

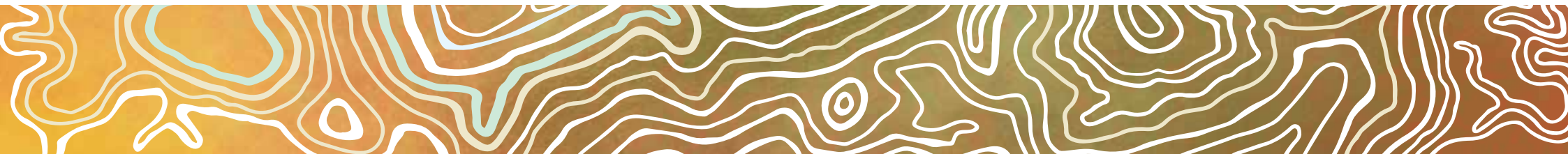


Museums & Galleries of NSW

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2024 – January 2026

**Museums
& Galleries
of NSW**



United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007

Article 31

1. *Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.*
2. *In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.*

Acknowledgment of Country

Museums & Galleries of NSW acknowledges the Gadigal and other Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We acknowledge all Aboriginal People of the lands on which we live and work as Traditional Custodians with continuing connection to land, waters, place and community while paying respect to their Elders past and present.

Front cover artwork and Museums & Galleries of NSW Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 24-26 document artwork: *Honouring Country* by Dennis Golding

Message from Brett Adlington, CEO

It is with great pride that Museums & Galleries of NSW introduces this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), our third RAP, and second Innovate RAP. Since I commenced in this position in March 2021, I have greatly valued the contributions from all staff in furthering reconciliation across the organisation, and the sector. Our increasingly regionally-based workforce works across a broad range of First Nations lands, and as such, are extending their learnings of First Nations cultures well beyond metropolitan Sydney. For me, it is an ever-increasing appreciation of the custodianship of the lands I live on by the Nyangbul people of the Bundjalung Nation.

We have found that having a RAP formalises our commitment and planning around prioritising First Nations cultures in all that we do. Embedding the RAP into our fortnightly team meetings, whereby our Aboriginal Programs Manager shares current First Nations stories in the media, keeps our conversations alive in this space, and encourages constant learning about the importance of supporting First Nations cultures. This learning will assist us in this next RAP to use our position as the Peak Body for museums and galleries across NSW to ensure that our sector is supported to further their reconciliation journeys. This will be achieved by building their capacity to establish respectful relationships with First Nations communities and enhance the way they care for and display First Nations cultural material.

The life of this RAP will see some big moments, both for the organisation and nationally. For the organisation, it is the progression of the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association Inc (ACHAA) to become a stand-alone Peak Body. M&G NSW has been supporting the transition of ACHAA to independence since its inception in 2014. Independence for ACHAA will mean a new way for M&G NSW to work with, and support First Nations culture and communities.

We see this RAP as a significant vehicle to build partnerships across the state so that together we foster a deep sense of recognition of the oldest continuous culture on earth.

Reconciliation Australia CEO Statement

Reconciliation Australia commends Museums & Galleries of NSW on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Museums and Galleries NSW continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,500 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Museums & Galleries of NSW will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Museums & Galleries of NSW using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Museums & Galleries of NSW to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Museums & Galleries of NSW will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Museums & Galleries of NSW's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Museums & Galleries of NSW on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Our vision for reconciliation

Museums & Galleries of NSW's vision for reconciliation is for the arts and cultural sector across New South Wales to have strong relationships with local Aboriginal Peoples. We will work to ensure that the sector we support prioritises First Nations cultures as being foundational to our understanding of art, culture and heritage. We believe valuing this understanding enriches the lives of all Australians.

We will commit to promoting to our sector that NSW Aboriginal peoples must have a role in determining how First Nations cultural heritage is collected, interpreted and displayed.

We will use our platform as a Peak Body for the small to medium museum and gallery sector to share resources, knowledge and programs that support the aspirations of Aboriginal communities across NSW. Initiatives such as ensuring our national touring exhibition program includes protocol documents for engaging with local First Nation communities (including specific budget to cover local First Nations engagement), and checklists for the volunteer sector to develop their own protocols will go some way to ensuring that the sector we work with assists these organisations on their own reconciliation journeys.

Our organisation continues to demonstrate leadership in highlighting First Nations cultural stories through our extensive communications channels, with the organisation taking a strong Yes position early in the campaign supporting the First Nations Voice to Parliament.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a timely document for M&G NSW, as it aligns with the transition of the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association Inc (ACHAA) to become a stand-alone Peak Body in 2024. This will be a moment for the organisation to establish a mutually beneficial working relationship with ACHAA, while still supporting the needs of the broader sector in advancing reconciliation goals.

Our business

Museums & Galleries of NSW is a service organisation primarily supported by the State Government of NSW. Our **Vision** is to Empower our sector to become vital hubs at the centre of their communities.

Our **Purpose** is to build the capacity of small to medium museums, galleries and Aboriginal cultural centres so they can maximise their impact on their communities.

We are an energetic and experienced team. From Board leadership, to our well-informed staff, extensive partnerships and sector and peer panel involvement; we bring a high degree of depth and understanding of the small to medium museum, gallery and Aboriginal cultural sectors. This expertise assists us as we work to build capacity across the sector.

Our 12 staff (2 of whom identify as Aboriginal people) fully acknowledge that First Nations led arts and cultural expression is an essential representation of our society, and that self-determination is a central and defining element in recognition of an ongoing Aboriginal presence in New South Wales.

We support a sector of 500+ small to medium museums, galleries and Aboriginal cultural centres. The small museum sector is largely volunteer-led. As a service organisation and peak body, we are seen by the government, and the sector, as the primary organisation supporting this diverse sector. We deliver an active touring exhibition program (with national reach); run a suite of professional development opportunities; advocate on behalf of the sector; provide advice and support to organisations on all matters relating to museum and gallery practice and conduct research for the sector. We therefore have an extensive sphere of influence to enact some actions as part of this Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our office is located in The Rocks, Sydney, however a number of staff, including the CEO, are based in regional NSW and the greater Sydney region. This ensures our organisation maintains a good understanding of the challenges and opportunities for regional organisations and communities, while also bringing a broader awareness and connection with various First Nations communities across NSW.

Our RAP

This is Museums & Galleries of NSW's third RAP, and our second Innovate RAP, which has become a vital vehicle for our organisation to monitor progress in areas supporting First Nations peoples, particularly, in our case, in supporting the Aboriginal arts, culture and heritage sectors. Our role as a service organisation ensures that having a RAP as part of our strategic direction, advances our advocacy and support of First Nations cultures, embedding this across our programs.

Our previous RAP was implemented 8 years ago and was more internally focused, supporting staff on a journey of better understanding, and appreciation of First Nations cultures. Much of this work has been led by the organisations Aboriginal Programs Manager, Steve Miller. We now feel we are ready to build on this and use our learnings to encourage more of the sector to embark on their own reconciliation journeys.

Part of our learning journey is supporting the transition of the Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Heritage Association (ACHAA) away from M&G NSW to become a standalone Peak Body supporting Aboriginal cultural heritage organisations across NSW. ACHAA will become financially independent of M&G NSW in 2024.

Once ACHAA is independent of M&G NSW, we will formalise our relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding so that this organisation will be our primary consultative organisation. The MOU will also detail collaborative programs and opportunities for M&G NSW to support ACHAA members through initiatives such as existing funding programs and professional development opportunities.

M&G NSW also has a Peer Panel of industry representatives guiding us on a range of activities including grants assessments, award judging and sector feedback. We have been intentionally increasing representation of First Nations peoples on to this panel over the past 18 months.

We are a small organisation of 12 staff, and the greatest impact our previous RAP has had on the organisation is the embedding of a RAP agenda item in our fortnightly team meetings. This agenda item highlights current stories, events and issues such as legal, education, health, land claims, environment, politics, treaties and the Voice to Parliament. While it covers national topics, there is a focus on NSW-based cultural activity and artists. It is compiled and delivered by our Aboriginal Programs Manager, and subsequently shared via email to all staff, Board members and previous staff of the organisation. Recently we have taken a story highlight and included in a dedicated section of our fortnightly e-news letter to the sector, received by 4,700 subscribers

This regular discussion is embedding awareness for all staff about what First Nations communities are currently achieving, and challenges being faced. This has ensured a much deeper understanding of the complexities of our shared histories, with strategies being employed by staff to further our reconciliation journey.

Following on from the above, a First Nations-led touring exhibition, *Void*, was developed and toured from 2019 to 2022. An aspect of this tour involved an artwork that needed to be installed by an Aboriginal person from the Country on which the exhibition was being staged. In the development of this tour, non-Indigenous staff became aware of the lack of connection between some host galleries and their local First Nations communities. Strategies were employed to seek to develop this connection, which have now become embedded into all of our touring programs. Further, staff also took the initiative to contract Artists in the Black (Arts Law Centre) to review touring exhibition contract template to ensure the cultural needs of First Nations artists are adequately met.

Recently there have also been instances whereby non-Indigenous M&G NSW staff have shared cultural learnings with sector peers, including a national funding body, who are now including Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) guidelines in their funding applications.

However, we work in a very diverse sector. A key challenge for our organisation is ensuring that First Nations cultural materials housed in non-Indigenous organisations and collections are cared for in ethical ways and in consultation with their First Nations communities. This predominantly volunteer led sector often lacks the resources to take carriage of this important work. The *National Standards for Museums and Galleries* has specific objectives to address this, which has been based on work done by First Nations consultants and using *First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts and First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries* as guiding documents. M&G NSW staff were involved in the consultation on both of these key documents. Our organisation will also be working with ACHAA to support a pilot project to work with small museums to improve engagement with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

M&G NSW's CEO, Brett Adlington, is the organisation's RAP champion. He has been leading in the development of this RAP, in close collaboration with the organisations Aboriginal Programs Manager/ACHAA General Manager, Steve Miller.

As a small organisation, all staff are on our RAP Working Group. This ensures ownership of RAP Actions, and the integration of these Actions and associated deliverables into their workplans.

The RAP Working Group consists of:

Brett Adlington, Chief Executive Officer (RAP Champion)

Steve Miller (Wiradjuri): Aboriginal Culture, Heritage and Arts Association
General Manager (and formerly M&G NSW Aboriginal Programs Manager)

Melissa Abraham (Gamilaroi), Aboriginal Programs Coordinator (ACHAA)

Susan Wachter, Funding & Programs Manager

Olivia Welch, Exhibitions Manager

Ashleigh Reardon, Exhibitions Coordinator

Emily Cullen, Sector Development Manager

Alice Norwood, Museums Coordinator

Jason Gee, Communications Manager

Victoria Cleland, Communications Coordinator

Dale Maxwell-Smith, Training & Engagement Manager

John Thompson, Finance and Administration Manager

Museums & Galleries of NSW Board of Management (January 2024):

Ray Christison (Chair)
Susi Muddiman OAM (Deputy Chair)
Phil Gordon (Gooreng /Gooreng)
Kylie Tung
Tamara Hynd

Judy Jaeger
Suzanne Cotter
Danny Yap
John Thompson (M&G NSW Finance Manager and
Company Secretary)

ABBREVIATIONS

ACHAA	Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Heritage Association
AMAGA	Australian Museums and Galleries Association
M&G NSW	Museums & Galleries of NSW
NAIDOC	Originally the acronym for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week, and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself. NAIDOC Week celebrates the histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
NRW	National Reconciliation Week
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
RAP champions	Internal and external stakeholders working with M&G NSW to prepare and implement this RAP
RWG	Reconciliation Working Group
ICIP	Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

LANGUAGE DISCLAIMER

As a NSW based cultural organisation, also working in partnership with ACHAA (Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association Inc) our collective focus is on supporting NSW-based Aboriginal communities and cultural practice. As such we have intentionally chosen the terms 'Aboriginal'; 'First Nations' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' to denote specific communities, peoples and cultural heritage being referred to in that specific instance.

CASE STUDIES:

ACHAA (NSW Aboriginal Culture Heritage & Arts Association)

At the 2011 NSW Summit of Aboriginal Arts and Keeping Places, hosted by Museums & Galleries of NSW, the formation of a standalone Aboriginal-led peak body was identified as a top priority for Aboriginal cultural centres and keeping places across NSW. By 2014, the NSW Aboriginal Culture Heritage & Arts Association (ACHAA) was established, with a Purpose to ‘support a network of Aboriginal culture, language, heritage and arts organisations that are located in NSW, so they can be resilient and locally sustainable’.

Since that time, M&G NSW has provided secretariat support for the organisation, including providing staffing, office space, and other resources.

Today, with 21 Members and 23 Associate Members, and as a member of the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations, ACHAA is well on the way to full independence.

As outlined in this RAP, M&G NSW and ACHAA will develop a Memorandum of Understanding to map how each organisation can continue collaborating on initiatives such as including the *ACHAA Award for Excellence by an Aboriginal Curator* as part of M&G NSW’s IMAGinE Awards; developing an ACHAA member touring exhibition as well as ACHAA providing cultural advice to M&G NSW. This will ensure that the cultural needs of the sector are met as ACHAA becomes a standalone, independent organisation.



ACHAA members at the ACHAA Yarrawarra Conference. Photo by Marly Morgan.



ACHAA members at the ACHAA Yarrawarra Conference. Photo by Marly Morgan.

VOID

Void explored the multiple ways in which First Nations artists visually articulate the unknown as space, time and landscape. Curated by Emily McDaniel, a curator, writer and educator from the Kalari Clan of the Wiradjuri Nation in central New South Wales, *Void* was presented in conjunction with UTS Gallery and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery. *Void* travelled 12,450km to 8 venues and reached 78,731 visitors in regions across 5 states and territories. The tour began on Wiradjuri Country at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery and concluded at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, returning to Wiradjuri Country.

Access was increased through significant resources developed by First Nations educators and academics, including a learning resource, a mediation handbook, artwork labels, a free take-home publication, and an Education Symposium that brought all of the forward tour venues together to discuss bringing this significant exhibition onto local Country, and how to engage communities through consultation and education. The artists and curator were supported where possible to present public programs and attend public forums, further increasing access. At each location artist Hayley Millar-Baker's *Meeyn Meerreeng (Country at Night)* was placed by local First Nations installers who held a relationship with the Country the gallery operated within, allowing local landscapes, knowledge and histories to become imbedded in each iteration.

Through the meaningful conversations and connections that came out of touring *Void*, as

well as through supporting galleries with public programming, community consultation and contracting local First Nations installers over the three-year tour, the need for well-financed opportunities for galleries and museums to engage with local people on Country in ways that extend consultation into participation, employment, and leadership became clear. Learnings gleaned from *Void* have significantly informed our budgets and approach to creating community connections in subsequent tours and programs.

An exhibition curated by Emily McDaniel, in conjunction with UTS Gallery and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, presented nationally by Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program, and through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

"I still talk about the Education Symposium in Bathurst of 2019 and how it informed not only programming for Void but all programming I have done since! The Symposium was like nothing I had ever experienced and allowed me to gain such a deep understanding on how to be inclusive and respectful of all First Nations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with events and programming. The consultation and respect were so highly evident within the exhibition at Bathurst. The Yarning Circles were at times confronting, always meaningful and deepened my listening. It was such a wonderful experience to be a part of these with the Elders on Wiradjuri Country, and to be taken on Country on the final day."
Suzie Luke, Acting Inclusive Communities Officer, Reconciliation, Bendigo Art Gallery

"The whole Void exhibition is so profound. It provided a visual opportunity for me to further explain Australian history to my son. Thank you."
Visitor comments, Newcastle Art Gallery

"Beautiful work combined with a wise and powerful message" Visitor comments, Bathurst Regional Art Gallery



Hayley Millar-Baker, *Meeyn Meerreeng (Country at Night)*, 2017. Installed in *Void*, curated by Emily McDaniel, at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, VIC. UTS Indigenous Residential College Collection, donated by the artist through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2023. Photo by Vanessa Low.

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery's iteration of *Meeyn Meerreeng (Country at Night)* was installed by Emily McDaniel, an independent curator, writer and educator from the Kalari Clan of the Wiradjuri nation in central NSW, and was deinstalled by Aleshia Lonsdale, a Wiradjuri woman from Mudgee in Central Western NSW who works as a visual artist, arts worker and curator based in regional NSW.



Void Education participants form a circle around Hayley Millar-Baker's *Meeyn Meerreeng (Country at Night)*, 2017. Installed in *Void*, curated by Emily McDaniel, at Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, 2019. Courtesy the artist and Vivien Anderson Gallery, VIC. UTS Indigenous Residential College Collection, donated by the artist through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program, 2023. Photo by Vanessa Low.

OCCURRENT AFFAIR

OCCURRENT AFFAIR is a major exhibition featuring works by Brisbane-established Aboriginal artist collective proppaNOW. They present a unique and controversial perspective of black Australia which is sometimes confronting and always thought provoking. First exhibited at The University of Queensland Art Museum (UQ Art Museum), *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* was conceived as a collaborative activist gesture that addresses current socio-political, economic and environmental issues, while celebrating the strength, resilience and continuity of Aboriginal culture. The artists represented in this exhibition are Vernon Ah Kee, Tony Albert, Richard Bell, Megan Cope, Jennifer Herd, Gordon Hookey and the late Laurie Nilsen.

The professional development and public programming offered in conjunction with the *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* tour have been developed in partnership with UQ Art Museum, proppaNOW, and First Nations educators and collaborators from FLENK Collective. These resources include an education resource, a mediation handbook, an academic reader, extensive labels,

and an Education Symposium looking at the themes of the work, as well as considerations when presenting work from one Country on another Country. The budget includes support for local Aboriginal consultation, a Welcome to Country contribution, fees for First Nations people to lead public programs, and bursaries for the venues to send First Nations and education staff and collaborators to the symposium. The public programs include Tony Albert's participatory mural *Terra Nullius (with Scrooge)*, which is an instructional mural to be painted by the local community, under the guidance of a First Nations group or artist, and Richard Bell's *Embassy*, which is being erected as a space for people on Country to speak, create and educate.

An exhibition from The University of Queensland Art Museum touring with Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. This project is assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.



OCCURRENT AFFAIR Education Symposium participants with works by proppaNOW artists Gordon Hookey, Richard Bell, Tony Albert, and Jennifer Herd. Installed in proppaNOW, *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* at NAS Gallery, National Art School, 2023. Courtesy of the artists, Collection of The University of Queensland, and FireWorks Gallery, Brisbane. Photo by Jacquie Manning.



OCCURRENT AFFAIR Education Symposium participant with Megan Cope's *Deadwood*, 2021. Installed in proppaNOW, *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* at NAS Gallery, National Art School, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Photo by Jacquie Manning.



OCCURRENT AFFAIR Education Symposium participants with Megan Cope's *Nyanba tahbiylbanjara gnanany* (*He knew his saltwater country*), 2019 and *Bated Breath*, 2021. Installed in proppaNOW, *OCCURRENT AFFAIR* at NAS Gallery, National Art School, 2023. Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Photo by Jacquie Manning.



DENNIS GOLDING | POWER – The Future is Here

Curated by Malera Bandjolan, Mitakoodi woman Kyra Kum-Sing, this project brings together two exhibitions, *POWER* from Blacktown Arts and *The Future is Here* from Carriageworks, to form a singular education-focused, Aboriginal-led tour encouraging communities to reflect upon local heroes and empower young people. The artworks are the result of a collaboration between Kamilaroi/Gamilaraay artist Dennis Golding and First Nations students from Alexandria Park Community School through the Solid Ground program. This national tour is accompanied by a substantial educational program.

The tour is highly adaptable with the ability to reach audiences regionally and remotely. It can be scaled to suit state-of-the-art cultural institutions, smaller volunteer run museums, and the diverse spaces within Aboriginal cultural centres. The tour includes an instructional making video featuring the artist, an education resource has been written by, Dharawal Visual Artist and Educator Jaz Corr, and a consultation guide developed with Artists in the Black (Arts Law).

An online symposium took place to connect venues with the engagement potential of the exhibition, and to allow time to prepare for appropriate consultation and seek local learning partnerships. Jaz Corr presented the Education Resource and venues shared opportunities and experiences.

A Solid Ground project with Dennis Golding and Alexandria Park Community School, curated by Kyra Kum-Sing, presented by Carriageworks and Blacktown Arts, and touring with Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.

Dennis Golding | *POWER - The Future is Here*, curated by Kyra Kum-Sing, install view at Wagga Wagga Art Gallery, 2023-2024. Image courtesy Wagga Wagga Art Gallery.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR AUSTRALIAN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES 2.0

As the NSW representatives of the National Standards Taskforce, M&G NSW has played a crucial role in the comprehensive redevelopment of the *National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries 2.0*. The impetus for this overhaul came in 2021 when the Taskforce secured funding from The Ian Potter Foundation, enabling a substantial update of the standards. This endeavour was driven by the need to address significant shifts in ideology and museum practices that had transpired since the release of the original version in 2008.

The update, encompassing diverse areas such as accessibility, inclusion, sustainability, and digital engagement, aimed to reflect the evolving landscape of the museum sector. Notably, the task of embedding First Peoples engagement throughout the Standards took precedence, aligning with the principles outlined in *First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Representation in Museums and Galleries*.

To bring this vision to fruition, the Taskforce enlisted the expertise of Donna Biles Fernando, a woman of the Muruari and Ngemba people, and Debbie Abraham. Together, they were commissioned to spearhead a nationwide consultative project known as *(re) Mapping National Standards Pathways*. This initiative served as the cornerstone for seamlessly integrating the First Peoples' Roadmap into the fabric of the National Standards, marking a significant stride towards fostering First Peoples representation in museums and galleries across Australia.

M&G NSW have integrated this new focus into our Standards Review Program, ensuring that this important information becomes part of the operations of organisations throughout the sector.



Smoking Ceremony performed by proud Yuin man, Nathan Lygon, Regional & Public Galleries Conference 2023.
Photo: David Rogers Photography

Relationships

Our organisations Purpose is to support and build the capacity of small to medium arts and cultural organisations across New South Wales. As such, a commitment to, and understanding of First Nations cultures and cultural heritage material is vitally important. This is achieved through building relationships with First Nations artists and cultural and community-based organisations to inform delivery of our exhibitions touring program, professional development activities, sector enquiries and broader sector support.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal stakeholders and organisations.	• Ensure increased and diversified representation of First Nations cultural workers through specific invitation to the M&G NSW peer Panel.	June 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Develop local engagement protocols for touring programs (multiple regions state-wide).	December 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Ensure that there is a fee for local consultation built in to budgets for touring projects to develop lasting relationships	December 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Meet with local Aboriginal stakeholders to develop guiding principles for future engagement, including developing MOU to maintain formalised relationship with Aboriginal Arts, Culture and Heritage Association (ACHAA) when it becomes standalone Peak Body with aims to inform strategic direction of M&G NSW	March 2024	CEO (lead) / ACHAA General Manager (Support)
	• At independence of ACHAA, develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal stakeholders and organisations	May 2024	CEO
	• Facilitate an annual donation opportunity and meeting with a First Nations organisation, in partnership with other tenants in the Arts Exchange building (M&G NSW office space with other cultural organisations)	December 2024/ 2025	CEO
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Share latest Reconciliation Australia's materials to all staff and Board in lead up to NRW	April 2024/2025	Communications Manager
	• Organise at least one NRW event each year	27 May- 3 June 2024/2025	CEO
	• Register relevant M&G NSW programs/touring exhibitions on NRW website and potentially align openings and programs with NRW	May 2024/ 2025	Exhibitions Manager
	• Promote to sector via <i>Alert</i> opportunity to list their NRW events on NRW website	May 2024/ 2025	Communications Manager


Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly RAP of current issues/stories delivered to all staff at team meetings and shared via email with Board members and former M&G NSW staff 	Fortnightly (Review June 2024/2025)	ACHAA General Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel for all staff to share and discuss relevant reconciliation articles and issues 	August 2023	CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of induction process, direct new staff to this RAP, RA website, and <u>Share our Pride</u> website 	Review June 2024/2025	Finance Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote new M&G NSW RAP through Alert and social media 	February 2024	Communications Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List M&G NSW RAP on M&G NSW website 	February 2024	Communications Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include dedicated section in <i>Alert</i> to stories pertaining to NSW Aboriginal cultures and opportunities. 	Fortnightly (Review June 2024/2025)	Communications Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly commit the Organisation to supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart 	June 2023	Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an enhanced staff engagement strategy to continue raising awareness of reconciliation across our workforce 	April 2024	CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly: Promote our RAP when finalised; through dedicated First Nations stories in our e-news; highlighting staff activity for First Nations related events 	December 2024/2025	Communications Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes including through professional development opportunities, touring programs and communications. 	December 2024/2025	CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with RAP organisations and other-like minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation including through National Exhibition Touring Support (NETS) collaboration 	March 2024/2025	CEO

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	• Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs	September 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation	April 2024	CEO
	• Engage with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	December 2024	CEO
	• Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	September 2024	CEO
	• Utilise our First Nations touring exhibition program and associated First Nations programs to advance reconciliation through partner organisations and audiences	December 2023/2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Ensure that the relevant protocols are included in all our grant guidelines: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Australia Council Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts</u> 2. <u>Create NSW Aboriginal Arts and Culture Protocols</u> 	July 2024	Funding & Programs Manager
Promote active engagement with Aboriginal communities across our stakeholder base	• Meet with Aboriginal cultural centre or community organisation if available as part of annual regional Board trip	September 2024/2025	CEO
	• Provision for at least 1 staff member annually to attend ACHAA conference	May 2024/2025	CEO

Respect

Respecting First Nations cultures, including its material heritage cultures and contemporary expressions of visual culture, underpins everything Museums & Galleries of NSW does. Our previous RAP's have deepened staff knowledge and understanding of the legacies of colonisation, and the vital role First Nations cultural heritage plays in maintaining culture. In this RAP, we are seeking to extend this awareness more broadly across the sector that we are charged with supporting.



Focus Area: 'Respect for First Nations peoples and their right to cultural ownership and more generally for the diversity of opinion and knowledge' is our organisations first value as outlined in our Strategic Plan, and as such, is an important element with in this RAP, and our broader program of activity.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	• Complete a fortnightly Cultural update, with a focus on NSW cultural projects provided to staff as part of team meetings	December 2024/2025	ACHAA General Manager
	• Engage Terri Janke and Company to hold workshop for staff and Board in enhancing understanding, and implementation of protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts and <i>First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries</i>	June, 2024	CEO
	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	December 2024	CEO
	• Consult local Aboriginal Traditional Owners or advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy	July 2024	CEO
	• Implement, review and evaluate the effectiveness of our cultural learning strategy	September 2024	CEO
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	• Build in to induction process provision for new staff to be fully aware of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	June 2024	CEO
	• Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols and fee for service for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	August 2024	Communications Manager
	• Invite a local Aboriginal Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	December 2024/2025	Training & Engagement Manager
	• Invite staff to have option to work on 26 January public holiday for time in lieu and highlight local Survival Day events to attend	January 2024/2025	CEO
	• Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	December 2024/2025	CEO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure M&G NSW continues membership of Indigenous Art Code, which provides fair and ethical treatment of First Nations artists. • Update our well used Acknowledgment to Country resource • Include Acknowledgment of Country on email signature (staff decision), website, and corporate documents 	December 2024/2025	Finance Manager
		October 2024	Communication Manager
		December 2024/2025	All staff as relevant
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. 	November, 2023	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and ensure participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. 	First week July 2024/2025	All staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to align touring exhibition program events and openings with NAIDOC week 	June 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage sector to list NAIDOC events on NAIDOC website and share 	First week July 2024/2025	Communications Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share sector NAIDOC activities through Alert 	First week July 2024/2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share relevant article from <i>Storyplace</i> through Alert 	First week July 2024/2025	
Increase understanding of best practice related to First Nations art and cultural heritage by sector and general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Aboriginal arts and culture through our national touring program and record number of projects, events and audiences as part of our agreed KPIs with Create NSW 	December 2024/2025	Exhibitions Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build in (re)Mapping National Standards Pathways into future delivery of revised Standards Program so that organisations are better equipped to ethically care for First Nations cultural heritage 	April 2024	Sector Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop simple checklist and resource linked to our well used <i>Acknowledgment to Country</i> resource to support smaller organisations on their reconciliation journey 	December 2024	Training & Engagement Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Webinar on above resource 	April 2024	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop relevant partnerships for M&G NSW to support First Nations-led cultural projects 	August 2024	CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with ACHAA to support a pilot project to work with small museums to improve engagement with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage 	September 2024	Sector Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue supporting ACHAA awards within annual IMAGinE Awards 	June 2024/2025	Training & Engagement Manager

Opportunities

Museums & Galleries of NSW are committed to expanding opportunities for First Nations peoples to be actively engaged with the arts and cultural sector in NSW. As a Peak Body, we will demonstrate leadership to the small to medium museum and gallery sectors through advancing training opportunities for First Nations cultural workers. Developing resources and learning avenues for the sector will also enhance opportunities for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across NSW.

This RAP will also see the transition of the Aboriginal Culture, Heritage & Arts Association Inc (ACHAA) to independence. This will provide a unique opportunity for M&G NSW to investigate how it works with and supports Aboriginal cultural centres and communities across the state, while also being mindful of the role of ACHAA as being a First Nations-led organisation working with many of the same organisations. We will ensure a formal, mutually beneficial relationship with ACHAA is established.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention, and professional development.	• Develop MOU with ACHHA at time of independence to include strategies to continue Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	March 2024	CEO
	• Develop case studies of successful models from sector of increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment including Elders in Residence and Curatorial positions	June, 2024	Training & Engagement Manager
	• Develop resource on successful models of increasing First Nations employment	July 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Include a paid Internship position as part of ACHAA exhibition tour	January 2024	Exhibitions Manager
	• Maintain KPI target as part of Create NSW funding supporting payment of First Nations artists and arts workers through our programs	April 2024/2025	CEO
	• Review Placement Program to offer First Nations training options (either through additional funding and/or dedicated places)	August 2024	Training & Engagement Manager
	• Ensure all recruitment activities provide equal opportunities for First Nations people to apply	July 2024/2025	Finance Manager
	• Review Contracts so that Aboriginal staff have additional Cultural leave provisions	November 2024	CEO
	• Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	April 2024	CEO
	• Engage with First Nations staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	April 2024	CEO
Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Develop and implement a First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	June 2024	CEO
	• All staff to utilise Supply Nation as part of all quote processes	December 2024/2025	Finance Manager
	• Promote Supply Nation to the sector through Alert	March 2024	Communications Manager
	• Tour exhibition of artwork from ACHAA members and encourage increased commercial avenues for sale of work	June 2025	Exhibitions Manager
	• Develop online resource to encourage and support the sector in ethically stocking First Nations art and design in museum and gallery shops to align with ACHAA tour	October 2024	Communications Manager

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain First Nations representation on the RWG.	June 2024/2025	CEO
	• Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2024	CEO
	• Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	March, June, Sept, Dec, 2023/2024	CEO
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Budget provided for staff trips and training needs	March 2024/2025	Finance Manager
	• Maintain CEO as the RAP Champion	June 2024/2025	CEO
	• Develop RAP reporting template for all staff to use to assist in reporting and inclusion in M&G NSW Annual Review	September 2024	CEO
	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation	September 2023	CEO
	• Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	August 2024/2025	CEO
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	1 August 2024/2025	CEO
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August 2024/2025	CEO
	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September annually	CEO
	• Report RAP progress to all staff and Board	March, June, August, November, 2024/2025	CEO
	• Publicly report on RAP progress through the Annual Review	April 2024/2025	CEO
	• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	CEO
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	August 2025	CEO
	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	April 2025	CEO
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	April 2025	CEO

Credits

VOID:

An exhibition curated by Emily McDaniel, in conjunction with UTS Gallery and Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, presented nationally by Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program, and through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.



OCCURRENT AFFAIR:

An exhibition from The University of Queensland Art Museum touring with Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. This project is assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.



DENNIS GOLDING | POWER – The Future is Here:

A Solid Ground project with Dennis Golding and Alexandria Park Community School, curated by Kyra Kum-Sing, presented by Carriageworks and Blacktown Arts, and touring with Museums & Galleries of NSW. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government's Visions of Australia program.



Contact details

Name: Brett Adlington

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Phone: 0439 027 149

Email: bretta@mgnsw.org.au

