

# INDIGENOUS RECIPROCITY INITIATIVE OF THE AMERICAS

## Decolonizing Philanthropy

In April 2021, Chacruna launched the Indigenous Reciprocity Initiative of the Americas (IRI), a community-directed biocultural conservation program connecting directly with grassroots Indigenous organizations at the local level with the aim of 'giving back' to the cultural regions that support indigenous plant use and knowledge. IRI created a pool of funds that supports local and Indigenous initiatives with proven track records of commitment to biocultural diversity addressing a broad range of efforts from food security and environmental health to economic and educational support. IRI's philosophy is one of 'no strings attached'. Apart from an annual reporting on funds usage, the organizations that we work with are not distracted by the funders' agenda. Part of establishing a process of reciprocity in the regions that have provided historical and current diversity is to not burden these organizations with having to exert their limited resources and efforts away from their hard work.

Working with local and Indigenous leadership and prioritizing the autonomy of grassroots initiatives and the individuals and groups that are committed to these regions, IRI consists in:

**20** organizations  **Supporting 38** different indigenous groups in multiple communities

**Brazil • Colombia • Ecuador • Peru**  
**Costa Rica • Mexico • United States**

## IRI in practice

IRI began as a proposal to pave the way forward toward more reciprocal relations between the rapidly growing psychedelics industry in the Global North and Indigenous and local peoples who have historically and ongoingly created the conditions for the current wealth of plant use and knowledge. In one year, IRI has raised over \$100,000. With 7.5% for operational costs, almost \$5,000 of unconditional funding has gone to each of our 20 partners.

IRI promotes community-led, grassroots projects designed and implemented by local and Indigenous people to address their own self-determined needs. Projects include collaborative community mapping and tree-planting in struggles for land tenure by the Kofán, reforestation of Kaingang territory with Parana pine, Matsigenka self-directed documentation of traditional storytelling, Shipibo-Konibo medicinal plant garden and seed-sharing networks, Wixarika-led hikuri (peyote) conservation initiatives, and strengthening Kichwa Indigenous health and environmental revitalization efforts.

Learn more about all the groups IRI supports at  
[www.chacruna-iri.org/regions](http://www.chacruna-iri.org/regions)





# IRI's Theory of Change

IRI recognizes that a 100% ground-up structure emphasizing local agency that challenges conventional philanthropic models is the most meaningful way to support Indigenous and local community autonomy and the most impactful way to support biodiversity. IRI acts as a channel for reciprocity and a platform for education and collaboration in service of biocultural conservation with three main areas of focus:

**Raising unconditional funding:** IRI accepts donations with strict adherence to the terms set by its partners, distributing them evenly among 20 organizations with no strings attached. This flexible funding can be used to address the immediate and constantly changing needs of community projects.

**Providing a platform for education:** Chacruna presents on IRI at conferences and universities and publishes articles and interviews exploring reciprocity, biocultural conservation, plant medicine, and Indigenous rights.

**Providing support through research and audio-visual services:** IRI engages with Indigenous and local stakeholders on their own terms to support their existing initiatives by providing relevant ethnographic and audiovisual materials as needed and when possible.

## LINKS

<https://www.chacruna-iri.org>

[https://chacruna.net/psychedelics\\_indigenous\\_reciprocity](https://chacruna.net/psychedelics_indigenous_reciprocity)

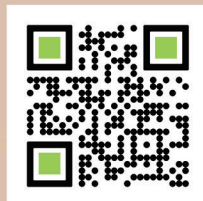
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