfoot)



Blackfeet Memorial Monument | Blackfoot Confederacy, North America | Whitney Snow (Blackfoot)



Exploring U.S. Indigenous Guardianship Meeting attendees | Lummi Nation, North America | Indigenous Leadership Initiative

North America



Frank Brown (Heiltsuk) and Valérie Courtois (Innu)
Lummi Nation, North America | Indigenous Leadership Initiative



Ramona Croff (Blackfoot) dancing | Blackfoot Confederacy,
North America | Mariah Gladstone (Blackfoot, Tsalagi)

Highlights

In 2024, an emerging U.S. Indigenous Guardians movement – inspired by the successful model established by our partners at the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI) – brought together over 60 Indigenous leaders and organizations from across the U.S. and Canada for an in-person gathering hosted by the Lummi Nation in Coast Salish Territory. This coalition, involving partners and collaborators including ILI, the Alaska Conservation Foundation, the Christensen Fund, Native Americans in Philanthropy, the Native American Rights Fund, and others, laid the foundation for a movement to connect and strengthen Indigenous guardians programs across the contiguous U.S., Alaska, and Hawai’i. Together, the group defined a vision and a strategy to grow the network and resource capacity to protect homelands and our environment for future generations.

Our Blackfeet Nation partners demonstrated remarkable leadership in revitalizing their culture throughout 2024. Through our partnership with the Blackfeet Nation, we affirmed our commitment to supporting Indigenous-led conservation, cultural revitalization, and the long-term restoration of buffalo as a keystone species across the plains. The Blackfeet-led nonprofit, Blackfeet ECO Knowledge, hosted one of the largest Akao’katsin circle camps, bringing together community members, youth, and

knowledge keepers in a powerful gathering dedicated to preparing for the continued restoration of buffalo. The camp also provided a crucial space for intergenerational knowledge transfer to ensure that culture, ceremonies, and other land-based practices remain central to the Blackfeet way of life.

A historic moment occurred during New York Climate Week when the Blackfeet successfully reclaimed a sacred ceremonial bundle from the American Museum of Natural History. This repatriation marked an important step in ongoing efforts to return such artifacts to their rightful keepers while strengthening the Nation’s spiritual continuity and cultural rebirth.

Nia Tero also provided key support for “Bring Them Home,” a documentary chronicling the release of over 30 wild bison at Ninna-stako, the most sacred Blackfoot site. This film, which premiered at the Seattle International Film Festival, showcased the cultural and ecological significance of buffalo restoration and amplified Blackfeet voices who are working to heal historical wounds through land and species stewardship. This documentary also sparked broader conversations about Indigenous sovereignty, conservation, and the need to restore balance to North America’s ecosystems.

Our longstanding partnership with the Heiltsuk Nation continued to grow in 2024

through direct collaboration with the Qqs Projects Society, a Heiltsuk-led organization dedicated to the well-being of Heiltsuk youth, culture, and environment. Building on years of partnership, Nia Tero is working alongside Heiltsuk leadership to explore enterprise-level investments that align with the Nation’s long-term vision of sovereignty and stewardship. These discussions have centered on fostering Heiltsuk-led enterprises that strengthen local economies while integrating innovative and regenerative business models.

As a coastal Nation with heavy ties to marine stewardship, Heiltsuk leaders continue advancing efforts to protect and manage their territories despite facing challenges relating to extractive industries and climate change. By supporting initiatives promoting Heiltsuk governance over natural resources, we are working to ensure their guardianship is recognized and upheld. As we move forward, Nia Tero remains dedicated to amplifying local leadership, supporting economic pathways that align with Heiltsuk values, and promoting cultural-community vitality.

Through the Indigenous Leadership Initiative (ILI)’s work, a historic agreement providing \$375 million to fund one of the largest Indigenous-led land conservation initiatives in the world was signed by 22 First Nations governments, Canada, the

Government of the Northwest Territories, and private donors. The Northwest Territories initiative, NWT: Our Land for the Future, will protect lands, enhance climate resilience, and create jobs, supporting cultural and economic opportunities while honoring Indigenous self-determination. Canada has committed monetary support to leverage government and use \$75 million in private funding to aid in Indigenous conservation through the Project Finance for Permanence model, which ensures funding for community-led protected areas and stewardship programs, to contribute to the country’s goals of conserving 30% of lands and waters by 2030. Nia Tero provided grant assistance to the ILI, which enabled First Nations communities to create the model.

Aligning with our mission of reciprocity and responsibility since 2019, Nia Tero has provided grants to the Puget Sound region, where our organization is headquartered, supporting Native communities and learning how to best steward these lands in partnership with their original caretakers. In five years, we have distributed \$723,000 to Indigenous organizations and their allies in the region, including support to more than 25 Pacific Northwest Art Fellows. In 2024, we refined our grant process for the region, ensuring that we are a good neighbor to the Coast Salish Peoples whose homelands and waters we gather, work, and live.

Pasifik

Our work in the Pasifik continues to thrive through meaningful partnerships and impactful initiatives in support of Indigenous Peoples' guardianship of collective territories – including lands, waters, and ways of life.

We aided in the care of one of the most bioculturally diverse regions on the planet by solidifying and strengthening collaborations with our partners living in five independent countries and one colonial territory across Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Kanaky/New Caledonia and the Cook Islands, and their local cohorts.



Village in the Solomon Islands | Solomon Islands, Pasifik | Lauren Guzauskas



Ho'okua'aina | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin



Grinding Kalo at Ho'okua'aina | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin



Canoe Arrival at FestPAC | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin

Pasifik



Boats on the shore | Solomon Islands, Pasifik
Lauren Guzauskas



Arthur Faerua (Vanuatu) and Dr. Bal Kama (Papua New Guinea) speaking at the Indigenous Constitutionalism panel hosted by Islands Knowledge Institute (IKI) | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Nils Cowan

Highlights

Indigenous Constitutionalism was a key focus of our Pasifik partnerships throughout 2024. The Islands Knowledge Institute (IKI), a core Nia Tero partner, and the Solomon Islands National University hosted a three-day Tok Stori to discuss the Indigenous values-based constitutions of Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Tok Stori, a traditional practice of bringing people together to dialogue and create understanding, united leaders from these states alongside elders, artists and creatives. Attendees reflected on the reality of their peoples as the original inhabitants of these lands, affirming their status as First Nations with sovereignty enshrined in the constitutions of PNG, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, which gained independence between 1975 and 1980. This gathering also provided space to discuss the critical importance and possibilities of these countries as exemplars of nationalities grounded in Indigenous ontologies predating colonialism and the U.N. decolonization movement. During the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC), IKI hosted a multi-panel discussion on **Indigenous Constitutionalism**, furthering the dialogue about the constitutions of these independent islands.

Nia Tero supported the launch of the Kava Strategy in Tonga, including the participation of key experts from both Vanuatu and Tonga. The strategy focuses on protecting and promoting the cultural significance and economic export of kava, a plant native to the Pacific Islands, while assisting in sustainable farming practices and job creation. Kava, meaning bitter in Tonga, is served in ceremonies and holds cultural significance, but has mass-market appeal as an herbal supplement that has a calming effect. The Kava Strategy calls for the use of geographical indications that protect the authenticity of products tied to specific regions and people. By protecting kava's unique identity and cultivation, the strategy aims to provide sustainable economic opportunities for Pasifik communities, ensuring that kava remains a vital and culturally significant part of the region.

As a sub-national expression of the Sky Islands pledge in the Solomon Islands, Malaita strengthened their leadership in Indigenous restoration and integrated development through the ongoing implementation of the Mala I Tolo Declaration. Led by Mala I Tolo Guardianship Trust (MiTIGT) and Maimaasina GreenBelt (MMGB), this commitment reinforced Indigenous guardianship against logging, mining, and other threats. Central to this effort was 'Remote Monitoring of the Tolo (REMOTO) – a youth-led initiative driven by MiTIGT and MMGB and funded by Nia Tero to enable a more coordinated strategy to enhance impact. REMOTO integrated biocultural satellite monitoring technology with Indigenous knowledge for real-time forest monitoring, advancing a governance model rooted in Indigenous ontology.

Through a local collaboration between Project Sepik and Jubilee Australia Research Centre, we continued supporting Save the Sepik in Papua New Guinea. This initiative supports the Sepik River Peoples in exercising their right to free, prior and informed consent in their years-long battle to defend the health of the Sepik River against a proposed gold and copper mine adjacent to an upper tributary of the river, to which they also hold deep spiritual and cultural connections.

Grantee Kōrero O Te 'Ōrau, based in the Cook Islands, continued to excel in engaging Indigenous youth through environmental stewardship throughout 2024. Their Operation Taramaea initiative has removed over 12,000 invasive Crown of Thorns starfish from the reef, a critical action in protecting marine ecosystems. The harvested starfish are then used as fertilizer in traditional gardens, a dual benefit for the environment and food security.

Wayfinders Circle

In 2024, the Wayfinders Circle, a global network of 15 Indigenous Peoples that amplifies the leadership and the reciprocity of connection between humans and Mother Earth, entered a transformative phase, marking a shift in members' commitment to this collective role.

This richer understanding, member-led clarity of function, and commitment as global Earth guardians represented a new milestone for the five-year-old initiative. From its inception, the Wayfinders Circle has been supported by three convening organizations: Pawanka Fund, Nia Tero, and the World Union of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners.



Stretched Hide | Mongolia | Daniel Lin



Wayfinders Circle members Lynn Jaime Rapu Tuki (Rapa Nui) and Isabel Pakarati Tepano (Rapa Nui) | Mongolia | Daniel Lin



Wayfinders Circle member Waakiach Kuja Jawirit (Achuar) | Mongolia | Daniel Lin



Wayfinders Circle Members at the Mongolia Gathering | Mongolia | Daniel Lin

Wayfinders Circle

Highlights

The Wayfinders Circle members held a global gathering in Mongolia, hosted by the World Union of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners (WUISP). Through spiritual and deep cultural connections and ceremony imbued with spirituality, members strengthened their recognition of the Circle as communal, vocal protectors of their lands and lifeways, embracing the Circle as a powerful platform to communicate the importance of Indigenous Peoples' guardianship to the broader world. Members discussed future steps for the Circle, including enhancing documentation practices, promoting knowledge exchange, and strengthening their collective capacity. Members came away feeling moved, taking a renewed and deepened commitment to the Wayfinders Circle back to their communities.

At the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) in New York City, the Wayfinders Circle and the World Union of Indigenous Spiritual Practitioners (WUISP) hosted an intergenerational event celebrating the vital transmission of knowledge from elders to future generations. Titled "Origins," the event featured visual arts, dance, music, poetry, and more from Indigenous Peoples around the globe, highlighting the powerful message that cultural continuity depends on Indigenous youth engagement in carrying forward their traditions.

Six films from the Wayfinders Circle series were completed in 2024 and appeared in 42 film festivals across 11 countries. Community screenings were held as part of the film rollout process. Following these screenings, five of the films premiered publicly, and four screened at Oscar-qualifying festivals. During Climate Week in New York City, Indai Apai Darah ("Mother, Father, Blood"), Ngarrindurdeng Kured ("We Going Home Now"), and Niitstitapi ("The Real People") premiered to a sold-out crowd at the American Museum of Natural History, followed by a lively discussion and reception with live music. This marked a significant and successful step in fostering understanding and collaboration between Indigenous Peoples and cultural institutions.

Indai Apai Darah ("Mother, Father, Blood") was nominated for the prestigious environmental Jackson Wild Award. At the 2024 Cuenca International Film Festival, the Achuar delegation presented their Wayfinders Circle film Inia Ikiampri ("Our Jungle"). This was the first time that a large Indigenous delegation attended the festival and had the opportunity to present its own film.

The six films released in 2024 were:

INDAI APAI DARAH

"**Mother, Father, Blood**" features a young girl growing up in the Indigenous-held forests of central Borneo. The film explores ancient traditions and the story of her People's historic fight to protect their lands in the face of rampant deforestation.

INIA IKIAMPRI

"**Our Jungle**" is an intimate "Day in the Life" of the Achuar people. It follows members of the Kapawi community in Achuar Territory in the Pastaza Province of Ecuador, portraying how different generations go about their lives in the heart of the Amazon forest. The film explores themes of Achuar land, language, and culture at the intersection of tradition and modernity.

NGARRINDURDENG KURED

"**We Going Home Now**" tells the story of the return and restoration on Aboriginal land, as Dean Yibarbuk, his family, and community work to protect their territory of Rock Country, Australia, from devastating wildfires and other threats to their traditional way of life.

NIITSTITAPI

"**The Real People**" journeys across North America and the vast ancestral territory of The Blackfoot Confederacy, an ancient alliance of Indigenous Peoples across the Great Plains bound together by land, language, and culture.

TE PITO O TE HENUA

"**The Navel of the World**" explores the cultural identity and close connection to the land and water shared by the Rapa Nui People through a visceral, behind the scenes exploration of the island's most important cultural festival - Tapāti Rapa Nui.

TUHAYAMANI'CHI PAL WANIGA

"**The Water Flows Always**" shares how water and culture bring together a Cahuilla, Cupeño father and daughter as they fight to protect their Indigenous homelands in Southern California.



You can learn more about the Wayfinders Circle on their updated website, www.WayfindersCircle.org, which launched in 2024, and on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn at [@wayfinderscircle](https://www.instagram.com/wayfinderscircle).

Africa

Throughout 2024, Nia Tero took its first steps to design an approach to supporting Indigenous Peoples' guardianship in Africa.

Our approach and initial selection of biocultural landscapes for research and outreach were informed by insights from 36 Indigenous leaders and advisors across the continent, including conversations with dozens of select regional Indigenous Peoples and local community sector leaders.

Highlights

In October 2024 in Samburu, Kenya, our Africa draft approach was presented to a group of Indigenous leaders in the region for input and validation before proceeding with planning to formalize it, and begin implementation in 2025.

Guided by criteria encompassing elements of customary land, thriving ecosystems, legal frameworks, and intersection with conservation initiatives, Africa's Indigenous leaders and other advisors recommended that Nia Tero should begin its initial engagement in Greater Eastern Africa. This region is home to many pastoralist communities and hunters and gatherers/forest-dwelling communities, and fisherfolk who occupy vast lands and waters with highly biodiverse ecosystems.



WE ARE EXCITED
TO ADVANCE THIS
WORK IN 2025.



Village view during Africa Advisors Meeting | Africa | Kendi Borana



Africa Advisors Maanda Ngotiko, Dr. Kenneth Wilson, Hannah Longole, Dr. Tadesse Wolde, Dominique Bikaba and Kendi Borana | Africa | Kendi Borana

Dominique Bikaba | Africa | Kendi Borana



Dominique Bikaba, Kendi Borana, Dr. Tadesse Wolde, Dr. Kenneth Wilson, Mali OleKaunga, David Rothschild, Hannah Longole, Maanda Ngotiko, Dr. Hussein Isaac | Africa | Kendi Borana

Policy



Nature House Event at COP16 | Colombia, Amazonia
Nancy Kelsey (Anishinaabe)



Paul Roughan, Peter Seligmann, and 'Aulani Wilhelm during
Climate Week | Lenapehoking, North America | Goals House

With the primary goal of advancing global policies that establish and enhance Indigenous Peoples' guardianship rights and sovereignty, Nia Tero revised its policy strategies in 2024.

Updated plans include connecting national-level policy with international efforts to highlight opportunities to implement global agreements. The strategy also includes efforts to strengthen Indigenous Peoples' participation in international forums. Finally, the plan enhances policymakers' and influencers' understanding of issues affecting Indigenous Peoples by regularly monitoring the potential impact of global regulations.

Highlights

At the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a specialized agency of the U.N., the Indigenous Caucus at the Diplomatic Conference on Genetic Resources and Associated Traditional Knowledge (GRTK) successfully negotiated the adoption of a new treaty that requires patent applicants across the globe to disclose the origin of genetic resources or traditional knowledge used in their creations. The historic GRTK Treaty is the first WIPO Treaty to require Indigenous Peoples' involvement in issues in the nexus of intellectual property, genetic resources and traditional knowledge.

During the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity's COP16 in Cali, Colombia, Nia Tero supported several partner organizations' attendance and held trainings to strengthen their participation before the conference. A landmark subsidiary body was established at COP16, prioritizing Indigenous Peoples' traditional knowledge and practices. Under Article 8(j) of the Convention and in several targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, parties must respect, preserve, and maintain knowledge, innovations, and practices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB), a grantee of Nia Tero's, played a key role in the negotiations that led to the adoption of a new program of work and the establishment of a permanent subsidiary body to support Indigenous Peoples. Nia Tero also co-sponsored the TRUA World Summit on Traditional Knowledge related to biodiversity to prepare for COP16, and supported the IIFB-led training to strengthen their participation before the conference.

In preparation for COP29 global U.N. Climate Change negotiations, six free virtual training sessions catering to Indigenous leaders were conducted by Nia Tero, the U.N. Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, Docip - Indigenous Peoples' Center for Documentation, Research and Information, the U.N. Development Programme, and other Indigenous rights organizations. These trainings were provided in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese and were designed to prepare Indigenous Peoples for engagement in global policy discussions affected by climate change. A total of 616 people participated and were trained to advocate for their rights, share traditional knowledge, and effectively participate in the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and related processes to influence climate policies.



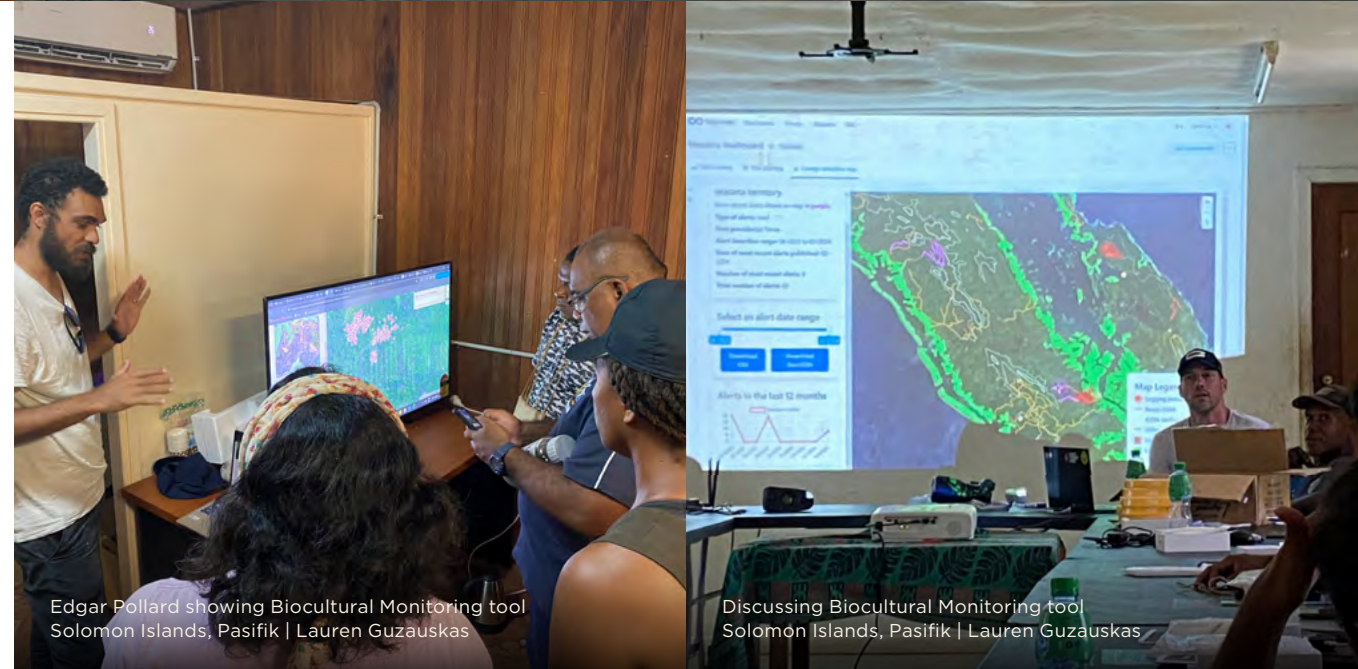
Biocultural Monitoring

In 2024, our partners—Conservation Metrics, Terras App Solutions, and Awana Digital (formerly Digital Democracy)—significantly enhanced technology for Indigenous Peoples to collect and visualize monitoring data, providing guidance and technical support to Indigenous Peoples’ organizations in the Amazon, Pasifik, and Africa.

Conservation Metrics improved the functionality of Guardian Connector, a platform to manage and visualize environmental and socio-economic monitoring data in one location, owned entirely by Indigenous Peoples’ organizations. Additionally, Awana Digital launched CoMapeo, an app designed for Indigenous Peoples to collect territorial data, and the three organizations integrated satellite imagery from CoMapeo into the alert system, strengthening the resources available for communities to respond to threats in their territories.



Arial view of two village sites | Africa | David Rothschild



Edgar Pollard showing Biocultural Monitoring tool
Solomon Islands, Pasifik | Lauren Guzauskas

Discussing Biocultural Monitoring tool
Solomon Islands, Pasifik | Lauren Guzauskas



OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR ON TESTING AND IMPROVING THE GUARDIAN CONNECTOR,

prepares us to expand access to this tool in the future for Indigenous Peoples’ organizations within Nia Tero’s portfolio and beyond.



Missão Nova village | Tumúcumaque, Amazonia | Kamikia Kisedje (Kisedje)

GRANTS BY PROGRAM

GRANTS BY REGION

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

GRANTMAKING & FINANCIALS

Grantmaking Impact

274

Indigenous Peoples Globally

82

Total Organizations

110

Total Grants

7

Total Fellowships

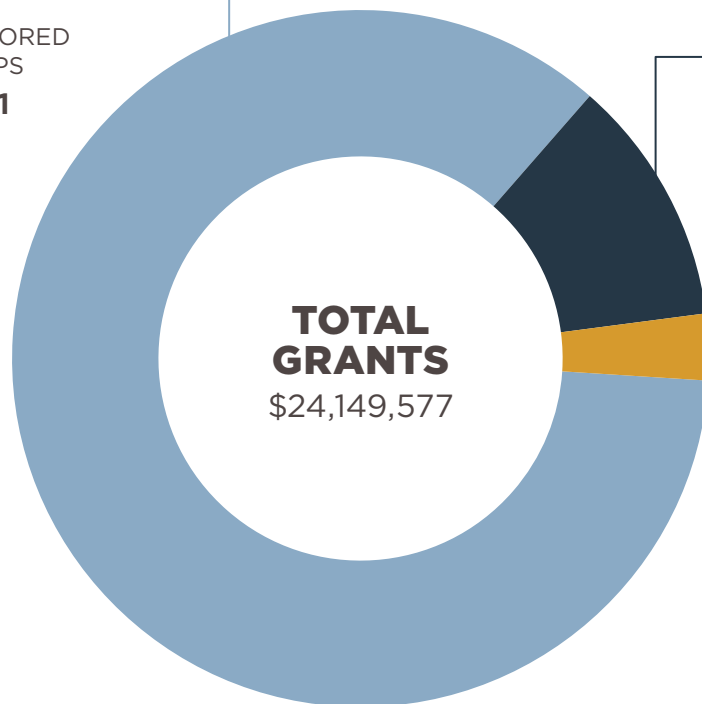
Nia Tero is proud to provide grants, contracts, and technical assistance directly to Indigenous Peoples' organizations, networks, and trusted allies based on our partners' self-determined needs.

In 2024, we distributed 110 grants and 7 fellowships to our partners, totaling over \$24.1 million in U.S. dollars.

GRANTS BY PROGRAM:

85%

PLACE ANCHORED PARTNERSHIPS
\$20,630,141



12%

AMPLIFICATION & SCALING
\$2,776,044

3%

SCIENCE & LEARNING
\$743,392

*Unaudited 2024 amounts



Canoe Arrival at FestPAC | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin

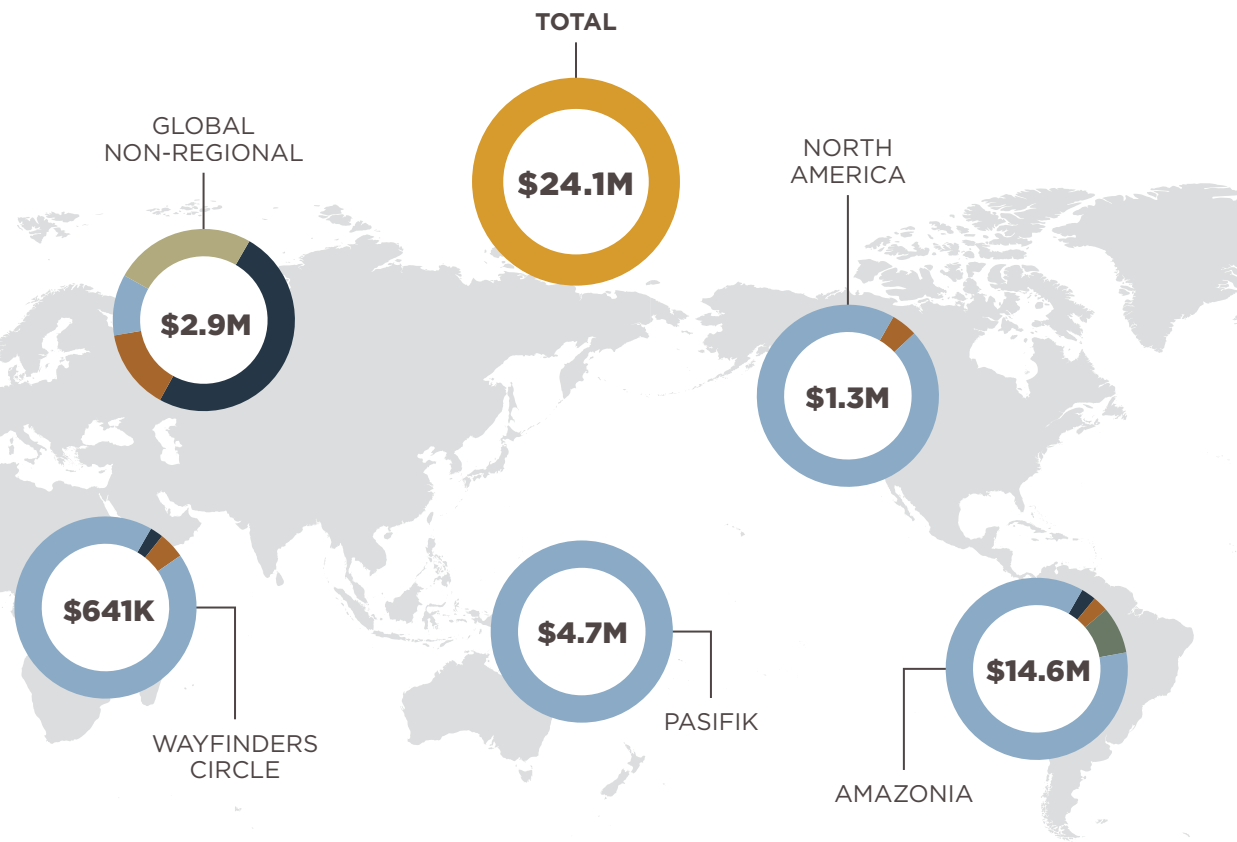
Grantmaking Impact

Nia Tero directly funds Indigenous Peoples.

58%
of Nia Tero's 2024 budget was allocated to grantmaking

When you factor in our program work the number is up to **86%** of our budget

GRANTS BY REGION:



- POLICY & ADVOCACY
- SCIENCE & LEARNING
- SHARED COMMITMENTS
- STORYTELLING & PRODUCTION
- DURABLE SUPPORT

*Unaudited 2024 amounts



SINCE INCEPTION

798
TOTAL GRANTS DISTRIBUTED

\$101M
TOTAL AMOUNT GRANTED

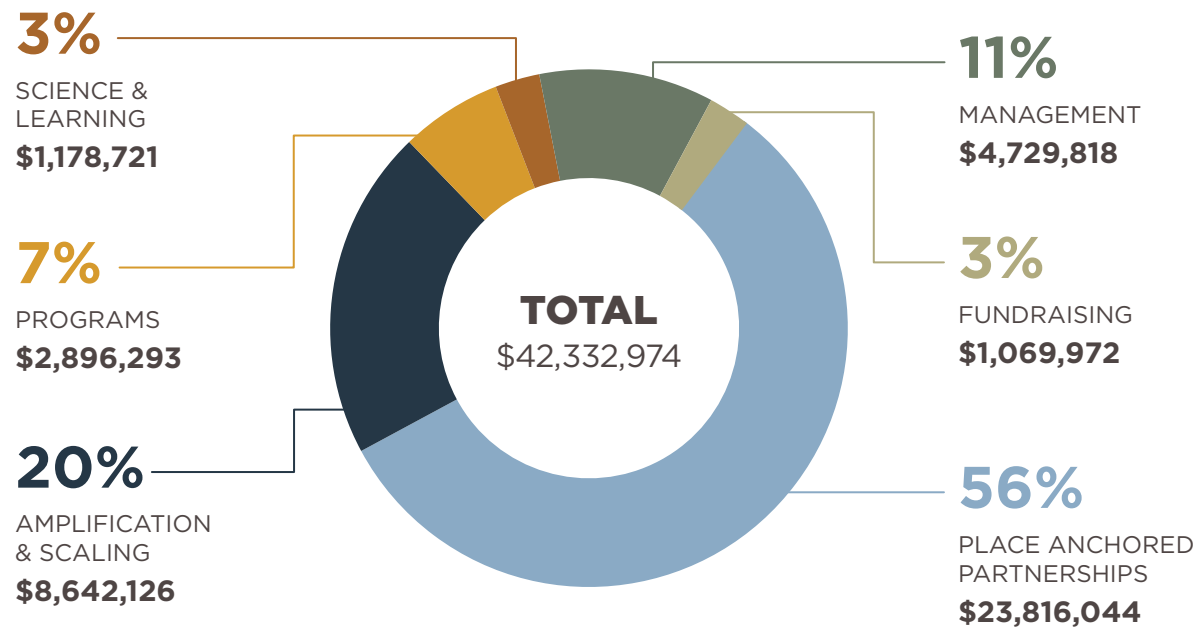
Lummi Nation drummers welcoming canoes to shore at the opening of the Exploring U.S. Guardian Network meeting Lummi Nation, North America | Indigenous Leadership Initiative

Financial Summary

In 2024, Nia Tero raised a total of \$31 million in revenue from a diverse portfolio of supporters who share our values and commitment to our mission.

In 2024, 86% of our \$42 million in expenditures focused on our program delivery to support the self-determined needs of Indigenous Peoples and to influence a more cohesive field serving Indigenous Peoples' guardianship. The remaining 14% supported our administrative, management, and fundraising capacities. As planned, we covered our expenses with restricted and unrestricted assets that are designed to fund our multi-year grantmaking commitments.

EXPENSES BY PROGRAM:



*Unaudited 2024 amounts

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Statement of activities and changes in net assets for the year ended December 31, 2024.

	2024		2023	
	Without Restrictions	With Restrictions	TOTAL	TOTAL
SUPPORT AND REVENUE				
Contributions & Grants	21,313,602	9,704,368	31,017,971	23,443,794
Interest & Investments Loss, Net	3,445,933	-	3,445,932	3,928,539
Other Revenue (Loss)	215,368	-	215,368	62,805
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	-	-	(9,509)
Net Assets Released from Donor Restriction	10,320,194	(10,320,194)	-	-
Other Gain/(Loss)	(1,197,187)	-	(1,197,187)	-
Total Support & Revenue	34,097,910	(615,826)	33,482,084	27,425,629
TOTAL EXPENSES				
PROGRAM SERVICES				
Place Anchored Partnerships	23,816,044	-	23,816,044	22,602,409
Amplification and Scaling	8,642,126	-	8,642,126	10,761,046
Science and Learning	1,178,721	-	1,178,721	1,037,440
Programs Overall	2,896,293	-	2,896,293	2,284,660
Total Program Services	36,533,184	-	36,533,184	36,685,555
SUPPORTING SERVICES				
Management and General	4,729,818	-	4,729,818	5,403,454
Fundraising	1,069,972	-	1,069,972	835,137
Total Supporting Services	5,799,790	-	5,799,790	6,238,591
Total Expenses	42,332,974	-	42,332,974	42,924,146
Total Changes in Net Assets	(8,235,064)	(615,826)	(8,850,890)	(15,498,517)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	66,768,039	17,040,385	83,808,424	99,306,941
Net Assets - End of Year	58,532,975	16,424,559	74,957,535	83,808,424



GLOBAL TEAM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ADVISORY COUNCIL

LOOKING AHEAD

APPENDIX

OUR TEAM

Global Team

Nia Tero is a United States-based nonprofit working globally with Indigenous Peoples committed to guardianship of their territories.

In 2017, a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders came together to found Nia Tero. Today, we are a global organization that brings Indigenous Peoples and allies together to advance Indigenous Peoples' guardianship.

Highlights

Our team and global consultants are currently based across the U.S. and within the regions where we work, with a large contingent at our Seattle headquarters. We speak many languages, including English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and a wide range of Indigenous languages. Our Board of Directors, who are majority Indigenous, continue to shape the focus and pace of the organization along with our global Advisory Council and regional advisors.

Our work is complementary to many longstanding Indigenous Peoples' movements, which have existed for hundreds of years. Whenever possible, we join forces with and amplify these movements. By design, we are but one player in an expanding constellation of efforts to advance Indigenous Peoples' guardianship.

LEADERSHIP UPDATE

After Peter Seligmann, Nia Tero's founder and CEO, announced his intention to retire, the Nia Tero Board of Directors led a transition process throughout 2024 and unanimously supported the appointment of 'Aulani Wilhelm (Kanaka 'Ōiwi) as its next CEO, starting January 1, 2025. 'Aulani joined Nia Tero in 2023 as the Chief Strategy & External Relations Officer, bringing decades of experience collaborating with Indigenous communities, bridging culture, community, and science to drive innovations in ocean policy and conservation.

Peter Seligmann will remain on the Board of Directors.



Nia Tero team members Nathalie Figueroa, Margarita Mora, Jennifer Tauli-Corpuz, Valeree Nolasco, Nancy Kelsey, Luana Polinesio, Carmen Guerra, Joel Cerda at Cop16 | Colombia, Amazonia | Nia Tero



Nia Tero team members Lacey Strong, Jacob Bearchum, Fancy Brown, Bryan Cole, Hill Ossip and Nils Cowan at FestPAC | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Nils Cowan



Nia Tero team member Nancy Kelsey, Board Chair Justice Joseph Williams, and Advisory Council member Ralph Regenvanu at Ho'okua'āina | Hawai'i, Pasifik | Daniel Lin



Amazonia Team members Daniela Lerda, Nara Bará, Margarita Mora, Joel Cerda, Sharon Austin, Felipe De Rosa, Lysa Ribiero, Maria Fernanda Ribiero, and Leslie Benzakein | Colombia, Amazonia | Daniela Lerda

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors, who are majority Indigenous, includes Nia Tero’s founding partners, other individuals of goodwill, and globally recognized representatives of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The Board is accountable for providing counsel, insight, oversight, and direction on Nia Tero’s strategy.

Pictured Left to Right

- Row 1: JOSEPH WILLIAMS**
Māori
Board Chair
- MYRNA CUNNINGHAM KAIN**
Miskita
Vice Chair
- ANNE MARIE BURGOYNE**
- Row 2: BRENDA PIPESTEM**
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- JUPTA ITOEWAKI**
Wayana
- KEVIN STARR**
- Row 3: LIAM KOKAUA**
Ngāti Arera
- MICHAEL CROW**
- NAINOA THOMPSON**
Kānaka Maoli
- Row 4: NEMONTE NENQUIMO**
Waorani
- PETER SELIGMANN**
- Row 5: VICKY TAULI-CORPUZ**
Kankana-Ey Igorot
Board Chair 2017 - 2022
- YO-YO MA**



Advisory Council

Our global Advisory Council, comprised of Indigenous leaders from around the world and two expert philanthropic observers, provides additional guidance and wisdom to our executives and Board. They advise on Nia Tero’s institutional culture and relationships, growing a global set of partnerships to amplify Indigenous Peoples’ voices and influence, secure thriving homelands and waters within partner territories, and fulfill Nia Tero’s mission.

Pictured Left to Right

- Row 1: AROHA TE PAREAKE MEAD**
Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Porou, Tuhourangi,
Ngāi Tuhoe and Ngāti Tūwharetoa
(Māori) Tribes, Aotearoa/New Zealand
- DOMINIQUE BIKABA**
Bashi Tribe, Eastern Congo,
Democratic Republic of Congo
- GUNN-BRITT RETTER**
Saami, Unjárga-Nesseby
by Varangerfjord,
North-Eastern Norway
- Row 2: JOJI CARINO**
Ibaloi-Igorot, Cordillera Region of the Philippines
- LAURA HATTENDORF**
Observer
- OLE KAUNGA MALI**
Laikipia Maasai, Kenya
- Row 3: RALPH REGENVANU**
Uripiv of Malakua Island, Vanuatu
- SHERRI MITCHELL**
Penobscot Nation, Penawahpskek
- Row 4: STEPHANIE PLATZ**
Observer
- VIVIANA FIGUEROA**
Omaguaca-Kolla, Indigenous from
the Jujuy Province of Argentina



Looking Ahead

At the end of 2024, we finalized a year-long effort with Board approval of our 5-year strategic plan (2025-2029), which we will be sharing publicly in early 2025.

As we look ahead, we are committed to:

- Continuing to directly fund Indigenous Peoples
- Strengthening Indigenous and ally networks and hubs
- Leading and inspiring new research
- Ongoing amplification of stories and evidence from Indigenous Peoples



We are grateful for your continued support and allyship in these efforts, building toward the shared dream of enabling Indigenous Peoples' guardianship everywhere possible on Earth as part of a just and vibrant future.

“

Growing up in Hawai'i, I was taught the importance of community, learning from and serving others, and building trust where trust has so thoroughly eroded. These values have guided me throughout my career and are aligned with the mission and guiding principles of Nia Tero. Recognizing that the daily threats to Indigenous Peoples around the world are incessant and growing, I hope to not only build on these efforts, but also accelerate global understanding about what Indigenous Peoples' guardianship is, and why it matters.

— **'AULANI WILHELM**
Kanakanā 'Ōiwi, (Native Hawaiian)
Incoming CEO, Nia Tero

Glossary of Terms

The following terms and definitions are meant to be understood in the context of Nia Tero’s work and mission and are not meant to present a position on their definition outside of this context.

Agency: The rights and capacity of Indigenous Peoples living in a territory to speak for themselves and make their own self-determined choices. This includes representation, economic well-being, development and governance.

Biocultural Approaches to Monitoring: Monitoring approaches that explicitly start with cultural perspectives connected to territory – encompassing (place-based) values, knowledge, relationships and needs – and that recognize mutual interdependence between ecological state and human well-being. They measure the things that matter to the people who hold the territory in question.

Co-responsibility: An obligation or a commitment to achieve common outcomes shared among the people living in a territory, their partners and Nia Tero, and that is clearly defined in a shared commitment.

Cultural Continuity: A dynamic process of upholding and reactivating relationships, values, and spirituality – an Indigenous way of being – in a rapidly changing world. It is both the way and age-specific responsibility to receive, generate/process and transmit traditional knowledge, wisdom and practices from generation to generation through families, kinship structures and life-asserting connections to the place and ancestral memory. It is a determining factor of Indigenous identity and self-determination as a distinct people.

Engagement: The act of approaching Indigenous Peoples managing territories identified by Nia Tero. It involves requesting permission to visit their territories, spending time with them in their territories, sharing Nia Tero’s mission and priorities, and learning about their governance structure, vision of the future, priorities, and challenges.

Financial Sustainability: The long-term condition of having financial means available to enable people to secure the guardianship of their territories.

Governance: The ability of Indigenous Peoples to define and maintain clear mechanisms, processes, and rules that guide decision-making and the implementation of a self-determined vision of well-being that secures cultural continuity and the health of the ecosystems they depend on. This concept recognizes long-standing customary governance mechanisms.

Guardianship: The ability of Indigenous Peoples to act upon an inherent right and acceptance of responsibility to govern and manage territory using their own laws and values. Nia Tero honors the diverse ways in which people understand this term. For us, it is linked to cultures, languages, and practices that have developed in tandem with thriving land, water and place, and has a vital intergenerational dynamic.

Indigenous Peoples: Nia Tero recognizes that Indigenous Peoples of different regions define the term Indigenous Peoples differently and does not endorse any one definition. Our approach is to work with Indigenous Peoples and local communities who share characteristics linked to a territory and have a strong connection to values and cultural practices developed in tandem with that territory.

Indigenous Territories: The lands and waters that Indigenous Peoples and local communities occupy collectively. Specifically, it is a distinct geographic, cultural and ecological space that is common to a specific Indigenous People, group of peoples or local community. Tenure is held collectively – either legally or de facto – and resource definition and use, as well as cultural practice, is governed within a common property context.

Long-term Sustainability: The quality of being able to continue implementing key activities to ensure Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship of vital ecosystems. It involves securing that financial sustainability is in place and that good governance is maintained over time.

Nia Tero: Our organization’s name, “Nia Tero,” means “Our Earth” in Esperanto, a language created in the late 1800s to promote peace and harmony. Esperanto is a second language to all, first to none, allowing people who speak different native languages to communicate while retaining their own language and cultural identity. This concept of unity while upholding identity embodies the heart of Nia Tero.

Partners: Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, and other groups and individuals working together and with Nia Tero to strengthen Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship.

Place-Anchored Partnership: Existing or potential relationship between the people living in an Indigenous territory, their partners and Nia Tero that secures a self-determined vision for guardianship and well-being.

Self-Determined Vision: Vision developed by Indigenous Peoples living in a territory that describes their contemporary sense of well-being, their dreams for the future and their priorities. This vision can be transmitted orally, can be found in existing community development plans (such as a “life plan”), or can be developed with Nia Tero’s support.

Shared Commitments: Co-responsibilities, activities, monitoring, and conflict resolution processes that result from equitable negotiation with partners to secure Indigenous Peoples’ guardianship.

Spirituality: A quality of being that transcends our physical reality and provides a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness.

Vital Ecosystems: Specific areas of the planet that are essential to the identity and well-being of peoples living within them, and of a scale and/or have biophysical qualities that make them of vital importance to the well-being of humanity.



NIA TERO

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