

# First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy

2023-27



The background of the page is a photograph of several clay pans, which are traditional Indigenous Australian musical instruments. They are made of clay and have a distinctive shape with a wide rim and a narrow neck. The pans are arranged in a row, and the image is slightly blurred, giving it a sense of depth and texture. The colors are muted, with shades of brown, tan, and grey.

The Australia Council for the Arts proudly acknowledges all First Nations Peoples and their rich culture. We pay respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters of the country we now call Australia.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to Australian life, and the ways that over 75,000 years of unbroken storytelling enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation as we work towards an equal voice and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all aspects of our society.

### Language

Throughout this protocol guide, the terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' are used to reference First Nations people and communities of Australia. Within the Australia Council, we use the term 'First Nations'. However, when we work with specific communities or language groups, we seek guidance from those in authority about the respectful and appropriate language protocols.

### Warning

Readers should be aware that this document contains the names of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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Cover image: KU Arts. Dunjiba Design artists  
L-R – Jasmine Nelson, Melissa Stewart, Audrey  
Stewart and Kay Finn – photo taken at the clay  
pans in Dunjiba.  
Credit: Mel Henderson.



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The National Indigenous  
Music Awards 2022.  
Credit: Paz Tassone.



# We build upon the wonderful Legacy of those who have gone before

**The Australia Council's First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel acknowledges those who have come before us.** The many people who have contributed to this work include (but are not limited to):

## **Those who served as Chairs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board<sup>1</sup> and First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel<sup>2</sup>**

Dick Roughsey (1973–76)  
Wandjuk Marika (1976–80)  
Larry Lanley (1980–81)  
John 'Sandy' Atkinson (1981–83)  
Chicka Dixon (1983–86)  
Robert Merritt (1986–89)  
Lin Onus (1989–92)  
Richard Walley (1992–96, 2000–04)  
John Moriarty (1997–2000)  
Chris Sarra (2005–08)  
Mark Bin Barker (2009–12)  
Lee-Ann Tjunypa Buckskin (2012–14)  
Wesley Enoch (2014–21)  
Larissa Behrendt (2022–)

## **Those who served as First Nations Directors and Executive Directors**

Gary Foley (1984–87)  
Gavin Andrews (1987–88)  
Chicka Dixon (acting 1988)  
Peter Brown (acting 1989)  
Lesley Bangama Fogarty (1989–94)  
Lydia Miller (1994–97, 2005–21)  
Fay Nelson (1997–2000)  
Cathy Craigie (2001–05)  
Franchesca Cubillo (2021–)

## **Those who served as members of the Australia Council Board (2014–)**

Lee-Ann Tjunypa Buckskin (2013–16, Deputy Chair 2016–21)  
Philip Watkins (2022–)

## **Those who served as members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board (1973–2013)**

Albert Barunga (1973–75)  
Harold Blair (1973–75)  
Ken Colbung (1973–76)  
Kitty Dick (1973–76)  
Wandjuk Marika (1973–75)  
Chicka Dixon (1973)  
Ruby Hammond (1973)  
Eric Koo'oilala (1973)  
Tim Leura Tjabalajari (1973)  
Albert Lennon (1973–74)  
Raphael Apuatimi (1973)  
Mick Miller (1973–75)  
Vai Stanton (1973–76)  
Terry Widders (1973–75)  
Samuel Ganaraj (1974)  
Edward Koiko Mabo (1974–76)  
Bobby Nganjmirra (1974–77)  
Jack Phillipus (1974–75)  
Leila Rankine (1974–76)  
Walter Pukutiwara (1975–77)  
William Reid (1975–76)

1 The Board was established as the 'Aboriginal Arts Board' in 1973, renamed the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Committee' in 1993, then re-established as the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board' in 1994.

2 Following the *Australia Council Act 2013* and the dissolution of art form boards, the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Strategy Panel' was established as a subcommittee of the Australia Council Board in 2014. It was renamed the 'First Nations Arts Strategy Panel' in 2020 and the 'First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel' in 2021.



Billy Stockman (1975–77)  
Larry Lanley (1976–80)  
Wendy Feifar Nannup (1976–80)  
David Mowaljarlai (1976–78)  
Mary Duroux (1977–80)  
Val Power (1978–80)  
John ‘Sandy’ Atkinson (1978–79)  
Jimmy Stewart (1978–80)  
Jack Wunuwun (1978–80)  
Larry Jakamarra Nelson (1979–82)  
Betty Colbung (1981–82)  
George Kaddy (1981–82)  
Maurice Luther (1981–82)  
Claude Narjic (1981–82)  
Margaret Valadian (1981–82)  
Peter Woods (1981–82)  
Ephraim Bani (1983–87, 1993–95)  
Colin Cook (1983–88)  
Jack Davis (1983–87)  
James Everett (1983–87, 1989–90)  
Charles Godjuwa (1983–85)  
Albert Mullett (1983–86)  
Thancoupie (1983–85)  
Oodgeroo Nonnucal (1983–85)  
Peter Yu (1983–87)  
Lin Onus (1985–86, 1988, 1990–91)  
Nola James (1986–88)  
Paul Martin (1987–88)  
James Wilson-Miller (1987–88)  
Geoff Narkle (1987–88)  
Jo Willmot (1987–89)  
Nora Bindal (1988)  
Kevin Cook (1989)  
Joseph Geia (1989–90)

Januarrie (1989–91)  
Jonathan Brown Kumunjara (1989–90)  
Sally Morgan (1989)  
Mudrooroo Narogin (1989–90)  
Justine Saunders (1989)  
Fiona Foley (1990–92)  
Cliff Watego (1990)  
Maureen Watson (1990)  
Eve Fesl (1991–92)  
Stephen Page (1991)  
Charles Perkins (1991)  
Debra Pilot (1991–93)  
Djon Mundine (1991–92)  
Roslyn Watson (1991)  
Lafe Charlton (1992–95, 2002–06)  
Banduk Marika (1992, 1995–99)  
Kaye Mundine (1992–95)  
Deborah Rose (1992–95)  
Sonya Arnold (1993)  
Ron Hurley (1993–96)  
Lydia Miller (1993–94)  
George Milpururru (1993–94)  
Kaye Mundine (1994–95)  
Brenda Croft (1995–96, 2004–08)  
Robyn Forester (1996–98)  
Vicki maikutena Matson-Green (1996–97)  
Ellen Jose (1997–98, 1999)  
Napau Pedro Stephen (1996–98)  
Terrence Coulthard (1996–99)  
Mark Bin Bakar (1997–2003)  
Deborah Mailman (1997–2000)  
John Kundereri Moriarty (1997–99)  
Leo Akee (1999–2001, 2009–12)  
Alana Garwood-Houng (1999–2001)

Yvonne Kopper (1999–2001)  
 Peter Pungkai Bertani (2000–03)  
 Lenore Dembski (2000–03)  
 Ray Kelly (2000–04)  
 Sandra Phillips (2001)  
 Julie Gough (2002–03)  
 Janina Harding (2002–06)  
 Jennifer Kemarre Martiniello (2002–06)  
 Djambawa Marawili (2004)  
 Anita Maynard (2004–06)  
 Gina Rings (2004–08)  
 Terry Djambawa Marawil (2005–08)  
 Chris Sarra (2005–08)  
 Rosie Barkus (2007–08)  
 Richard Frankland (2007–10)  
 Tara June Winch (2007–10)  
 Jeanette James (2007–13)  
 Lynette Narkle (2009–11)  
 Desmond ‘Kootji’ Raymond (2009–12)  
 Lee-Ann Tjunypa Buckskin (2010–11)  
 Melissa Lucashenko (2011–13)  
 Rachel Maza (2011–13)  
 Monica Stevens (2011–13)  
 Lydia George (2013)  
 Ben Graetz (2013)  
 Charmaine Green (2013)

**Those who served as members  
of the National Indigenous Arts  
Reference Group (2007–10)**

Angela Hill  
 Clothilde Bullen  
 Darryl Danton Murgha  
 Diat Alferink  
 Ebony Williams  
 Elizabeth Cavanagh  
 Frederick Gesha  
 Murrumu Walubara Yidindji  
 Kylie Belling  
 Lee-Ann Tjunypa Buckskin  
 Leo Brian Akee  
 Lisa Michl  
 Liza-Mare Syron  
 Lydia George  
 Mitch Torres  
 Nancy Bamaga  
 Nici Cumpston  
 Robynne Quiggin  
 Tessa Rose  
 Tracey-Lea Smith  
 Trevor James  
 Walter Saunders



**Those who served before us and with us as members of the First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel (2014–)**

Francesca Cubillo (2014–17)  
Michael Leslie (2014)  
Jeanette James (2014–17)  
Tristan Shultz (2014–17)  
Peter White (2014–17)  
Terri Janke (2015–16)  
Nancy Bamaga (2017–2020)  
Hetti Perkins (2017–19)  
Sonia Smallacombe (2017–20)  
Jason Eades (2017–21)  
Stephen Page (2018)  
Jody Broun (2018–19)  
Patrick Mau (2018–20)  
Major Moogy Sumner (2018–20)  
Christian Thompson (2020)  
Jared Thomas (2018–21)  
Marlene Chisholm (2020–22)  
Wayne Barker (2020–)  
Janina Harding (2020–)  
Nardi Simpson (2020–)  
Vicki West (2020)  
Sienna Stubbs (2021–22)  
Troy Casey (2022–)  
Nathan Maynard (2022–)

**Those who served as key Australia Council First Nations staff**

Joanne Brown, Manager First Nations Arts and Culture (2018–21)  
Patricia Adjei, Manager First Nations Strategic Development (2016–18), Arts Practice Director First Nations Arts and Culture (2018–)

We also acknowledge the many more First Nations arts and cultural practitioners who have served on the Australia Council's First Nations artform sub-committees and peer assessment panels over previous decades, which ensure the Australia Council's dedicated funding to First Nations people, groups and organisations through our grants program is assessed wholly by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peer assessors.

***The Australia Council recognises the importance of First Nations peoples' self-determination, cultural authority and leadership to our collective prosperity.***



# Context

Creativity is the wellspring of culture. We are all connected through art and its expression. Our arts embody individual and collective stories, histories and identities and are vital expressions of human experience. Our arts connect us to our past and imagine our future.

Our First Nations cultures connect us to over 75,000 years of living culture and knowledge. They are a source of great pride to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and a reflection of cultural strength, resilience, innovation and artistic excellence.

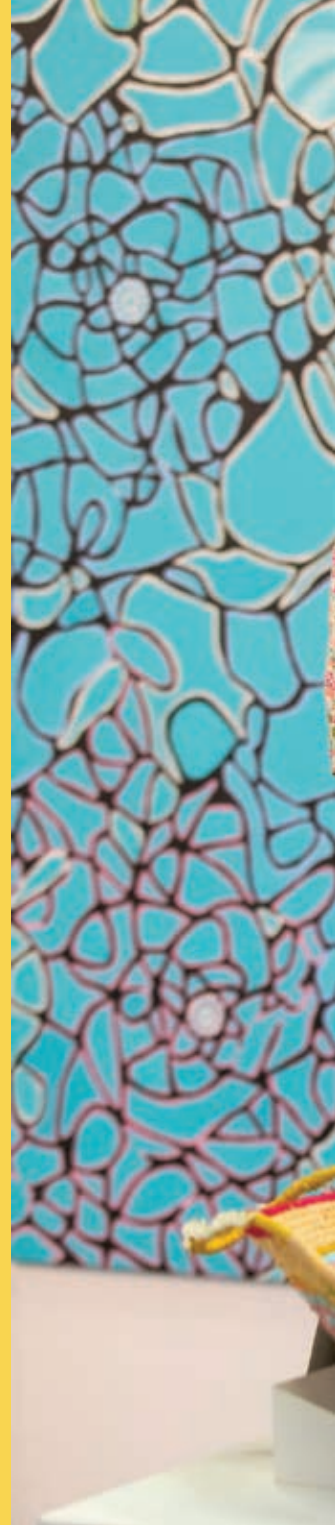
The stories of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are Australia's first stories. Today, these are complimented by the stories of many diverse peoples that now call Australia home. Together these promote mutual understanding and respect and connect us to a global community of histories, struggles and triumphs, oppression and celebration, and pasts and futures.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, stories expressed through the arts are expressions of cultural continuation; self-determination on unceded territory; and detail deeply rich contexts that reach well beyond modern, western, and colonial forms.

More than ever, Australians are engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts for its beauty, power and to understand who we are as a nation. Understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is essential to Australia's social wellbeing and benefits both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Outside of Australia, First Nations arts is recognised for its unique cultural expression. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists enjoy international acclaim and are in high demand with international audiences. Similarly, visitors to Australia are increasingly seeking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural experiences as an expression of Australian identity.<sup>3</sup>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge is also increasingly recognised as providing valuable insights and perspectives – and alternative modes of thinking – to all realms of society, including wellbeing, environment and research.



3 pg. 28 of the Corporate Plan 2020–2024.





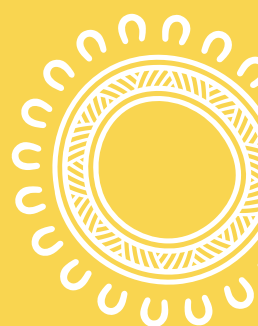


Artist Elisa Jane Carmichael at Cairns International Art Fair 2018.  
Credit: Kerry Trapnell.

With decades of investment, we have seen a flourishing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and organisations across all areas of practice. New organisations have come into being while existing organisations have gone from strength to strength. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists are excelling in their practice, being recognised in awards and receiving critical

acclaim. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership is essential to the future of our cultural and creative industries.

It is vital we continue to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture, through the recognition of the importance self-determination, cultural authority and leadership to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collective prosperity.



# About the First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel

For over 50 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders have brought a guiding voice to the Australia Council – and to the nation – on matters relating to First Nations arts and culture and the broader arts and cultural sector.

The First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel is rooted in the Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board, founded in 1973. The First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel advises on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural matters and ensures the Australia Council delivers its First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy.

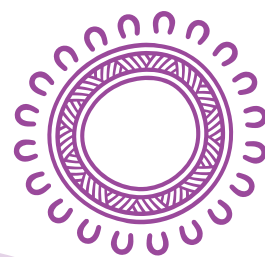
It is comprised of senior arts leaders who have direct influence at both a national and international level. They provide expert advice and help build strategic networks to ensure cultural continuity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture within a constantly changing environment.

To strategically support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture, the Strategy Panel takes a holistic and systemic view privileging Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. This view embraces global conversations of social justice, climate justice and decolonisation.

Alongside many other First Nations leaders, the Strategy Panel strive to be advocates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture. The Strategy Panel aim to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture in conversations around sovereignty, treaty, voice to Parliament, truth-telling, constitution and other transformative movements and moments in time.

The Strategy Panel have been key in developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture sector, by advocating for; and investing in, First Nations artists and organisations across all areas of practice. Today, the Strategy Panel is a vital mechanism that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture for the benefit of all Australians.

Borroloola Womens Cultural  
Song Project at Artback NT.  
Credit: Benjamin  
WarIngundu Bayliss C.





## Becoming a First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel member

Strategy Panel members are recommended by peers or current members of the Strategy Panel. Nominees are invited to become members by the Australia Council's Executive Director, First Nations Arts and Culture.

The purpose of each Strategy Panel member is to bring intersecting leadership qualities to their appointment:

- Thought Leadership
- Policy Leadership
- Cultural Protocols Leadership

Strategy Panel members are not elected 'representatives' and therefore respectfully refrain from 'speaking on behalf of' a sector. Rather, the Strategy Panel share a responsibility to listen, celebrate and advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture.





## Case study: Elevate

The Elevate career development opportunity saw Celia Coulthard, a proud Adnyamathanha woman, artist, and producer at Adelaide Festival Centre, attend the First Nations literature Festival, *Blak & Bright* on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nations in March 2022.

“As a producer of literary events, I was looking for opportunities to better support local South Australian First Nations writers and through my experience at *Blak & Bright*, I managed to create many valuable connections including partnership opportunities for OUR WORDS with Australian Poetry, who have partnered with several of the festival’s events. That connection was made possible because of the Elevate grant, so, the opportunity has had some tangible and immediate benefits. Also, I’m able to use the experience to further develop events in Adelaide that create ongoing and meaningful opportunities for our First Nations writers.”

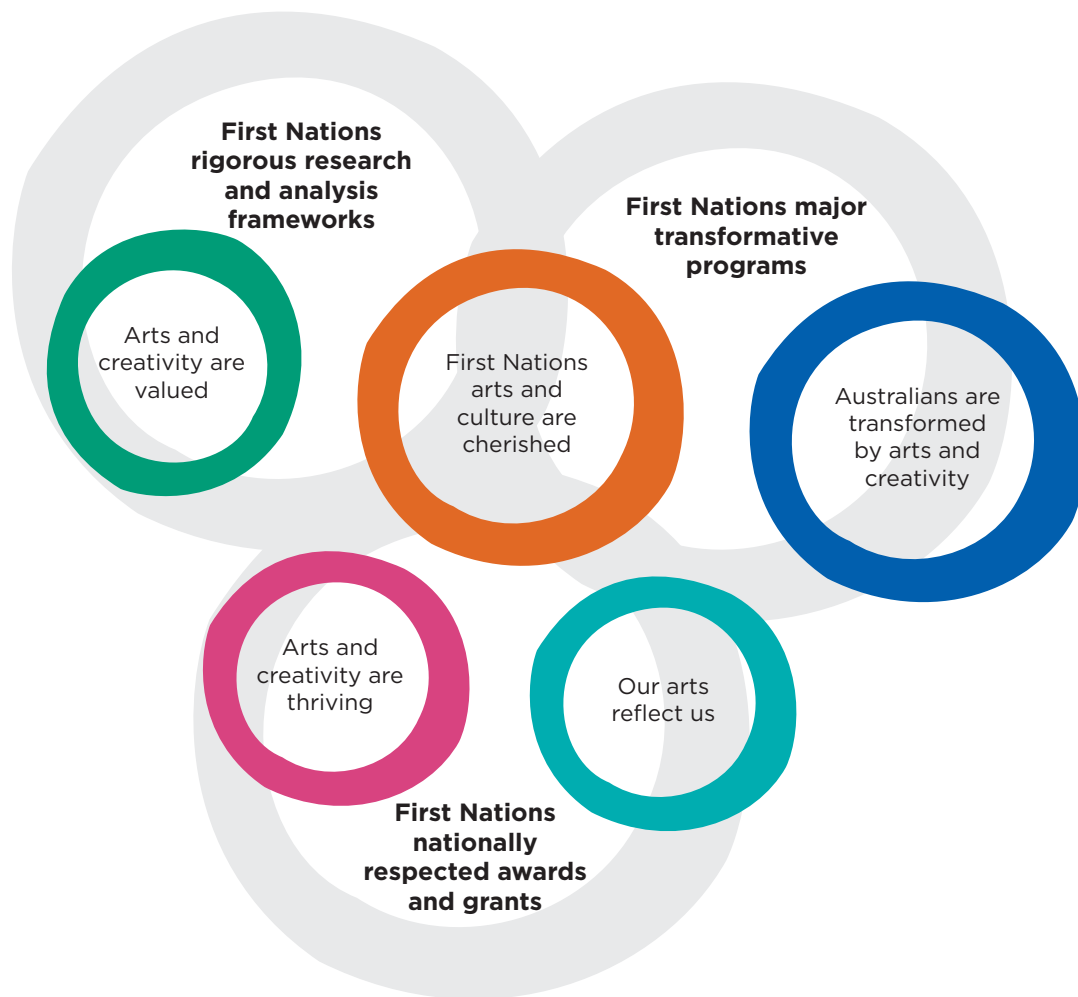
**Celia Coulthard,**  
2022 Elevate recipient.



Elaine Crombie, Seb Lawrie and Nara Wilson.  
Credit: Ben Searcy.

# Spheres of influence

The Strategy Panel recognises the cultural legacy of First Nations' arts and contributes to its social, economic, political, environmental and digital endurance. To do this, the Strategy Panel identifies, supports and engages with rigorous research and analytic frameworks. It also collaborates with, and oversees, major transformative programs and nationally respected awards and grants.



First Nations Arts and Culture Strategy Panel sphere of influence



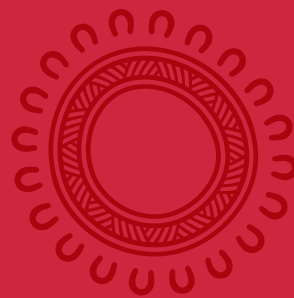
The Council's performance aligns to five strategic objectives





Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair Opening  
Ceremony performance by Abai Sagulau  
Buai Dance Team from Badu Island, Torres  
Strait, Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair, 2022.  
Credit: Dylan Buckee.





## Objectives

To ensure cultural continuity of First Nations arts and culture within a constantly changing environment, the Strategy Panel's objectives are to:

1. Enrich the Australia Council's understanding and connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture and provide a channel for sector issues and challenges to be raised.
2. Provide expertise and advice to the management and administration of Council, through the examination of reports and updates.
3. Champion conversations between local jurisdictions and Council about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture.



Destiny Deacon, BLAK, 2020, lightjet print,  
100 x 215 cm, Edition of 5 + 2 APs.  
Courtesy of the artist and Roslyn Oxley9  
Gallery, Sydney.

## Case study: Red Ochre Award

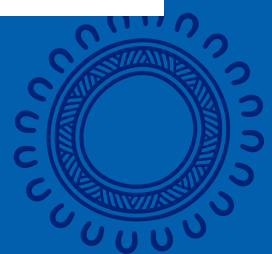
Destiny Deacon, a 2022 recipient of the prestigious Red Ochre Award, is a deeply respected multidisciplinary First Nations creative activist, educator and practitioner whose influence spans over three decades at community, regional, national and international levels. Since the 1990s Deacon's work has been primarily involved with performative photography, exploring Indigenous identity with provocative and humorous imagery that mocks and satirises clichéd and racist stereotypes – often with her collaborator, Virginia Fraser. Destiny's multidisciplinary practice, which is partly autobiographical and partly fictitious, encompasses photo-media, installation, film, archival research, public commissions, publications, lectures, workshops and panel discussions. Her work is intensely disturbing and disarmingly comedic, with domestic scenarios that tell tales of dispossession and alienation, featuring her trademark black dolls and Aboriginalia or vast collection of Koorie kitsch, and has participated in numerous international biennales and festivals throughout her career.

“We First Nation artists should try to create some understanding of what Australia is to us – from before colonisation and right up to contemporary times – what was, what is and what should be.”

**Destiny Deacon**

“Destiny Deacon is perhaps one of Australia's most underrated contemporary artists. She makes her work largely at home in suburban Brunswick, and her wide-ranging practice over the last 30 years has included photomedia, and a kind of absurdist performance through video. Destiny is one of the true characters of Australian art – and there is no one else who makes images of the abject or the unremarkable iconic, and unforgettable.”

**Daniel Browning, ABC**





## Case study: Flourish

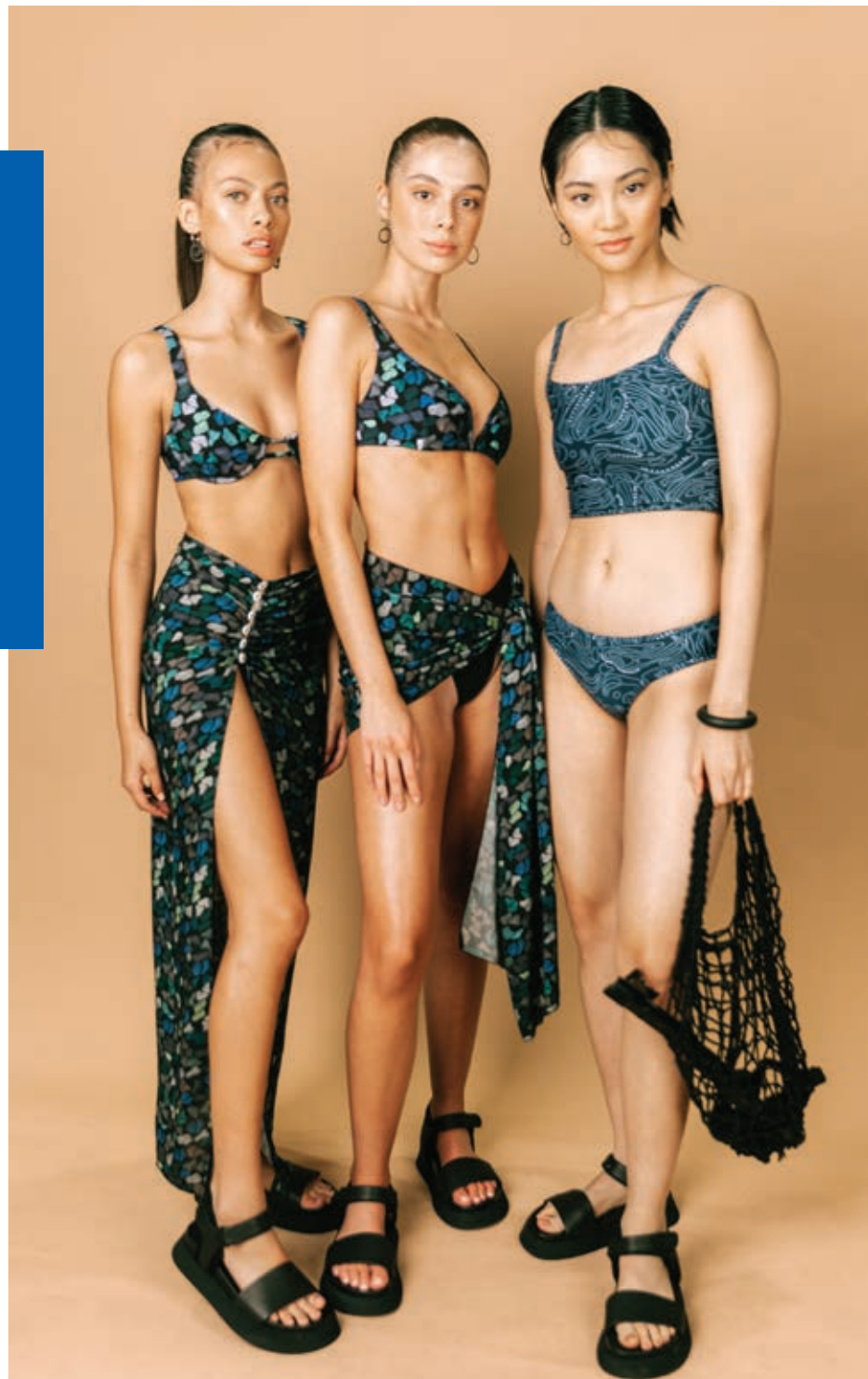
Liandra Gaykamangu, founder of swimwear label Liandra Swim, designs swimwear that fuses Aboriginal Australian Culture with on-trend premium designer swimwear. Each of Liandra Swim's prints represent a different story and are a contemporary representation of Liandra's experience as a Yolngu woman from East Arnhem Land, NT.

Liandra Swim Designer: Liandra  
Gaykamangu Collection: Deep  
Sea Collection Photographer:  
Joshua Howlett Location: Afterpay  
Australian Fashion Week 2022.

“What excited me about the Flourish grant was that the fashion industry is so well aligned with First Nations designers and artists as a platform to tell their stories in a contemporary way and to have an organisation like the Australia Council recognise that importance and to want to grow and nourish the industry is amazing.”

**Liandra Gaykamangu**

Liandra will use the Flourish grant opportunity to grow her marketing and capacity building by exploring new international audiences through key PR and social media activities. This will include building a digital strategy and profile that will enable an international audience to buy directly through an e-commerce store. Liandra will also actively look to grow her brand's professional development opportunities by broadening its industry network, both nationally and internationally, which in turn will help to foster the growth of two key sales channels: wholesale and direct-to-consumer.





# Principles

The principles of the Strategy Panel are a culturally informed, protocols-driven, inclusive guide to how we approach our spheres of influence.

## We are protocols driven:

We align with the established and nationally significant protocol guide document, ***Australia Council for the Arts' Protocols for using First Nations Intellectual and Cultural Property in the Arts***, with the following principles directly referencing this document.

### Respect

Respectful use of Indigenous cultural material and information is a basic principle. This underpins all aspects of engagement with Indigenous people, communities and their Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).

### Self-determination

Empowering Indigenous people in decision-making processes. Indigenous people have the right to self-determination in their artistic and cultural affairs, as well as in the expression of their cultural material.

### Communication, consultation and consent

Championing communication, consultation and consent as an essential first step when developing and planning projects and when reproducing and referencing existing cultural material.

### Interpretation

Ensuring Indigenous people are the primary guardians of their cultures and should be given the opportunity to interpret and present their own cultures.



### Cultural integrity and authenticity

Respect and upholding customary lore and cultural obligation associated with a work ensures authenticity and integrity in relationships and culture.

### Secrecy and confidentiality

Protecting Indigenous material from inappropriate or wide dissemination when dealing with secrecy and confidentiality.

### Attribution

Relevant Indigenous language groups or communities are attributed in respect to the use of their ICIP.



Photo supplied by KALACC.

### **Benefit sharing**

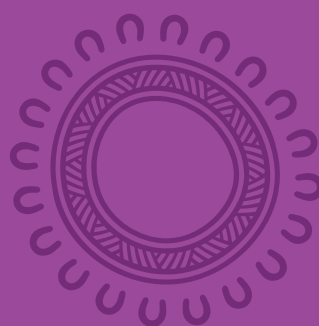
Indigenous people should share in the benefits and receive proper returns for use of their ICIP.

### **Continuing cultures**

Indigenous people are responsible for ensuring the practice and transmission of Indigenous cultural expression is continued for the benefit of future generations.

### **Recognition and Protection**

Australian law and policies should be developed and implemented to respect and protect ICIP.





## **We see arts as wellbeing:**

We value the contribution from all of community in the social and emotional wellbeing of our communities.

## **We celebrate all arts:**

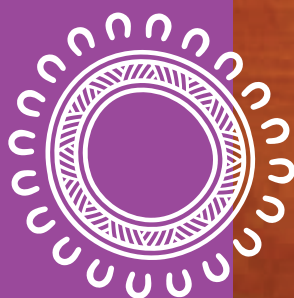
We support and celebrate First Nations achievement in the arts and cultural sector, in practice and endeavour, and in all its forms.

## **We cherish arts as a human right:**

Cultural participation is a human right. We cherish arts and culture for its intrinsic value.

## **We embrace cultural continuity:**

We embrace communities' continuation of culture through the arts, through its transformations, and development for time immemorial and forever more.



The National Indigenous Music Awards 2022.  
Credit: Paz Tassone.



### **We embody leadership:**

We remain grounded, while aspiring to strong strategic leadership.

### **We collaborate:**

We foster dialogue between governments and the private sector, as well as an ever increasing chorus of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices through capacity building.

### **We respect governance:**

We act in accordance with the Council's governance policies and procedures.

### **We demand Indigenous peoples rights:**

We align with the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008).



## Case study: Cherish II

Ngarrimili, meaning ‘to dance’ in Wadawurrung, is an organisation that supports business and entrepreneurship opportunities amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities nationally. In 2020, Ngarrimili recognised that a COVID-19 recovery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, arts workers, and business owners, required a trauma informed process, intersecting with adaptable, innovative, sustainable business support. A response that understood that the business of ‘the arts’ needed to be reimaged, underpinned by watertight accountability and governance, and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. With this knowledge, Ngarrimili worked to provide a culturally informed support program through 1:1 mentoring to 54 creatives, arts workers and arts businesses, developing capacity, entrepreneurialism and leadership in the arts sector, by strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative enterprise skills and governance.

These mentoring sessions spanned 368 hours, engaging 14 mentors (13 First Nations mentors) and covered themes for the creative/business owners that included e-commerce, strategy, art sales, legal, financial, and accounting wellbeing. Ngarrimili then hosted eight workshops, designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, working within the arts sector as creatives, business owners and arts workers. These workshops included a First Nations business and creatives development day (Shepparton), media training for First Nations businesses and creatives, Ngarrimili Yarns – for First Nations men in business and arts, identifying and understanding grant opportunities, mix and mingles – First Nations women in business and arts, understanding Xero, getting started with Patreon and equity crowdfunding and fundraising.

“The Ngarrimili model supports the First Nations economy in two ways, by supporting emerging businesses and creatives to grow, whilst enabling established business leaders and creatives to continue to thrive. Utilising the Cherish II funding, Ngarrimili is proud to have connected a network of world class First Nations leaders with the First Nations arts sector. We are focussed on delivering support to our community, from the grassroots level through to the mainstream, using innovative delivery strategies to ensure the best outcomes can be achieved with minimal barriers to accessibility.”

**Cormach Evans,**  
Managing Director, Ngarrimili

“Ngarrimili is a conduit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative businesses. Their work in connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders creatives to their own community of mentors and professional service providers has seen an increase in representation of First Nation creative practitioners in the creative industries, and this is a huge step in the right direction to self-determination”.

**Kerry Kennel,**  
Director, Artist Manager,  
Lead Consultant: Kennel and Co





Credit: Jacina Keefe.

## Case study: Space to Create

Western Gugu Yalanjiand Birri Gubba songman, Jungaji, is one of the successful participants in Space to Create, an intensive music residential program based onsite in Canberra in partnership Australian National University and the Yil Lull Studio. Space to Create works to provide participants with a professional development opportunity to sustain and grow their creative ideas. Jungaji, as one of only a small group of fluent Gu gu Yalanji speakers/song men left, has forged a reputation based on integrity and alongside this solo career has delved deep into the language and culture of his ancestral lands.

“The opportunity to further enhance my song-lines and stories within a professional environment and the impactful positive opportunities that (Space to Create) would create with a middle-aged song man like myself would be the trajectory for more sustainable outcomes within the music industry and would be a trigger for many other artists like myself to claim their purpose in society through music. I have a number of new songs to explore and record and will also dedicate time to any mentoring for younger participants.”

**Jungaji**



Jungaji and Dean Brady.  
Credit: Richard Clifford.



# Bringing it Forward: The journey towards a national body for First Nations arts and culture

In 2018 and 2019, the Australia Council conducted a national consultation about a proposed National Indigenous Arts and Cultural Authority (NIACA). A report on this process will be released in 2022 and will explore the genesis of NIACA, its history and context and the findings of the consultation undertaken by the Australia Council. It will also explore 'where to from here'.

The report was developed by the National Indigenous Arts Reference Group of the Australia Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts Board between 2008 and 2010. It was endorsed by the Board and members of the National Indigenous Arts Infrastructure Program, including unfunded partners. It was an idea that continued to be discussed in the First Nations arts and cultural sector in the following years.

Please visit  
**[australiacouncil.gov.au](http://australiacouncil.gov.au)**  
to read the full report.

The Australia Council thanks all those who contributed to discussions and consultations about NIACA over previous decades.

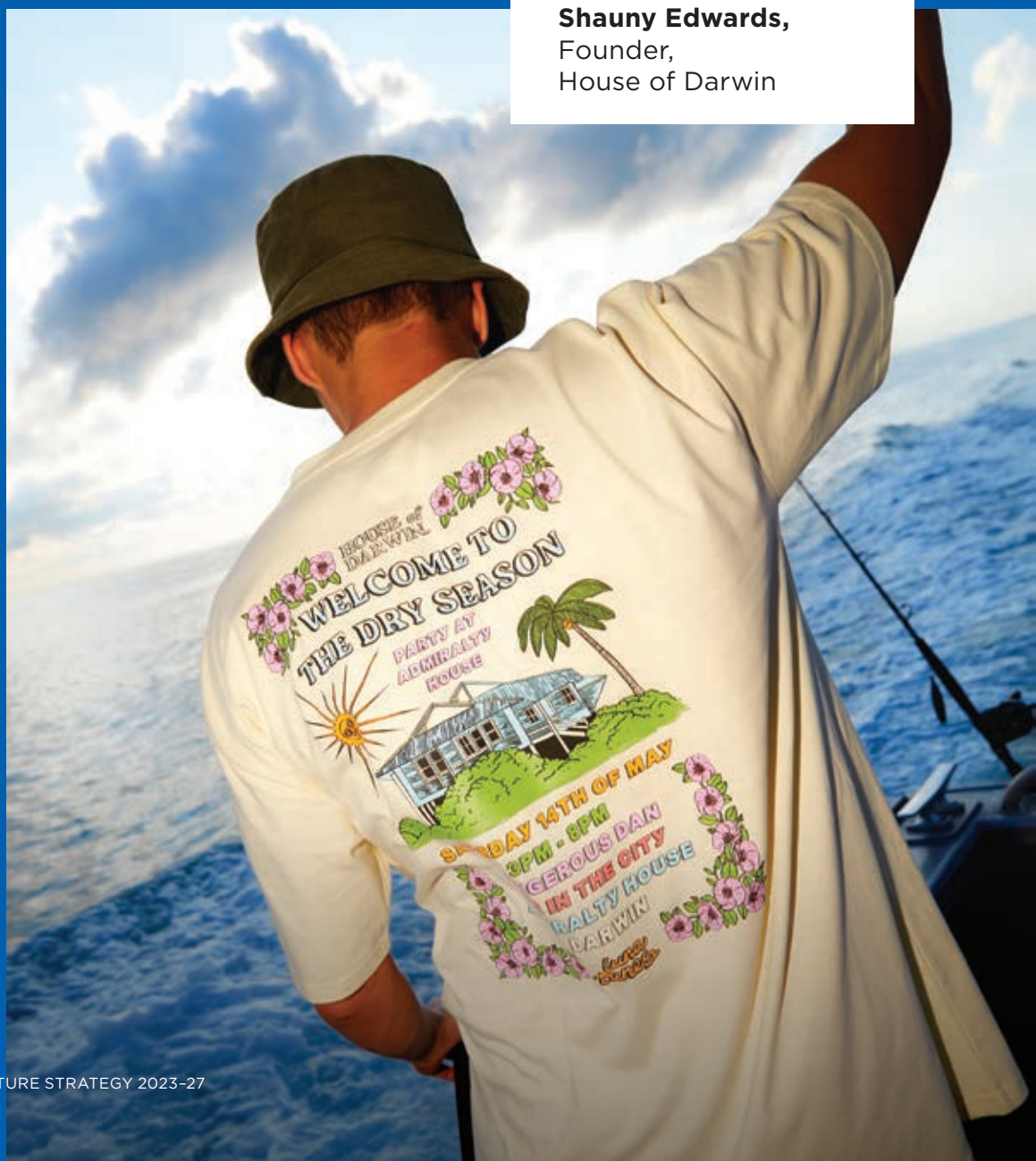
NIACA Broome visit during  
NIACA consultations.  
Credit: Australia Council  
for the Arts.

## Case study: House of Darwin

House of Darwin, an Indigenous owned, social enterprise based in Darwin, is one of the recipients of the Flourish Innovation Fund, which supports design, production, capacity building, marketing, professional development, and increasing digital visibility in the First Nations textile design and fashion sector. As a for-profit clothing company that reinvest their profits back into social programs in remote Indigenous communities, House of Darwin exists to inspire, educate, and cultivate change within the two worlds of Australia. They use creativity to tell stories, partner with grass roots organisations to enable change and inspire people to seek knowledge and join hands in the chorus of change.

“The Flourish grant allows House of Darwin to reach for the stars and try to take on the big brands around Australia and the world. This investment gives us the opportunity to bring in a world class mind to grow and expand beyond the borders of the Northern Territory. We are so humbled and proud to be a recipient of the Flourish grant.”

**Shauny Edwards,**  
Founder,  
House of Darwin



House of Darwin  
photoshoot.  
Credit: James Giles.



Production images of *Sunshine Super Girl* at Sydney Town Hall as part of Sydney Festival 2021. Credit: Brett Boardman.



**Case study:**  
**Signature Works *Sunshine Super Girl* –**  
**Andrea James**

*Sunshine Super Girl*, is a quintessentially Blak Australian story about Evonne Goolagong Cawley, a girl from the bush who dared to dream. This heart-warming story is a celebration of spirit and passion over adversity, and a tribute to a woman whose sporting prowess continues to inspire a nation, giving hope to thousands of young girls across the country. Written by Andrea James, a participant of the Signature Works program, an invitation only opportunity that involved intensive workshops aimed at supporting artists to develop concepts from production through to distribution.

“Signature Works gave me the time and space needed to think through my idea, then the opportunity to create a work of scale, one to be shown on the big stage.”

**Andrea James**



