Oshkigin Noojimo'iwe, Naŋi Wan Petu Un Ihduwaš'ake He Oyate Kiŋ Zaniwiçaye Kte, which roughly translates to the spirit that renews through fire heals the people in Ojibwe and Dakota languages, is the final report of the Towards Recognition and University-Tribal Healing (TRUTH) Project, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to research University-Tribal relations from an Indigenous perspective. Moving at a speed that fosters trust-building in the wake of irreparable harms, the TRUTH Project centers relationality and Indigeneity.

In partnership with the 11 recognized Tribes in Minnesota, TRUTH meets one of the calls in the June 2020 executive orders released by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (06262020-02 and 06262020-03).

Drawing on academic literature, financial, legislative and archival records, as well as Indigenous oral histories, this report highlights the ongoing struggle for recognition of Indigenous rights and sovereignty, focusing on persistent, systemic mistreatment of Indigenous peoples by the University of Minnesota.

**Findings indicate that institutional harm has taken many forms since 1851, including:**

**Genocide**
The Founding Board of Regents committed genocide and ethnic cleansing of Indigenous peoples for financial gain, using the institution as a shell corporation through which to launder lands and resources.

**Forced removal**
Members of the Founding Board of Regents used their positions in government to pass anti-Indigenous legislation that benefited them and the institution financially.

**Land expropriation**
The University of Minnesota has benefited from multiple land grabs. To date, TRUTH has mapped 186,791 acres of land that Congress granted Minnesota between 1851 and 1868.

**Wealth transfer and accumulation**
In addition, many resources have been extracted from land grab lands retained by the UMN, notably the timber and mining industries.

- The 2020 Permanent University Fund (PUF), which includes mineral leasing, timber, land sales, royalties on iron, etc. totaled: $591,119,846.
  - The PUF was investing in colonial municipalities from very early on in Minnesota’s history as a state. Those municipalities were able to use PUF money for capital projects, and they paid interest back into the PUF. This circulation of wealth did not benefit any of the Tribal Nations whose land those municipalities occupy today.
  - Without adjusting for inflation, the revenue created by iron and taconite mineral leases between 1890 and 2022 totaled $191,875,315.
  - Exploitation and commodification. Indigenous knowledge, culture and practices have been usurped without adequate acknowledgement. In addition, harmful research practices have been perpetrated by UMN faculty and researchers for nearly two centuries.

**Revisionist history**
The term “land grant” is a revisionist narrative that attempts to cover up the harm perpetrated against Indigenous peoples.

**Indigenous erasure**
The University of Minnesota has failed to adequately teach the correct history of this land, resulting in the perpetuation of a lack of knowledge of Tribal sovereignty, Indigenous rights, and benefits of diverse environments among UMN graduates and Regents alike.
In light of these findings, the institution must formally recognize the harm and genocide committed against Native American peoples, including the theft of language, culture, community, and land that has led to the depressed social determinants of well-being among Indigenous peoples including education, healthcare, and housing.

We call on the Board of Regents and University of Minnesota leadership to take concrete, meaningful, and measurable steps toward healing through a comprehensive approach that combines reparations, truth-telling, policy change, and transformative justice processes. This includes centering the perspectives and voices of Indigenous peoples, recognizing and respecting Indigenous sovereignty, providing resources and support for language and cultural revitalization, and ensuring access to healthcare and education.

The report concludes with detailed recommendations for university leadership in the following areas:

**Land Back**
The Board of Regents must commit to annual review and rematriation of Indigenous lands.

**Reparations in Perpetuity**
The Morrill Act stipulates that the Permanent University Fund must be held in perpetuity, as the beneficiary of perpetual wealth made from Indigenous genocide, UMN must commit to perpetual reparations to Indigenous peoples.

**Diverting PUF Streams**
Engage in economic justice, including committing part of the annual investment returns of the Permanent University Fund in a way that gives back to Native Americans, in perpetuity.

**Representation**
The Board of Regents must adopt measurable policies that remedy the lack of Indigenous representation in administration, tenure-track faculty, staff and students on all UMN campuses.

**Commitment to Education as Individual and Tribal Self-Determination**
Full cost of attendance waiver for all Indigenous peoples and descendants regardless of state of residence.

**Enact Policies that Respect Tribal Sovereignty and Cultural Heritage**
Board of Regents must enact new Indigenous Research policies that respect the sovereignty and treaty rights of Indigenous peoples. The Board must also call for Indigenous curriculum requirements for all degree programs so future graduates are prepared with this knowledge. UMN must also conduct a systemwide inventory of human remains and items related to Native American Cultural Heritage.

**Sites for Future Research**
Institutional commitments to fully funding research that continues to explore TRUTH and ways that UMN can be in better relation with Indigenous peoples.

**Meet Trust Obligations**
As a federal land grant institution, UMN has trust responsibilities to Indigenous peoples codified by law and upheld by the Supreme Court.

“This report’s name, Oshkigin Noojimo’iwe, Na’gi Wan’etu U’ndhuwa’ake He Oyate Ki’Zaniwiçaye Kte, is a call for a metaphorical burning of policies and practices that have been harming people and the land, a series of controlled burns that promote the transformation and renewal of the institutional landscape.”