



Gathering of Native Americans/Alaska Natives Native Connections Grantee Guide

Using this guide

This guide will serve as a planning document for Native Connections (NC) grantees planning a Gathering of Native Americans or Gathering of Alaska Natives (GONA/GOAN). A GONA/GOAN can be an impactful, healing community experience. However, this multiple-day intervention takes a lot of time, effort, and resources, so adequate planning and support from your partners and community is crucial. This guide is a first step in planning a successful event that meets the objectives of your NC grant. Your Grantee Technical Assistant (GTA) can supply you with other materials that can help in the planning process.

This guide asks a series of questions that will help you plan your GONA/GOAN and will help the facilitators customize it for your grant and community. This guide also outlines the themes and format of a GONA/GOAN. This is a living document that will be updated by the grantee as a GONA/GOAN is being planned.

Preassessment/Marketing

As part of the planning process, address the following questions:

Question	Response
Have you ever attended a GONA/GOAN?	
What topic will the GONA/GOAN focus on? For example, suicide or substance misuse.	
Is there a target audience? (For example, community, youth, etc.) Your audience should include youth, but the	



GONA/GOAN doesn't have to only be for youth.	
What would you like the NC GONA/GOAN to accomplish in your community? (What is your vision?)	
What are your objectives for the NC GONA/GOAN?	
Does the community know about the NC grant and its mission?	
Are the objectives for the GONA/GOAN aligned with your CRM scores?	
Has the community hosted a GONA/GOAN in the past?	
Will community partners be collaborating in this effort? If so, have their roles been determined?	
What is the level of youth involvement with the NC grant?	
Will youth be actively involved in planning the GONA/GOAN? If so, how?	
How will you market the GONA/GOAN to the audiences you want to attend?	
What information would you like by the end of the GONA/GOAN?	
How will you document the information you garner in the GONA/GOAN? Would there be a way to capture the data to inform future guides?	
How will you use this information to reach your NC objectives?	



What is your vision for what NC will accomplish in your community by the end of the grant.	
--	--

Some Considerations

An NC GONA/GOAN will examine all four themes of GONA/GOAN – belonging, mastery, interdependence, and generosity. But to address the different conditions that exist within different communities, the NC GONA/GOAN agenda can emphasize one of the four themes.

- **Belonging:** Emphasis if the audience/community isn't aware of the NC grant – a GONA/GOAN could be used to build community, belonging, and to market the NC project.
- **Mastery:** Emphasis if the audience/grantee is concerned with healing intergenerational trauma and lateral oppression – a GONA/GOAN could be used to examine trauma and trauma-informed care.
- **Interdependence:** Emphasis if the audience/grantee is working on the Community System Analysis – a GONA/GOAN might include an asset mapping process to help identify gaps in agencies/entities. If the audience/grantee has completed a Community Readiness Assessment (CRA), a GONA/GOAN could also be used to share the results of the CRA to create buy-in and ownership of the plan.
- **Generosity:** Emphasis if the grantee wants to get community input on the SAP– a GONA/GOAN could examine the CRA results and review the readiness levels and then get community input for prevention activities. They could do an interactive, dynamic brainstorming process to list activities they would like to see in the plan, then prioritize their ideas and see what aligns with their readiness level.

An NC GONA/GOAN may also emphasize a particular type prevention, for example, suicide prevention, substance misuse, historical and present trauma, or lateral violence.

The activities and stories used in a GONA/GOAN will depend on the community, the culture of the community, and might change depending on the theme emphasized and the prevention emphasis of the GONA/GOAN.



Question	Response
Which theme do you think should be the focus for your community's NC GONA/GOAN? Why?	
Will you GONA/GOAN emphasize a particular prevention topic? Which one and why?	

Native Connections GONA/GOAN Framework

The GONA/GOAN themes of belonging, mastery, interdependence, and generosity are each explored in the GONA/GOAN using these elements: story, mini-teach, experiential activity, and reflection. Each of the themes is listed below and then suggestions of topics for the elements that align with the NC approach are given. Following these explanations, there are questions for the planning committee or director to answer.

I. Belonging

Question	Response
Is there a cultural/traditional story about strengths or resilience that would be appropriate for this section?	
Is there a cultural/traditional story about diversity that would be appropriate for this section?	
Are there cultural/traditional norms for creating safety?	
Is there any community-specific current or historical information that the GONA/GOAN facilitators should know relevant to this theme?	



II. Mastery

Question	Response
Is there a cultural/traditional story about adversity or trauma that would be appropriate for this section? Alternatively, are there personal recovery or healing stories to include in this section?	
Is there a cultural/traditional story about resilience that would be appropriate for this section?	
Is there any community-specific current or historical information that the GONA/GOAN facilitators should know relevant to this theme?	

III. Interdependence

Question	Response
Have you completed a CSA? Is it up to date?	
Is lateral violence an issue that is impacting partnering efforts in your community?	
Is there any community-specific information that the GONA/GOAN facilitators should know relevant to this theme?	

IV. Generosity

Question	Response
If you have a SAP, has it been shared with the community?	
Is tribal leadership on board with the project?	



Is there any community-specific information that the GONA/GOAN facilitators should know relevant to this theme?

Summary

This guide should be used and completed by the advisory board or GONA/GOAN planning committee. Please consider the goals of your grant and your vision statement when planning a GONA/GOAN. Once completed share your responses with your GTA. Following discussion with your GTA, share this planning document with your Government Project Officer, and the GONA/GOAN facilitators.