

CNAIR's Mission

“We took care of this knowledge for thousands of years before it came to the APS. We would like to work together to help you take care of our knowledge while it is here and to make it useful to our community.”

-- Tom Belt, Cherokee traditional knowledge keeper and CNAIR Native American Advisory Board senior member.

The mission of the American Philosophical Society's Center for Native American and Indigenous Research is to use the collections of the Society to build collaborations with Native American and Indigenous groups and scholars who want to use these materials to advance knowledge of their history and culture. The Center serves this mission by working with Indigenous community members and scholars who are revitalizing languages and cultures in the communities from which the languages, stories, and songs held in the Society's collections originated; by supporting researchers whose work depends on having access to the Library's collections; and by promoting knowledge of Native American and Indigenous history and culture through new technologies that make accessible and useful the Society's holdings.

Our goals are:

- To make the cultural treasures within the APS's Indigenous collections accessible to community members and scholars while also protecting culturally-sensitive materials.
- To work with our Indigenous partners to digitize select portions of the APS's collections to develop curriculum for schools, to provide materials of use to traditional knowledge-keepers, and to support young scholars from the community interested in cultural revitalization.
- To support scholars doing linguistic, ethnographic, historical, and digital humanities projects that will benefit communities.
- To take full advantage of this unique historical moment when digital technology makes archival materials accessible to communities of origin and vibrant revitalization movements are thriving across the continent.