



# Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2023-2028

# Acknowledgement of Country

Deakin University acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of all the unceded lands, skies and waterways on which Deakin students, staff and communities come together.

As we learn and teach through virtually and physically constructed places across time, we pay our deep respect to the Ancestors and Elders of Wadawurrung Country, Eastern Maar Country and Wurundjeri Country, where our physical campuses are located.

We also acknowledge the many First Nations from where students join us online and make vital contributions to our learning communities.



# The Spirit of our Strategy

In 1986 at Waurin Ponds, a spark was ignited that became a lighthouse for the nation, and a new chapter in Indigenous education commenced.

The new Deakin Indigenous Strategy builds on that rich heritage making action for Indigenous education a shared responsibility for the whole Deakin community. The Strategy sets out principles for sustained and responsive action with key goals across five core domains. It establishes Faculty compacts that recognise context and celebrate success.

Our Strategy invites Deakin staff, students, partners and communities to walk together with First Nations Peoples with bold ideas that enrich us all.



# Foreword



**Professor Iain Martin**  
Vice-Chancellor

I am proud to launch Deakin's new Indigenous Strategy, which demonstrates our ongoing commitment to Reconciliation, Indigenous Knowledges and improving the experience and success of Indigenous students in higher education. This document sets out a comprehensive action plan across five domains: students, knowledge, employment, community and whole-of-University.

This truly is a momentous occasion in the history of the University. The strategy encapsulates our journey thus far, but more importantly, expresses our deeply held beliefs about what still needs to be done, and how we will achieve it.

Advancing the educational aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by providing access to education through inclusive pathways to university is at the heart of our strategy. This is consistent with our broader approach for all students, balancing excellence and equity, and as a university that is responsive to its communities' needs. Indigenous students must also be supported academically, socially, emotionally and financially. As one of Australia's most progressive and innovative universities, Deakin is well placed to achieve the ambitious goals set out in this, our next, formal strategy. It is a strong declaration – to our own communities and to the broader Australian public – that we will strive even harder to do better for and with First Nations Peoples.

Joining with Indigenous communities in raising the voice and influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples is an essential part of building an inclusive future in Australia. Deakin can help in many ways, such as promoting Indigenous voices and visibility through celebrations, commemorations and events, or by working closely with Traditional Custodians on whose lands the University sits: the Wadawurrung people of the Geelong (Djilang) region, the Wurundjeri people of the greater Melbourne (Naarm) region, and the Eastern Maar people of the Warrnambool region. Every day, our students and staff are privileged to enjoy these beautiful lands and their waterways that were nurtured for many thousands of years.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy 2023–2028* aligns with the University's overall strategic vision, as articulated in *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact*. Improving the experiences of Indigenous Australians is the responsibility of everyone. Together, we will work to move Indigenous Knowledges into the fabric of Australian life, creating a harmony of voices and ethos, and a shared vision for the future.



**Professor Elizabeth  
Johnson**

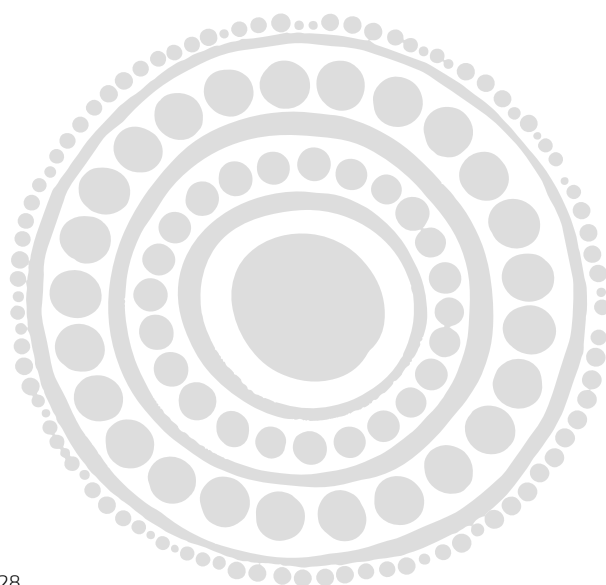
**Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
Academic**

Deakin University has a proud history in Indigenous education. We have been privileged to work alongside Indigenous students, staff and community to build the aspirations and support the achievements of First Nations learners and scholars. The new *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* builds on the goals set for higher education in the *Universities Australia Indigenous Strategy 2022–2025* and recognises our context of rising national commitment to reconciliation. Through this Strategy, we extend our commitment to a new level that involves all of us in advancing Indigenous Knowledges and Peoples. Our action will be built in and core to our work.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* sets out principles and priorities to guide us in a journey of continuous uplift, and actions to prompt us along on our path. It fosters increased participation and success in higher education for Indigenous Peoples. It recognises that Indigenous Knowledges should be a shared heritage for all Australians; setting cultural intelligence as an attribute that every Deakin graduate will take into their professional and community life. It asks Deakin University to be an employer of choice for Indigenous staff where they can achieve their full potential. It builds strong respectful relationships with Traditional Custodians and Indigenous Communities that enrich us all. Critically, it requires all of Deakin to commit to and participate in this crucial work.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* creates a pathway to continuous improvement. We will monitor our progress and lift our goals each year and we will be trusted partners with Indigenous students, staff and Communities.

It has been a great pleasure to work with our Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Innovation and his team on development of the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*. I look forward to working with all of our Deakin communities to ensure the success of the Strategy which will enrich us all.





**Professor Mark Rose**  
**Pro Vice-Chancellor**  
**Indigenous Strategy and**  
**Innovation**


Today we turn a new page in First Nations education at Deakin. The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* builds on the three-and-a-half-decades that the University has been a lighthouse for many First Nations people who sought liberation for their families, communities and themselves through education.

From humble beginnings back in 1986, in demountable classrooms on the edge of campus, a group of pioneers ventured into the Koorie Teacher Education Program (KTEP). From this, their work evolved into the Institute of Koorie Education (IKE), recognised for Indigenous education locally, nationally, and internationally. The profile of Deakin University through IKE became a brand synonymous with Community aspiration and relationships and forged by culturally respectful pedagogy and engagement through innovation.

Predicated on these principles, the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* as a living document recognises the changing Indigenous landscape within a national context. With shifts in demographic and community aspiration, and with the prospect of Treaty and Statement from Heart on the horizon, with this strategy we move to partner First Nations people in their education journey.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*, with our prime partner the National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research and Innovation Institute (NIKERI), seeks to mobilise the entire University to provide for every Deakin University student an Indigenous experience. The strategy, in tandem with *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact* and Deakin's education, employability, and research strategies, positions Indigenous Knowledges at the heart of our business. The University-wide curriculum transformation project seeks to position authentic Indigenous Knowledges into the fabric of Australian life. We do this with community endorsement and in doing so every Deakin student through either curriculum, pedagogy or student experience will have the opportunity to connect with the rich cultural heritage of our land.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* seeks to work at close quarters with Faculties and significant University centres to marshal a whole-of-University response to Deakin's intention to progress Reconciliation and Treaty, while reflecting the nation's full history as we seek and build an inclusive future. The pioneering spirit of KTEP, the heritage of IKE/NIKERI in targeted First Nations education and the cumulative might of a great Australian university converge in the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*, as we walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples with bold ideas that will impact a nation. Won't you join us in this most important journey.



In this document we deliberately use the terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Indigenous, First Nations, First Peoples interchangeably and in doing so acknowledge that while people have personal preferences, none of these terms are perfect and with that imperfection each carry nuanced residual forms of colonial power. The document was constructed with the core value of Respect.

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# Preamble

Over three-and-a-half-decades Deakin University has witnessed iterations to Indigenous life, ATSIC, Congress, Reconciliation and with it contributed to the rise of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academy. Students carrying a Deakin qualification have represented their Communities at every significant gathering ranging from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues ([UNPFII](#)) to Desert Sands and the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#).

While the NIKERI (National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation) Institute continues that rich tradition today, the change in First Nations demographics and the increasing number of Year Twelve school completions has seen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students access the entire suite of Deakin offerings.

As one of the nation's leading universities, Deakin University has earned a reputation for student-centredness, educational excellence through innovation, graduate employability and pushing boundaries with ideas that impact. This strategy calls for these approaches to be applied systematically in a whole-of-University response to Indigenous education that attracts and retains Indigenous students and boosts their success.

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* introduces underpinning principles to previous arrangements.

The Strategy is:

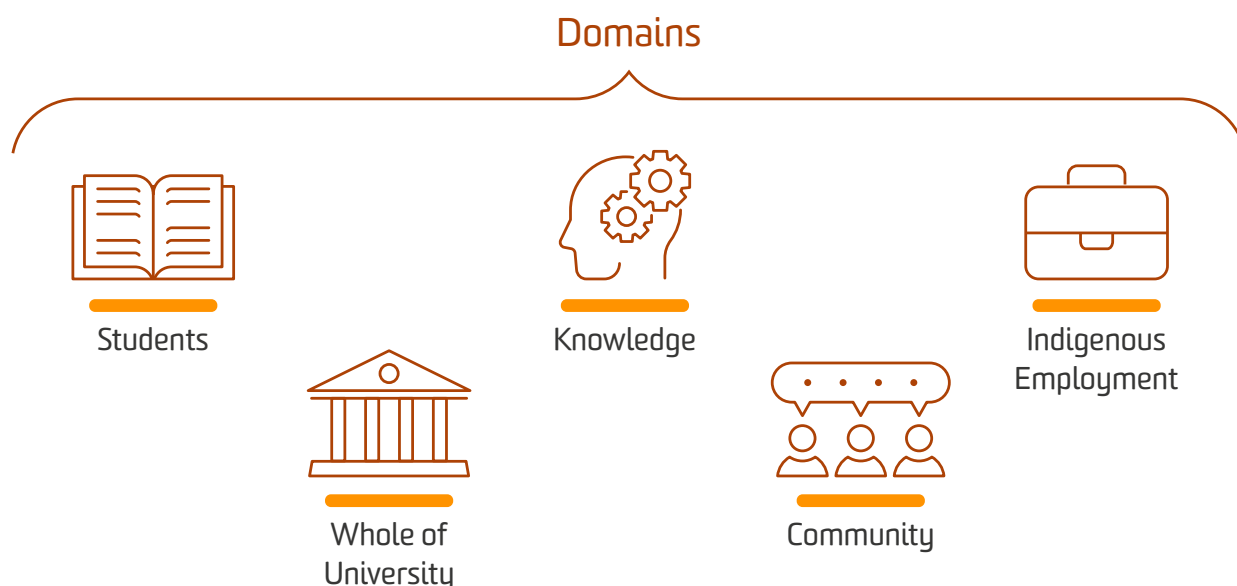
- **linked** – the strategy cascades across the University with a line of sight to central University documents including *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact*, *Deakin Education and Employability Guiding Plan* and *Deakin Research and Innovation Guiding Plan*.
- **consulted** – the strategy is predicated upon true and authentic consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.
- **inclusive** – considering diverse viewpoints while maintaining integrity with Indigenous probity.
- **wide** – while maintaining sophisticated academic, financial, cultural and wellbeing augmentation for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the strategy also takes into account the learning experience of all Deakin University students.
- **embedded** – in pursuit of Indigenous outcomes, the strategy marshals University resources and is considered as core business and a priority of the University.
- **evidence-based** – based on evidence drawn from Deakin and its communities.

As we enter a new era of Treaty and Statement from the Heart, and commence the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, it is time to redefine First Nations engagement within the University. In doing we draw upon the spirit of 1986 and spark a new light that will shine across the sector as a spotlight for First Nations Peoples and Communities. Join us as we write a new chapter for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education here at Deakin University.

# Strategic domains

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* is created to address the whole of our University.

It guides action across five domains:



## Deakin Policy Framework

The *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* sets this agenda for the University under the Deakin Strategic Plan *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact* and guides the development and delivery of Deakin's guiding plans for Education and Employability, and Research and Innovation.

# Faculty Compacts

Faculty Compacts agree goals and targets with faculties for relevant outcomes of the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*, particularly in the leadership and delivery of research and education in faculty disciplinary domains.

The strategy takes a strengths-based approach that allows for differentiated targets for each faculty in recognition of historical and emerging trends in Indigenous engagement with different disciplines.

The University will work collaboratively with faculties to co-design realistic but aspirational annual goals that guide faculty action. Annual reporting as a balanced scorecard will inform University reporting as it monitors and celebrates progress.

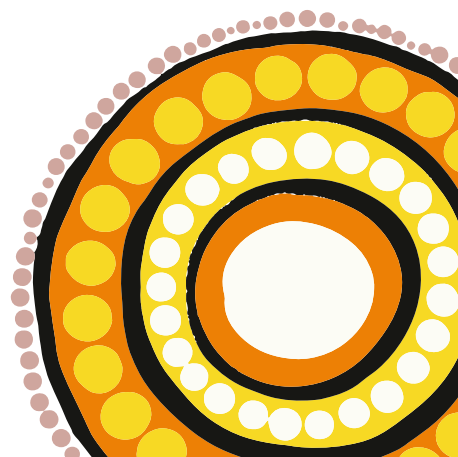
# Acknowledgement

Deakin University thanks the many contributors to this strategy, especially:

The staff of the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation for ideation and realisation.

Students and staff of NIKERI Institute and Traditional Owner groups for expert cultural comment and feedback.

Dr Justin Macdonnell, Executive Director, Anzarts Institute for conceptualisation, structure and initial development.



# 1. Students

Deakin University will grow access, participation and success in higher education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

# 1. Students

First Nations students entering the professions are at the vanguard of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander liberation and Deakin University has been a leader in fostering professional participation.

By walking with Indigenous Communities, Deakin has crafted educational responses that are flexible, rigorous and culturally probative. Building familiarity with post-secondary education and inspiring role models drives aspiration. Equitable access schemes increase Indigenous participation.

Tailored supports for First Nations students with bespoke academic, financial, social and emotional wellbeing and cultural resources in all modalities foster success and excellence.

Deakin will marshal and connect the educational capacity of Deakin University with the learning aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities wherever they may be: in class, online and on Country. We will nurture students to be successful, culturally anchored and lifelong learners.

## Strategic priorities

- Priority 1.1** To promote and foster a higher education **aspiration** with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, families and communities through programs and projects that place Deakin University as an established and culturally relevant destination of choice.
- Priority 1.2** To broaden, maintain and promote **access** through inclusive pathways to university for all First Nations Peoples, irrespective of personal, geolocational and educational contexts.
- Priority 1.3** To provide dynamic, responsive, and relevant academic, social and emotional wellbeing, financial and cultural **anchoring** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students regardless of course or modality.
- Priority 1.4** To enable First Nations people to **achieve** their goals as lifelong learners with Deakin University as their prime partner.

## Key success measures

- Increase in Indigenous student enrolments in line with targets set in Faculty Compacts.
- Increase in Indigenous student retention and success.
- Increase in Indigenous graduate employment outcomes.
- Indigenous student use of targeted support, pathway and augmentation programs.
- Indigenous student participation in community and workplace learning.
- Indigenous student participation in student engagement and support activities.
- Increased Indigenous student satisfaction.
- Increased Indigenous alumni engagement and activities.

## Action plan 2023–2024

Aspiration	Access	Anchoring	Achieve
Engage with schools and communities to foster Indigenous students' familiarity with university/post-secondary education.	Review access and participation across all study modalities.	<p>Develop needs analysis and recommended services for Indigenous students in every modality.</p> <p>Identify and foster opportunities for social connection and cultural anchoring for First Nations students.</p>	<p>Create targeted strategies for First Nations graduates to develop careers and find relevant employment.</p> <p>Develop and maintain an active and vibrant community of First Nations Alumni.</p>



## 2. Knowledge

Deakin University will support the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and respectfully embed them in all courses.

## 2. Knowledge

For any university to be considered truly Australian, there is a clear requirement to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and knowledges. First Nations students and Communities appreciate recognition of their rich history and knowledge in the curriculum. Equally the university has an obligation to prepare all students as informed global citizens with the capacity to enhance their professions and society. This requires exposure to Traditional Indigenous Knowledges and perspectives.

Indigenous Knowledges are the world's oldest living intellectual tradition and one of the nation's richest assets with insights that contribute to who we are as a people as well as informing our future. As the nation is challenged in both an understanding of and a reconciled relationship with First Nations Peoples, Deakin University is committed as part of its social contract to advancing Indigenous Knowledges into the mainstream. This is enshrined in both the University statutes and reinforced in the Deakin Strategic Plan *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact*. We strive to equip Deakin University graduates with the tools to build an inclusive future through an understanding informed by Indigenous Knowledge and the ability to accommodate competing worldviews and discover themselves in the process.

In University courses, this will be achieved through the University-wide delivery of the *Indigenous Curriculum Transformation Project: Graduate Learning Outcome 8 (GLO8)* which aims to make Indigenous perspectives visible in all courses Deakin offers, through curriculum, pedagogy, or student experience. This will equip our graduates to make meaningful contributions in their chosen career with a balanced and mature view of their discipline through Indigenous Knowledges and perspectives that inform our shared future. As Indigenous Knowledges infuse the teaching and learning agenda, informed by authentic research, our goal is to surface, publish and protect Indigenous Knowledges both in the academic context and in the wider community.

### Strategic priorities

- Priority 2.1** To embed Indigenous Knowledges and perspectives in all Deakin **courses** through curriculum, pedagogy, or student experience.
- Priority 2.2** To create a comprehensive Indigenous **research strategy** for the University that builds capacity for all staff and students particularly in respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and ethics.
- Priority 2.3** To build **cultural intelligence** within Deakin staff with cultural immersion and exchange opportunities, including international, and other programs in tandem and beyond curriculum transformation.
- Priority 2.4** To establish the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation as a centre for contemporary, relevant, and authentic Indigenous **advice**. This will be achieved through the provision of intelligence, network, opportunities and strategies as the University develops recognition of the balanced, full history of Australia.



## Key success measures

- Number of courses with embedded Indigenous curriculum, pedagogy, or student experience.
- Participation in Indigenous Studies units and sequences.
- Engagement of research guidelines for research related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or cultures.
- External recognition for and impact of Indigenous research.
- Number of First Nations researchers at all career stages.
- Consistent engagement with research integrity protocols.
- Annual staff participation in cultural intelligence/immersion.

## Action plan 2023–2024

Courses	Research	Cultural Intelligence	Guidance
Implement the Indigenous Curriculum Transformation Project across all disciplines.	Develop a Deakin University Research Strategy to build national profile in Indigenous research.	Develop a program of cultural immersion opportunities to build cultural intelligence in Deakin students, staff and communities.	Embed appropriate guidelines for research related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or cultures, based on reciprocity and respect.
Expand participation in Indigenous Studies units and sequences.	Empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Communities to understand and undertake research themselves, and recognising their rights and ancestral responsibilities as participants and researchers.		Foster relationships with Indigenous professional entities, peak bodies and statewide organisations as advisors.



## 3. Employment

Deakin University will grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation amongst its staff and will be an employer of choice for First Nations Peoples.

# 3. Employment

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment is a national priority with a broad target of population parity. With experience of over three and a half decades, Deakin University recognises that success as an employer of choice requires a holistic approach. First Nations Peoples are attracted to a workplace with an industrial environment that respects culture and provides meaningful growth opportunities and career pathways. Deakin recognises respect as the basis of cultural safety and the hidden challenge of managing cultural load.

Deakin University acknowledges the unique contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to the University in its employment platforms. Deakin seeks employment of Indigenous Australians across the entire spectrum of the University and sustainability in their employment. Deakin strives to be an 'employer of choice' for First Nations peoples with a workplace that respects culture, recognises cultural load acknowledging cultural safety, and provides meaningful growth opportunities and career pathways.

## Strategic priorities

- Priority 3.1** To **expand** Indigenous employment with realistic, sustainable, and supported growth targets set by faculties and divisions.
- Priority 3.2** To develop meaningful **careers** for First Nations staff with effective professional development across the diversity of academic and professional positions.
- Priority 3.3** To ensure that the Indigenous employee **experience** is consistent, culturally respectful and safe through partnership between the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation and the People and Culture Division.
- Priority 3.4** To foster First Nations economic opportunities through targeted **procurement**.

## Key success measures

- Indigenous Employment plan negotiated with People and Culture Division embedded in revised employment policies and processes.
- Increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, development, promotion trajectory and length of service across academic and professional positions.
- Active and productive Deakin University Indigenous Staff Network (ISN).
- Improved Indigenous staff satisfaction.
- Supportive management and recognition of cultural load in workplans.
- Uptake of Cultural Intelligence training from broader staff cohort.

## Action plan 2023–2024

Employment	Experience	Career	Procurement
Create a comprehensive Deakin Indigenous Employment Strategy that integrates local and institutional action.	Re-establish the Deakin Indigenous Staff Network (ISN) to foster a sense of community and peer mentoring.	Build capability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through tailored training, and professional development.	Develop targets and guidelines for procurement from Indigenous industries.
Provide targeted work experience, traineeships, and other programs at Deakin for First Nations students.	Ensure managers understand obligations of inclusivity and diversity through an Indigenous lens including understanding of cultural safety and cultural load.	Build awareness of professional and career development amongst prospective and current First Nations employees.	

The background of the page is a vibrant Indigenous Australian artwork. It features a large central sun or moon with concentric circles of orange, yellow, and white dots. Surrounding this are various orange and red shapes, including footprints and stylized figures. A blue and white dotted line curves across the middle. The bottom right corner has a dark grey semi-circle containing text.

## 4. Whole of University

Deakin University will embed commitment to and celebration of First Nations Peoples and Communities across all its activities.

# 4. Whole of University

Deakin University acknowledges within its statutes and attendant policies responsibilities to First Nations Peoples and Communities. In a whole-of-University approach the University sees this commitment as core business and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and centres shares a joint obligation to work towards Indigenous liberation through education.

Deakin University's heritage and investment in engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities began through IKE (Institute of Koorie Education) and continued as NIKERI (National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation) Institute. With the work of IKE as a national exemplar, the broader university saw its contribution in supporting IKE but not competing with it. In the last decade, universities across the nation through their peak organisation, Universities Australia, recognised that outcomes are best served when a dedicated centre works in tandem with a whole-of-University response.

Current university strategies including *Deakin 2030: Ideas to Impact* and *Deakin Education and Employability Guiding Plan 2021* underpin Deakin University's whole-of-University response. Strategically the OISI (Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation) seeks to engage the broader University through strategy, intelligence, and networks that empower through collegial co-design and are calibrated to bespoke responses for each context. A whole-of-University response will alleviate cultural load and increase cultural safety and respect by engaging all Deakin staff and students with Indigenous Knowledges and awareness.

## Strategic priorities

- Priority 4.1** To integrate **strategy**, planning and action for Indigenous Peoples, Knowledges and Cultures to ensure effective outcomes for First Nations Peoples, Communities and Deakin.
- Priority 4.2** To ensure appropriate strategic **advice** from Communities, Indigenous professional entities and external stakeholders.
- Priority 4.3** To set and monitor clear **targets** for faculties and professional divisions for delivery of the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* priorities in partnership with OISI.
- Priority 4.4** To **recognise** Deakin's role in moving towards reconciliation and truth-telling, and to celebrate First Nations Peoples and Communities.



## Key success measures

- University performance against the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*.
- Faculty performance against Faculty Compact targets.
- Indigenous participation in governance at all levels of the University and representation on course advisory boards and professional advisory mechanisms.
- Activity of Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Council (VCIAC).
- University participation in recognition activities and Community outreach engagements.

## Action plan 2023–2024

Strategy	Advice	Targets	Recognition
Link the <i>Deakin Indigenous Strategy</i> to faculty and division planning.	Establish the Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Council (VCIAC) as the peak advisory body to the University, noting connection to NIKERI and its governance.	Develop tailored Faculty Compacts with targets for Indigenous employment and education recognising disciplinary context in partnership with the OISI.	Celebrate Indigenous perspectives and make them more visible through celebrations, commemorations, and events, including the annual Indigenous Oration, in adherence to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols.
Establish the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation as a focal point for contemporary, relevant, and authentic Indigenous leadership and co-ordination.	Build strong relationships between Faculties and parallel Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-controlled and State-wide organisations to provide advice and cultural input from a discipline perspective.	Monitor overall University performance against University strategy with annual comprehensive reporting to the Deakin University Council.	Develop the University response to the Alfred Deakin Legacy as a Truth Telling in Reconciliation agreement, as a further example of the University's commitment to projecting the full history of Australia.



## 5. Community

Deakin University will grow and advance respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities.

# 5. Community

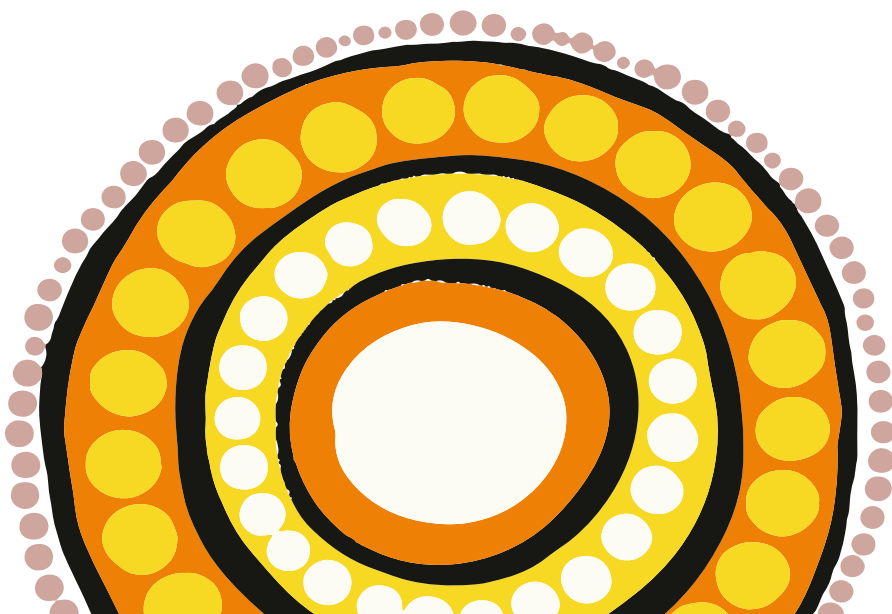
The heritage of Deakin University in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education has always been predicated upon rich and dynamic relationships with First Nations Communities across the continent. These relationships enrich the curriculum and endorse the probative positions the University takes around Reconciliation, Treaty and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Through the ground-breaking work of IKE, the precursor of NIKERI Institute, Deakin University set standards in community engagement that were recognised nationally.

With many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities having links to Deakin University, we realise that our success and reputation is predicated upon doing business ‘proper way’ and that the way we engage is the lifeblood of this domain. Based upon this heritage and pivoting in response to Community aspirations, we strive to exchange knowledge respectfully, give voice to our community partners and work in a way that promotes self-determination through truth.

## Strategic priorities

- Priority 5.1** To **advance** engagement with the three Traditional Owner groups on whose lands our campuses sit, as well as those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who by force or by choice live as dispersed communities off-Country and engage with Deakin University.
- Priority 5.2** To **engage** with external Indigenous groups and alumni to explore collaboration and mutual benefit.
- Priority 5.3** To **connect** Deakin activities in advancing Indigenous Knowledges, Peoples and Communities to national and international First Nations agendas.
- Priority 5.4** To foster external **support** for programs and activities that promote Indigenous achievement through communities or individuals.



## Key success measures

- Established formal annual consultation with the three Traditional Owners groups on whose lands the University sits.
- Increased number of formal strategic relationships with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, organisations, and bodies locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Establishment of a calendar of University-wide Indigenous events with supporting facilitation.
- Increased Indigenous alumni engagement and philanthropic engagement with Indigenous students and activities.

## Action plan 2023–2024

Advance	Engage	Connect	Support
Develop a range of relationships, networks, policies, and protocols to guide relationships with Traditional Owner groups and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engaging with Deakin University.	<p>Create a network for Indigenous Alumni that links them to ongoing activities including networking and employment opportunities.</p> <p>Create an academic space for community to bring knowledges together.</p>	<p>Build and maintain productive relationships with key state and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational organisations and programs<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Develop and maintain productive relationships with key international Indigenous organisations<sup>2</sup>.</p>	Partner with corporate and philanthropic organisations to support Indigenous students and communities including through scholarships and targeted projects.

<sup>1</sup> Key state and national Indigenous organisations:

- NATSIHEC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium).
- VAEAI (Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc).
- Toorong Marnong Accord.

<sup>2</sup> Key international Indigenous organisations:

- WINHEC (World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium).
- UNPFII (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues).
- WIPCE (World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education).



# Roles and responsibilities

# Roles and responsibilities

## Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation

The *Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation (OISI)* takes a whole-of-University view to guide university strategy and action on Indigenous matters and recognition of the balanced, full history of Australia. The OISI works to create an environment that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff to be successful and safe at Deakin and build cultural intelligence across the University. The Office provides timely, evidence-based, and culturally-grounded advice; building collaborative effort and driving collective responsibility. The OISI develops the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*, co-designs Faculty Compacts, monitors outcomes and leads curriculum reform to embed Indigenous Knowledges in Deakin degrees. It develops regional, national and international partnerships to support University participation in and support for important national conversations.

## NIKERI Institute

The *National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation (NIKERI) Institute* based on Wadawurrung Country delivers degrees in culturally appropriate modes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, leads Indigenous Research and develops First Nations researchers, and fosters learning for all Deakin students through its Indigenous Knowledges minor and major study sequences. Community Based Delivery for degrees for First Nations students allows flexibility for Indigenous students to access to higher education while maintaining family, work and community commitments. The Institute creates a focal point for Indigenous students, Community and networks at Deakin. The NIKERI Institute is proud of its more than 35 years of history at Deakin (formerly the Institute of Koorie Education (IKE) and the Koorie Teacher Education Program (KTEP)) and acknowledges the more than 1000 students who have graduated with its assistance.

## Faculties

Deakin's *Faculties of Arts and Education, Business and Law, Health, and Science, Engineering and Built Environment* deliver education and research to fulfil the University strategy and create impact for the Deakin communities. They lead activities in learning and teaching to grow Indigenous student success for students enrolled in their degrees and grow awareness of Indigenous Knowledges and cultures for students in all degree programs. They lead work in research to ensure respectful and valued interactions and collaborations with Indigenous Communities and foster Indigenous Research. They build symbolic recognition of Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges and grow cultural intelligence in their practice. Faculties work collaboratively with the OISI to design individual compacts that acknowledge historical and emerging trends in Indigenous engagement with different disciplines, and set ambitious and achievable targets to achieve the goals of the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy*.

## University Portfolios

Professional services, including Resources, Futures, Academic and Research Portfolios deliver, refine and renew business operations, drive innovation, and support students and staff. University Divisions contribute to the *Deakin Indigenous Strategy* by supporting faculties to deliver outcomes against their compacts, by directly supporting Indigenous staff and students, and by ensuring professional services build cultural intelligence and an enabling, respectful environment that fosters success.

## Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Council (VCIAC)

The VCIAC is composed of First Nations voices from around Australia, with expertise from a range of backgrounds including education, justice, health and business. The Council provides expert advice and consultation on a range of issues, and monitors the University's progress on key strategic initiatives.

### Establishing Members (2022):

- **Aunty Dr Geraldine Atkinson** (*Bangerang/Wiradjuri*), Co-Chair of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.
- **Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney** (*Narungga*), Professor in Aboriginal Education.
- **Angela Singh** (*Yorta Yorta*), Regional Director in the Victorian Department of Education and Training.
- **Lionel Bamblett** (*Wiradjuri/Yorta Yorta/Bangerang*), General Manager of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI).
- **Antoinette Gentile** (*Wollithiga*), Director of Policy and Engagement at Djirra.
- **Mick Coombes** (*Gamilaraay/Kamilaroi*), Manager of Aboriginal Economic Development and Industry Engagement at the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.
- **Corrina Eccles** (*Wadawurrung*), Manager Cultural Education, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

Deakin representatives include the Vice-Chancellor Professor Iain Martin, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Strategy and Innovation Professor Mark Rose (*Gunditjmara*), Director of the National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research and Innovation (NIKERI) Institute Professor Gabrielle Fletcher (*Gundungurra*), and a current student representative.

This approach is consistent with the aims expressed through the Uluru Statement from the Heart for First Nations people to have an appropriate voice in decision-making that affects them. This expert panel of respected people from diverse backgrounds provides such a voice.

## Reporting

Deakin University reports on outcomes of the Indigenous Strategy publicly through the University's Annual Report. Deakin monitors progress of the Indigenous Strategy through:

- *regular reporting* to the Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Advisory Council against the annual action plan
- *annual reporting* on progress against success measures and Faculty Compacts, to the University Executive and University Council
- *regular consultation* with Traditional Custodians.

Progress reporting is co-ordinated by the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation (OISI) and supported by Deakin's Academic Portfolio.

# Artwork



**Title:** 'Learning Together, Growing Together', commissioned by the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation

**Artist:** Nathan Patterson

**Description:** In the centre is a large meeting place representing Deakin, with students and teachers gathered together. The three circles symbolise past, present and future. The footprints symbolise walking together.

The bottom corner represents family and community, with gum leaves representing connection to Country. The boomerangs symbolise students returning to their communities, with the coolamon symbolising the knowledge they have gathered on their journey with Deakin.

We are grateful to be able to feature this beautiful artwork throughout the strategy.

**About the Artist:** Nathan Patterson is a proud Wagiman man living in on the south coast of Victoria. His mother's people are from Pine Creek, near the Daly River Region in the Northern Territory, where the Wagiman clan are the traditional landowners.

Nathan burst onto the scene around four years ago with his ever-evolving modern Aboriginal art. He has been commissioned for numerous large scale mural projects as well as featuring on four AFL Indigenous guernseys.

His art is a mixture of contemporary designs using traditional techniques that incorporate the Dreamtime stories of his people and of the land he was born on. He continues to tell these stories through his art. Nathan strives to push the boundaries of contemporary Aboriginal art through the use of vibrant colours which his work is becoming well known for.

Nathan's artwork is inspired by his passion for Australian native wildlife and landscape and especially loves painting birds, including the Red-Tailed Cockatoo and Wedge-Tailed Eagles.

