

SCIENCE GALLERY



NGALURI — FLAMES

SCIENCE GALLERY
MELBOURNE
**FIRST PEOPLES CULTURAL
FRAMEWORK 2020–2025**



INDIGI LAB PTY. LTD.

Email: info@indigilab.com.au

Ph: 0407773259

For Science Gallery Melbourne

Email: info@melbourne.sciencegallery.com

Ph: 03 9035 8199

Copyright © Science Gallery Melbourne

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise). Without the prior written permission of Science Gallery Melbourne.

During 2019, INDIGI LAB conducted surveys and critically analysed reports and reviews of public and private sector peak Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations and Individuals associations across the museums and galleries sector, as well as internal staff and key stakeholders to develop a First Peoples Framework specific for SGM. An initial Discussion Paper was developed to support a First Peoples Framework for SGM to guide better engagement with First Nations Peoples. Key Stakeholders were invited to consider the ideas and aspirations in the discussion paper and provide input. Views were sought on the following key themes:

- Building strong relationships
- Community protocols
- Guidelines for Indigenous curatorial practices

Feedback on each of these themes was sought via an online questionnaire on the SGM website for public comment and further distributed to key SGM First Peoples stakeholders. A roundtable workshop was facilitating with UoM First Peoples stakeholders and the Discussion Paper was discussed with the Melbourne Connect Indigenous Narrative Committee and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee.

Science Gallery Melbourne thank Luke Briscoe and INDIGILAB for generously developing this framework, and Zena Cumpston for The Story of Place.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we work, the Boonwurrung, Wurundjeri and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples and the Yorta Yorta nation. We pay our respects to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other First Nations people this document may come across.

We also acknowledge the existing work in the sector by First Nations communities, organisations and government agencies that have contributed to developing protocols and building relationships.

THE STORY OF PLACE

Less than fifty metres from the site of Science Gallery Melbourne, on the University of Melbourne Parkville campus, a creek runs under the concrete. This creek was once an important part of the ecosystem of the Birrarung (Yarra). Often referred to as Bouverie Creek, River Townend and Williams Creek, it originated somewhere to the north near the Melbourne Cemetery in Royal Park and ran through the university and down what is now Bouverie St, joining with the Elizabeth St waterway which stretched down into the Birrarung (Yarra River).

The Bouverie Creek was perhaps considered an impediment to 'improvement', an unruly inconvenience serving to undermine popular colonial ideas of progress and the dominance of man over nature. As the city of Melbourne grew, the rate of modifications to its landscapes and waterways expanded and quickened. In 1861, a short time after the founding of the University of Melbourne, an ornamental lake was engineered as a means to drain the 'swampy' Bouverie Creek. Like many of the ephemeral streams, swamps, creeks and rivers which were once dotted all over what is now our city centre, this creek was covered over, negated, annulled, denied. This creek was once a vital part of the Wurundjeri world and the ecosystem of the mighty Birrarung, acting as a lung to clean and renew, a pathway, a water source for all living things, a place of abundance, teeming life. Now concrete. The Bouverie Creek now only exists as an underground watercourse. Eels are still seen at times using this underground highway, seasonally moving through the drains of the University.

The presence of this waterway would have provided important resources for the Wurundjeri people, such as fish, yabbies, prawns, eels, frogs, echidnas, possums, swamp rats, bandicoots, brush turkey, stubble quail, snakes, lizards and emu. Many plants from this area would also have provided staple foods, such as tubers, corms, stems, fruit, pith, leaves and seeds. Near this site, at Royal Park, it is documented that Wurundjeri people camped and held cultural business such as dances, making it likely food sources here were abundant. The grassy plains and eucalypt woodland which formed the landscape of this site would have made it a plentiful hunting ground as well as well-traversed Country with waterways often used as convenient pathways of travel. The waterways which stretch all over the lands of the Kulin Nations are cultural landscapes which symbolise lifeblood, with water intrinsically bound to the cultural and spiritual identity of all Aboriginal peoples.

Just like the nearby waterway, the women's hospital which was once on this site has been covered over. Whilst the cultural landscape of this site may be hidden, it is still very much present. Country holds her stories and this has been a place of both great joy and undoubtedly, much pain. It has been a significant women's place since Invasion, and we must respectfully remember this site as a cultural landscape which cannot be erased, no matter how significant the aesthetic interventions and modifications may be.

Science Gallery Melbourne acknowledges this site as a Wurundjeri place, full of millennia of cultural histories and belonging, and also as a site of complex, overlapping histories in more recent times. We pay our respect to Wurundjeri peoples who continue today to care for Country and fulfil their custodial responsibilities. We also pay respect to the many women who passed through this place in its recent life as the Women's Hospital. We respectfully begin the new story of this place, remembering its belonging. We welcome this new beginning, and hope it will again be a place of much abundance, teeming life, as the nearby waterway once ensured.

"We respectfully begin the new story of the place, remembering its belonging. We welcome the new story of place, and hope it will again be a place of much abundance"

Zena Cumpston, Barkandji Research Fellow

SCIENCE GALLERY MELBOURNE'S FIRST PEOPLES' CULTURAL FRAMEWORK

THE VISION

Science Gallery Melbourne is strongly committed to ensuring that First Nations Peoples and cultures are respected and recognised as a vital part of a vibrant and accessible arts and science community. First Nations knowledge, culture and science are crucial to multiple aspects of SGM's practice, including public engagement, education and employment opportunities. Indigenous peoples have been amazingly adaptive and creative with new media technologies, applying them to their own ways of life and maintaining cultural boundaries rather than simply assimilating into the dominant social order. Indigenous communities that survived the cataclysmic forces of nature and invasion are now telling their stories and constructing new forms of cultural power in the digital age and knowledge economy.

It is the duty of all Australian citizens to acknowledge the mistakes of the past and recognise a history that includes First Nations Australians. SGM therefore aims to include First Nations knowledge and science in multiple aspects of our practice, including our public exhibitions, events and education programs, while further providing opportunities for Indigenous scientists, cultural practitioners and artists to contribute and participate as part of the Science Gallery team.

Our vision for the Framework is to also contribute to a sustainable, vibrant and culturally respectful museum and galleries sector, one that gives First Nations People of Australia and throughout the world the Right to Self-Determine.

We will achieve our objectives by:

- Cultivating a respect of First Nations Cultures and Peoples.
- Build lasting relationships with First Nations Peoples.
- Create meaningful opportunities for First Nations Peoples.

WHY A FIRST PEOPLES FRAMEWORK?

A First Nations Framework will help guide our engagement with Indigenous communities locally and across the globe. It is designed to ensure we act responsibly and for the needs of all Indigenous people and communities who we are collaborating and working with. The guidelines are to enable all staff to understand, value and respect Indigenous perspectives. This resource is a living document that will reflect current community protocols and social norms as our understanding of culture is always changing and we want our framework to reflect the true needs of the communities it is intended to serve.

These guidelines apply to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander projects including research activities relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections. In the Australian context, research has generally been defined as 'investigation undertaken to gain knowledge and understanding' and casts a wide net in terms of what constitutes research. Research includes not only academic research carried out in and by universities and publicly funded research agencies, but also archival research, evaluation, quality assurance, social marketing, government policy and program design, and re-use of data for public policy and clinical trials, among others.

WHO SHOULD USE THE FIRST NATIONS FRAMEWORK?

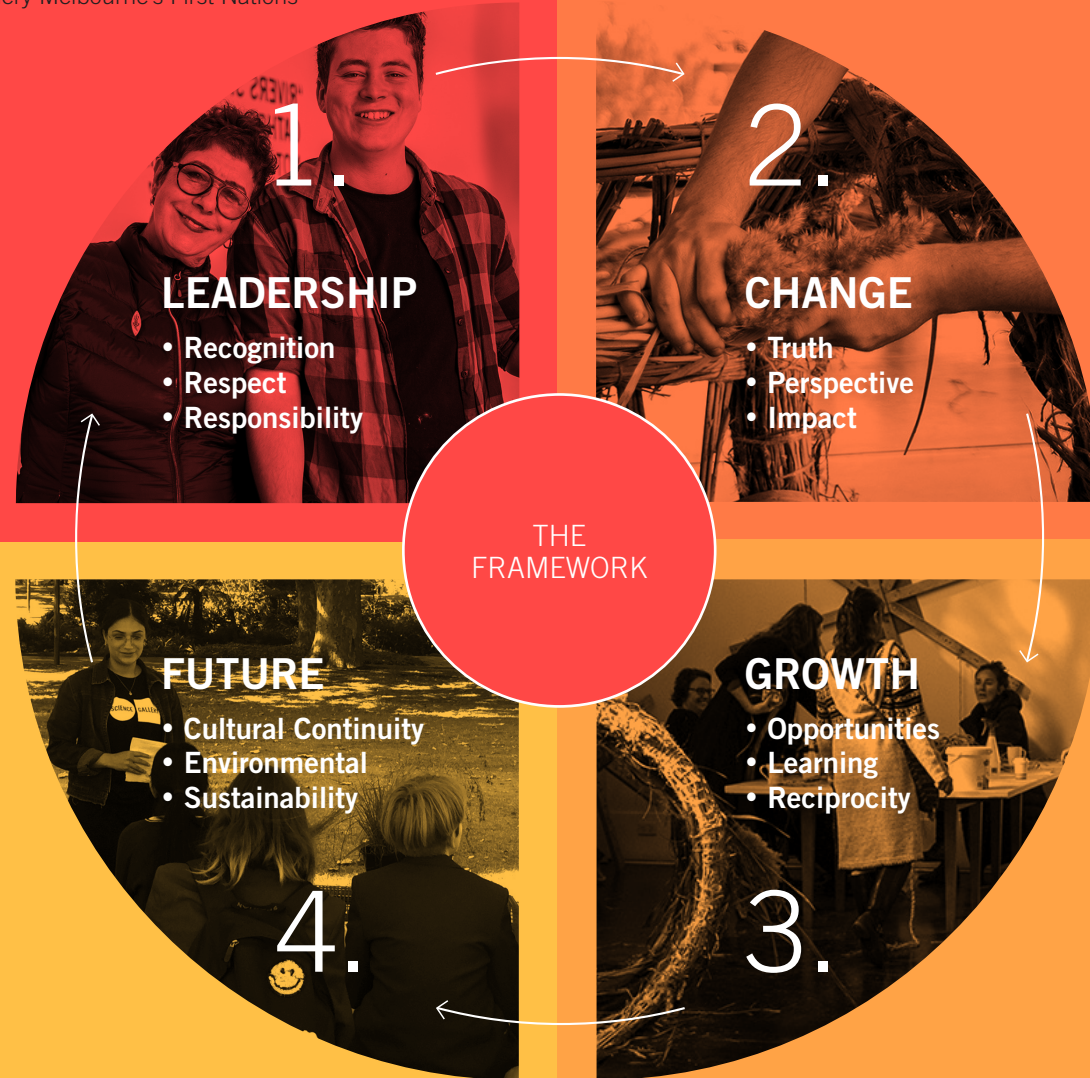
The Framework and Guiding Principles are intended for use by:

- All Science Gallery Melbourne staff.
- Science Gallery contractors and collaborators.
- Members of the Global Science Gallery Network.
- Government agencies and government statutory bodies.



THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Four guiding principles form the core of Science Gallery Melbourne's First Nations Framework:



1. LEADERSHIP

First Peoples perspectives are the catalyst for SGM to promote a deeper understanding and respect for First Nations cultures, science and ways of knowing. SGM aims to take a leading role in the Museums, Galleries and Science Communication sectors to improve the recognition and respect for First Nations Australians. SGM will ensure impactful change by taking responsibility to ensure First Nations peoples and cultures are at the forefront of the gallery's programs and empowering the next generations of First Peoples.

- **Recognition & Respect**
 - SGM celebrates and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which we work, the Boonwurrung, Wurundjeri and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples and the Yorta Yorta nation.
 - SGM pays respects to all Elders past and present and acknowledge First Nations people as our first artists and scientists across Australia and throughout the world.
 - SGM values that genuine community engagement takes time and promotes projects that foster respect for culture and community.
- **Responsibility**
 - SGM will ensure First Nations peoples, cultures and perspectives are respectfully showcased in every exhibition program by providing culturally safe opportunities for First Peoples and communities to lead on and be the voice of key projects and programs.
 - SGM has a responsibility to consult with Traditional Custodians and provide opportunities for young Indigenous people.

2. CHANGE

SGM understands that Western science, along with many museums and galleries, have not been safe spaces for First Nations peoples and cultures, and therefore we aim to advocate change and create a gallery that takes pride in First Peoples histories, cultures and sciences. The Gallery will be a place where the true history of Australia will be shared and celebrated to enable positive change. The aim for the Gallery is to be a decolonised place of learning for all visitors and through a shared learning we will have a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of First Nations Peoples. We aim to be a cultural safe space for First Peoples' and will strive to ensure they are supported and are able to work in culturally safe spaces.

- **Truth & Perspective**
 - SGM will truthfully acknowledge the injustice and suffering of First Peoples in Australia and aims to decolonise scientific knowledge and research practices through its exhibitions and programs. We will actively engage in truth telling and provide space for First Peoples' stories, pedagogies and ways of knowing to be empowered.
 - SGM will work to decolonise methodologies and practices
- **Impact**
 - SGM aims to have a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of First Peoples by providing a culturally safe space to inspire the next generations of First Peoples, by actively providing employment opportunities, and by highlighting thousands of years of Indigenous science, knowledge systems and cultural practice through our programs.

3. GROWTH

SGM is a place of growth, opportunity and knowledge sharing. The Gallery will play an important role with providing increasing opportunities for First Nations Peoples including communities, artists, scientists and curators. As the Gallery becomes a focal point for culture and science in the City of Melbourne, Australia and the World we will ensure that broader Australian community will have the chance to learn and understand First Nations perspectives in sciences, culture and ways of knowing.

- **Opportunities**

- SGM provides opportunities for young Indigenous people to experience our exhibitions, public events and education programs, and employment through our mediator and youth advisory group programs.
- SGM also provides employment opportunities for First Peoples as SGM staff members, artists and academics, consultants, advisors and guest curators.
- Inter-generational mentoring programs are provided for all SGM First Peoples staff and artists.

- **Learning & Reciprocity**

- Integral to the success of the Gallery is the creation of a curatorial practice that is inclusive to First Nations artists and scientists. This includes a curatorial process that ensures representation of Indigenous knowledge in all Science Gallery exhibitions and opportunities for First Nations individuals to develop skills and experience in art/science and trans-disciplinary practices.
- The Gallery aims to be a significant gathering place where share knowledge, reciprocity and great ideas will inspire the next generations through creativity and science.
- Indigenous leadership will be resourced so to empower and not be experienced as a burden.

4. FUTURE

SGM aims to ensure cultural continuity for First Nations Peoples through community-led cultural projects and programs. The Gallery strongly supports the revitalisation and continued practices of First Nations cultures, sciences and ways of knowing. The Gallery also understands that First Nations culture and knowledge are vital to the ongoing sustainability of the planet and through the gallery we can provide insight into the important role First Nations Peoples and Cultures play in sustainable practices.

- **Cultural Continuity**

- SGM aims to foster meaningful and long-term connections with local, national and international First Peoples and support projects that exist beyond the timeframe of an exhibition season, ensuring continuity of cultural knowledge and practice.

- **Environmental Sustainability**

- As part of SGM's Sustainability Action Plan, SGM is committed to be a leading voice in raising the importance of sustainability and actioning sustainable practices.
- We believe we have an integral role in finding creative and innovative solutions to solve sustainability challenges, including promoting First Peoples knowledge and practices in living more sustainable lives.

Our vision for the Framework is to also contribute to a sustainable, vibrant and culturally respectful museum and galleries sector, one that gives First Nations People of Australia and throughout the world the Right to Self-Determine.

SGM FIRST PEOPLES ADVISORY GROUPS

SGM is supported by the following First Peoples advisory groups and committees:

TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND ELDERS REFERENCE GROUP

Made up of senior representatives of traditional owners from the lands upon which our campuses are situated and other indigenous elders, this group advises the university on:

- Engagement with Victorian aboriginal communities.
- Cultural and community protocols.
- Our indigenous strategies including the rap.

The University of Melbourne acknowledges and is grateful to the following traditional owners and elders who have been instrumental in our reconciliation journey: N'arweet Carolyn Briggs, Paul Briggs OAM, Janine Coombs, Uncle Kevin Coombs OAM, Aunty Diane Kerr, Aunty Lyn McInnes, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, Aunty Loraine Padgham, and Aunty Sandra Smith.

SCIENCE GALLERY MELBOURNE LEONARDO GROUP

The Leonardo Group acts as a 'brain trust' of Science Gallery Melbourne, drawing together a group of exceptional people from a range of backgrounds – science, technology, the arts, media, education and business. This group inspires new themes for exhibitions and spark new collaborations. SGM's Leonardo Group includes the following inspiring Aboriginal people:

- Brook Andrew, Artist.
- Dr Peta Clancy, Artist and Academic, Monash University.
- Luke Briscoe, Founder and CEO of INDIGILAB.
- Prof Shaun Ewan, Visiting Professor of Indigenous Health and Leadership at King's College London & Foundation Director of the Melbourne Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at The University of Melbourne.
- Rae Johnston, Journalist, TV and Radio Presenter, Actor.



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL HERITAGE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee (ATSICHOC) advises the Associate Provost on the implementation of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy, which outlines the principles by which the University will manage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ancestral Remains and cultural heritage, including with respect to the built and landscape environment. ATSICHOC is chaired by Dr Lyndon Ormond-Parker and Prof Marcia Langton.

MELBOURNE CONNECT INDIGENOUS NARRATIVE ADVISORY GROUP

The Indigenous Narrative Advisory Group provides advice on the development of heritage interpretation projects associated with the short and long-term Indigenous history associated with the Melbourne Connect site. This group provides advice on the overall approach to Indigenous narrative development and engagement with the Indigenous community.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

Melbourne Science Gallery as part of the University of Melbourne is also guided by the following additional policies and frameworks:

- The 2011 National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities.
- The University of Melbourne RAP 2018-2022.
- Continuous Cultures.
- Inspire Australia, Indigenous Science Engagement Strategy.
- Australia Council for the Arts First Nations Protocols and Guidelines.
- AMAGA Indigenous Roadmap.
- The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property Policy.

SCIENCE GALLERY



melbourne.sciencegallery.com