

Walanga Wingara Mura Design Principles

Cover image: Cornel Ozies, Xanthorrea - Gadi, 20

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The University of Sydney's campuses and facilities sit on the lands of Australia's First Peoples, who have for thousands of generations exchanged knowledge for the benefit of all.

Respectfully acknowledging the ancient learning cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the University of Sydney declares its commitment to the continuation of this sharing through the agency of our work.

The University of Sydney's campuses and facilities sit on the ancestral lands of the Gadigal, Gamaraygal, Dharug, Wangal, Darkinyung, Guringgai, Gamilaraay, Barkindji, Bundjalung, Wiradjuri, Ngunawal, Gureng Gureng and Gagudju peoples, who have for thousands of generations exchanged knowledge for the benefit of all.

Ngyini ngalawangun mari budjari Gadinurada

We meet together on the very beautiful Gadi Country

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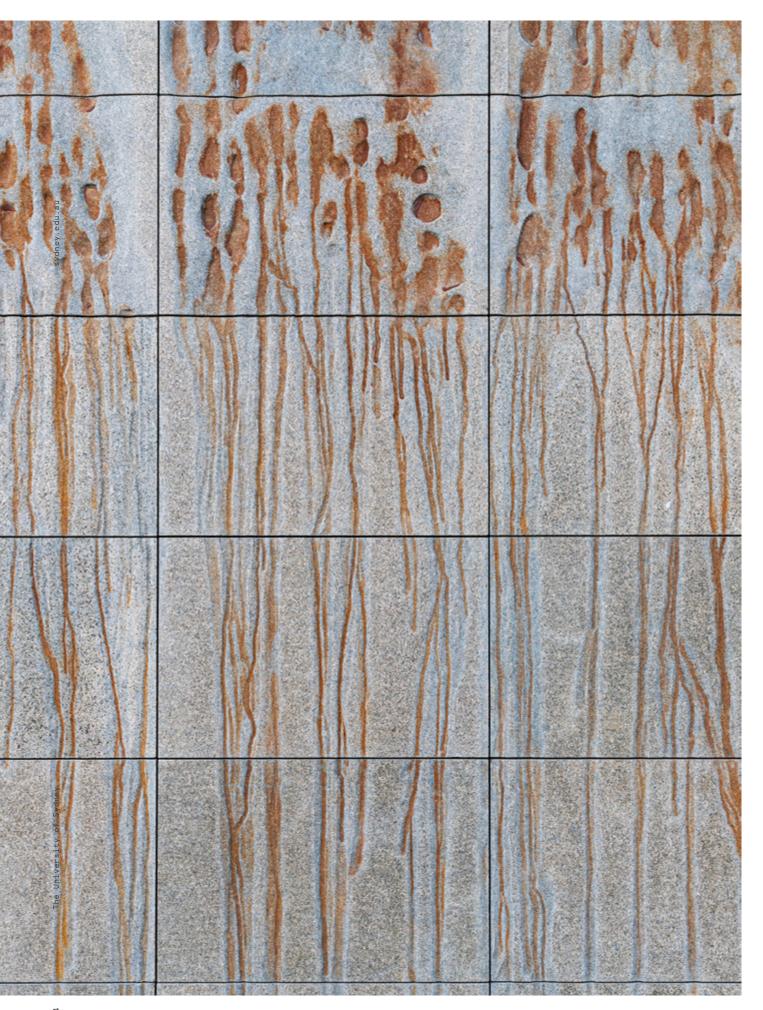
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Background

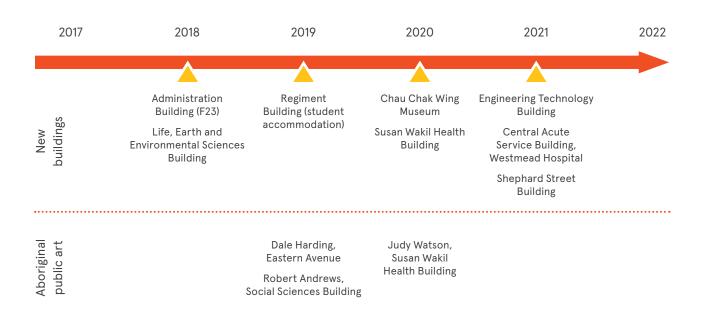
In 2016, the University of Sydney launched the Wingara Mura Design Principles and only two years later was awarded the Australian Institute of Architects 2019 Reconciliation Prize. Wingara Mura Design Principles have now been evaluated to examine how the principles have been applied, their impact on campus life and how best to share these stories with others.

This document – Walanga Wingara Mura Design Principles (Walanga Design Principles) is the product of collective dialogue between the University, the community of practice, industry and our Aboriginal stakeholders. It has been informed through engagement meetings where participants exchanged cultural understandings of place, offered practical examples of using the Design Principles and shared ideas on how to progress this work into the future.

The purpose of the Walanga Design Principles is to provide guidance on how to weave Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, world views and practices into the very fabric of our University and beyond. It will serve as a guide to those who are involved in realising the University's aspirations in physical design, including architects, engineers and landscapers, as well as in scholarship – curriculum developers, researchers, educators, and others.

To assist users of the Walanga Design Principles, we have documented selected case studies illustrating how these principles are being used, and describing some of their outcomes. We have also developed a template and checklist for you to use in planning future projects and activities.

The story so far



Introduction

From its earliest days, the University of Sydney was proudly in and of this land. As Australia's first university, it is important for us to consider our social responsibility and leadership in embracing the values and principles of the world's oldest continuous culture.

Our Camperdown and Darlington campus sits on the lands of the Gadigal of the Eora nation; all University teaching and research facilities are situated on lands of Australia's First Peoples. The Quadrangle was built on land on which the Gadigal have been teaching and learning for thousands of years, with sandstone hewn from local quarries, timber felled from Bundjalung country and mortar ground from lime and shells of on-site middens.

The University's founding decision to be a distinctively Australian university in this land has guided our thinking in developing these Walanga Design Principles. The Walanga Design Principles will help inform all involved in the work of the University about their rights to know the history of this place, their responsibilities to hold and share that knowledge, and their obligations to care for this country. These values also reflect the University's commitment to a culture centred on courage and creativity, respect and integrity, diversity and inclusion, openness and engagement.

The Walanga Design Principles are a resource for transforming these values into practice. The 'Making it happen' template on page 26 provides an easy framework for applying the Design Principles to your work.

The Walanga Design Principles will see our campuses become platforms for progressing reconciliation and creating opportunities to explore elements that connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities together.



Christian Thompson, *Heat*, 2010, Alan Richard Renshaw bequest University Art Collection

Vision

The University of Sydney is committed to upholding the connections that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples have with the lands on which the University stands, honouring this in its everyday life.

Through the Walanga Design Principles, we will develop a deeper understanding of Australia's history, of the traditional knowledge systems that have been in place for over 60,000 years, and contemporary issues connected to our local community.

This understanding will contribute to an ability to actively, ethically, respectfully and successfully engage across and between cultures, and with the environment that we all share.

The Walanga Design Principles inform how we and other institutions belong to this country, and what it means to be on and learn from lands that to Aboriginal people, have always been places of learning, knowledge exchange and wellbeing.



Louise Cooper, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags, 2019, University of Sydney

What are the Walanga Design Principles?

The Walanga Design Principles are a visual and tangible expression of the University's cultural framework, empowering the four values shown below, by:

- engaging with local Aboriginal peoples throughout all stages of the planning and decision-making process to better inform the development of projects
- prioritising the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, processes and knowledges in campus placemaking
- uncovering and further creating an environment that deeply resonates with the University's rich and diverse cultural history
- including student and alumni perspectives in the consultation, development and review processes when designing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander narratives
- improving the lived experience of the University's many cultures to build a strong and distinctive sense of belonging and place.



These four principles are central to the University's Culture Strategy. If the University is to meet its commitment to delivering outstanding education and research, we need to be supported by a culture that enables excellence.

The Walanga Design Principles and the University culture are interwoven and interdependent on one another. One simply does not exist without the other.

Culture change is an ongoing process that requires the participation of the whole University community. It will take time to achieve, however we have identified the important steps we can take to transform our culture into a place where everyone can thrive.

What does it mean to be a university on Aboriginal land?

The Walanga Design Principles seek to answer this question by engaging in authentic dialogue during our design approaches in order to enable cultural change.

Design approach

To strengthen a sense of belonging in the context of planning and designing the physical environment of the University, we need to take responsibility for an approach that:

- pursues a process of investigation and exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the narrative of their relationships and connections to place over time
- engages fully with cross-disciplinary dialogues and practices to foster respect, dignity, equality and engagement in the design process, from start to finish
- is responsive to the contemporary concerns of the diverse University community
- engages meaningfully with the needs and values of the community we support and serve, both now and into the future
- explores every project's contribution to a wider landscape and cultural experience
- supports the strengthening of a 'community of scholars' and a 'community of practice'
- recognises the powerful role of the University's physical environment as collective space, where relationships between different academic communities that constitute the University can be part of a network of collaboration and accountability for the good of the institution.

Embedded engagement

The University is committed to ensuring that engagement with all Indigenous peoples is embedded as an essential and prominent part of its overall strategy. This means making sure that:

- the voices of our Indigenous staff and students are heard at all levels of University decision-making
- we enjoy strong reciprocal relationships with local, regional and international Indigenous communities
- we actively promote reconciliation
- we are the university to which Indigenous students and staff choose to belong.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in design processes is more important than embedding Indigenous imagery in built form. Art, ritual and life is 'the doing', the process being as important as the outcome. Through the design process, we need to pursue every opportunity to engage fully and facilitate participation with local community members. The Walanga Design Principles are supported by a project partnership – a selected advisory group of informed University and community representatives, who will guide and endorse all projects.

"Our vision is that the complex range of relationships, histories, cultures and aspirations will, through education, research and engagement, be woven respectfully into a coherent Australian identity and narrative."

> Walanga Design Principles Project Control Group 2020

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Walanga Design Principles' three directives

The Walanga Design Principles are structured around the following three directives:

- Engaged Enquiry
- Community of Practice
- Mutual Accountability

Engaged Enquiry

- EE 1.1 Imagine a distinctively Australian university
- EE 1.2 Explore and advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and knowledges as design narratives

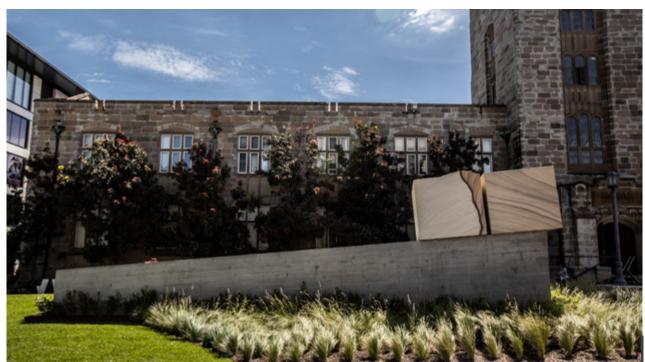
Community of Practice

- CoP 1.1 Deliver cultural experiences that are physically and visually tangible
- CoP 1.2 Create an environment that supports and clearly reflects core Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values
- CoP 1.3 Create an environment that deeply resonates with the narratives of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to create a living language of the land and its peoples, further enabling the creation of a sense of pride and generating informal opportunities to exchange shared knowledges

Mutual Accountability

- MA 1.1 Use a process of dynamic engagement with relevant stakeholders through the life of the project
- MA 1.2 Understand the Indigenous relevance to the future use of place and space
- MA 1.3 Engage in a creative process that respects ceremony as a significant aspect of place

Dale Harding, *Spine 2*, 2018, Eastern Avenue, Camperdown Campus



Engaged Enquiry EE 1.1 – Imagine a uniquely Australian university

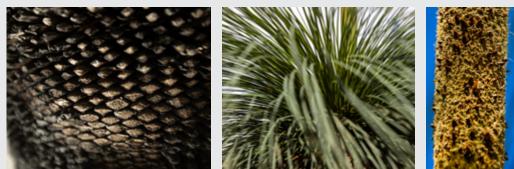
- Projects are grounded in a dialogue with our place – they should be climatically and culturally responsive, and explore opportunities to work with local languages, materials and craft
- In the treatment of buildings and spaces, projects seek to convey and express meanings legible to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people
- Projects explore initiatives that encourage the sharing of Country and development of spaces that recognise history and our future together
- The siting and orientation of buildings, activities and spaces are considered within the context of a larger landscape of Indigenous narratives.

Case study: the Gadi

Gadi have been planted at the front entrance of the University from City Road and throughout the campus to acknowledge the land and people of this place.

Also known as the Xanthorrea, or grass tree, Gadigal, meaning Gadi people, is derived from the word Gadi. The plants were used by the Gadigal for a range of purposes. The Gadi are unique to this continent and not too long ago, Sydney's landscape was defined by their presence.





Cornel Ozies, Xanthorrea - Gadi tree, 2019, Eastern Avenue, Camperdown Campus

Case study: Indigenous landscapes

We source local flora for the Camperdown and Darlington Campus. Of more than 2000 trees, approximately 1400 are native. There are also more than 500,000 native plants, shrubs and grasses. Landscape areas are developed using symbols and patterns to reflect Indigenous gathering places and original natural environments.

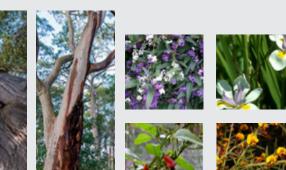


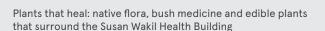


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Sand-blasted Gadigal Green

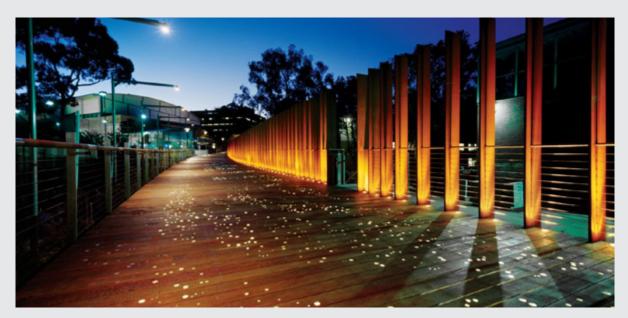
Indigenous references in plantings in the public domain, here illustrating the natural creek that formerly ran across what is now Eastern Avenue







An artist's impression of the Illawarra flame tree, planted as a companion for the new jacaranda in the Quadrangle



Engaged Enquiry EE 1.2 – Explore and promote Aboriginal histories and knowledges as design narratives

- Our design ideas seek to understand and explore relationships with Country and community, knowledges and storylines past and present
- Relationships with the cultural present and future across all age demographics of Indigenous peoples are embraced.

Case study: 'Learning', the University of Sydney seal, 1851

Soon after its foundation in 1850, the University of Sydney held a design competition for its first seal. The winning entry was a design by recently-arrived English artist Marshall Claxton, which was adapted to include the motto 'Virtutem Doctrina paret' (Let teaching promote excellence), composed by another entrant.

The University's first seal depicts the Greek goddess Athena anointing a young scholar kneeling next to a Gadi plant.

The University's seal was replaced by a Royal Grant of Arms made in 1857.

Case study: Public art

Garabara, an artwork in the Social Sciences Building, is the first project in the University's history to integrate public art into the fabric of a building. The work, by Aboriginal artist Robert Andrew, acknowledges the Gadi peoples of this Land. The work displays the Sydney language word for corroboree or dance – *Garabara*. The word has been eroded into the surface of the granite façade of the building.





DOCTR

Robert Andrews Garabara, 2018 Social Sciences Building, Camperdown Campus

SIGI

Case study: Public art (continued)

Judy Watson *djuguma*, 2020 (in development) Susan Wakil Health Building, Camperdown Campus

"Djuguma is the local name for the dilly bag made by female ancestors and used in this Country to collect and carry. This artwork pays homage to the important role of Aboriginal women who gathered food and bush medicine to feed, nurture and heal their communities. We have survived because of the efforts of our mothers, aunties, sisters, grandmothers and theirs before them." Judy Watson, artist, 2020





Dale Harding, *Spine series*, 2018 Camperdown Campus

Spine 1 (universe) Life, Earth and Environmental Sciences Building foyer

"The paintings are literally illustrations of my breath. The petrified tree links to the Moreton Bay fig trees lining City Road which are important to the shared thinking about this site that houses Environmental Sciences. Many relations – scientific, historic, cultural, spiritual and philosophical – are embedded between the living trees and the petrified trunk."

Dale Harding, artist, 2018



Spine 2

Eastern Avenue

"The work is an acknowledgement of the Great Dividing Range – the sandstone country that rises and falls along the spine of eastern Australia. Many of the University buildings have been built from this sandstone."

Dale Harding, artist, 2018

Spine 3 (radiance) Carslaw Building

"I begin with a line of inheritance in rock art, but I am not bound to the rock art of my ancestors. Instead, my work is aligned to contemporary practice with different histories and new materials."

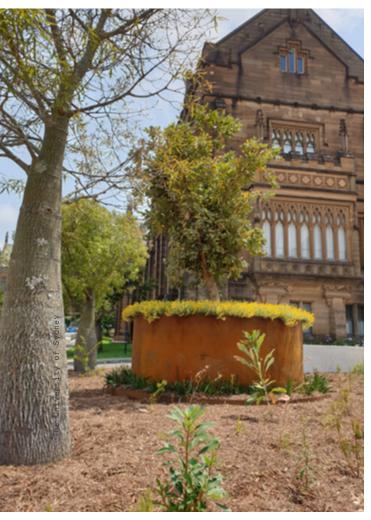
Dale Harding, artist, 2018





Community of Practice CoP 1.1 – Deliver cultural experiences that are physically and visually tangible

- Projects explore an appropriate translation of 'intercultural space', spaces for deep listening, sharing, learning and attempting to understand different world views
- Projects explore the physical, the emotive and the spiritual elements of relevant storylines and the materiality of the contextual natural world to develop meaningful interpretation in the physical forms of the University.



The Transient garden on Camperdown Campus, 2019

"From gardens to monuments and institutions, what we do to the land tells a story. The narrative of landscape is something that Aboriginal people have always understood, it is our history, our present and our future. Our story of connection to Country is something that has and always will be present."

Arcadia Landscape Architecture

"Spaces like this allow us to easily have conversations about what belongs – and how those talks about belonging can happen easily."

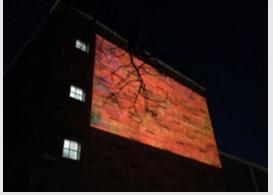
Professor Lisa Jackson Pulver AM

Case study: Lights and soundscapes

The Footbridge Gallery This is a space designed for ceremony, projection and digital art.

A key element is *Moodulation*, an audio-based installation that converts the noise pollution from Parramatta Road traffic into the sounds of the past, of bird song, waves or peoples stories, transforming the aural landscape.







"The Footbridge Gallery brings together the work of all its communities, students, staff, alumni, creatives, and residents in adjacent areas for all those who feel a sense of belonging on these Gadigal lands that have for thousands of years been a gathering and journeying place."

Professor Richard Miles Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Enterprise and Engagement)

Vivid 2014 and 2015 Buildings as a canvas for projection art



Community of Practice

CoP 1.2 – Create an environment that supports and reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values

- Designs reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and values: community, kinship, social responsibility, social interaction and the importance of place
- Projects explore the creation of spaces that strengthen community ties and facilitate community obligations to create spaces that are designed to fit the community's requirements, both now and into the future.



Charles Perkins, The Freedom Ride Memorial Plaque Organised by Chris Legge-Wilkinson Beneath the Clock Tower of the Quadrangle.

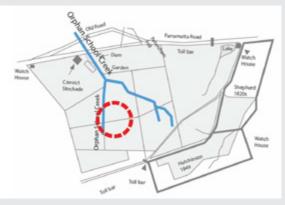
Case study: Susan Wakil Health Building

Camperdown Completion in 2020

The Susan Wakil Health Building is a teaching location for students of health sciences, nursing and midwifery. It is located on the site of Orphans School Creek, in the vicinity of a recognised Indigenous birthing place.

Streams once passing through there would have been clean and flowing, with the Gadigal fishing, hunting land animals and gathering plants.

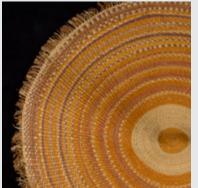
The Susan Wakil Health Building has layers of embedded Indigenous narratives, with the façade screen taking inspiration from the making of the woven dilly bags, and the landscape reflecting the path of the now invisible streams. The colour of the interiors reflect natural fibres, the natural landscape and local flora.

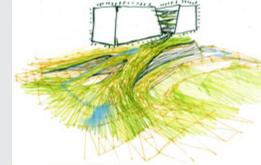


Susan Wakil Health Building design



Woven dilly bag





Natural fibres of woven bags and baskets were the inspiration for facade of the Susan Wakil Health Building



Arist's impression of the Susan Wakil Health Building

Community of Practice

CoP 1.3 – Create an environment that generates opportunities to exchange shared knowledge

- sydney.edu.au
- Deeply resonates with the narratives of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to create a living language of the land and its peoples, further strengthening sense of pride
- Sensitively explores opportunities to use local language to name projects and concepts
- Naming brings language and vocabulary; it implies a notion of belonging to group or country. When a building, place, process or event is named by a traditional owner, it is a recalling of connection to an existing ancestral history, place, person and activity
- Achievements and contributions of significant Aboriginal or Torres
 Strait Islander graduates can be opportunities for acknowledgment and
 celebration in the naming of spaces and places
- Projects explore opportunities to use the environment to educate and reveal the local vocabulary of place to ignite conversations and share cultural knowledges.

Case study: Local language visualisation

"At the University of Sydney, as in other parts of Australia, we are recognising our responsibility to acknowledge and preserve Aboriginal Australia's heritage.

At the local level, the focus on Indigenous languages on our campuses provides opportunities to connect the higher education community with Indigenous culture. Language lies at the heart of cultural identity."¹



Robert Andrew, Garabara, 2018 Meaning: Corroboree or dance Social Sciences Building, Camperdown Campus

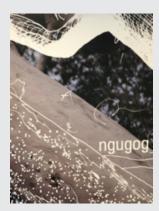
Regiment Building (student accommodation) City Road, Darlington campus

The naming of each common space within the building was advised by Indigenous students to create a community of learning.

These murals are at lift entrances and other public spaces through the accomodation.



Warami Meaning: A friendly greeting in Gadigal language



Ngugog Meaning: Owl



Ghuttie Meaning: King brown snake



Erambie Meaning: Yabby – a freshwater crayfish

1 Quinnell, R., Poll, M. and Troy. J. "The Sydney Language on Our Campuses and in Our Curriculum." Cultural Competence and the Higher Education Sector: Perspectives, Policies and Practice, edited by Jack Frawley, Gabrielle Russell and Juanita Sherwood, Springer, 2015, pp. 215-232.

Mutual Accountability

MA 1.1 – Use a process of dynamic engagement with relevant stakeholders through the life of the project

- Through project engagement, teams seek to create responses that avoid perpetuating stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia to non-Indigenous audience
- The project team and client adhere to the University's consultation process to establish common creative ground and generate a dialogue about the physical manifestation of Indigenous design relevant to each project.

Case study: Chau Chak Wing Museum

Camperdown Completion in 2020

In-depth co-design and regular community consultations have occurred throughout the planning, design and construction of the Chau Chak Wing Museum (CCWM). The museum sits at the corner of University Avenue and Parramatta Road. The Wingara Mura Design Principles have been used to incorporate a sense of Gadigal place and history into the museum's architectural and social spaces.

Building on community dialogues that have been taking place for more than 10 years, the museum team have facilitated an extensive consultation process. This includes the following engagements: Chau Chak Wing Indigenous Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, Gadigal community Elders, Gadigal community youth and an Indigenous architectural advisory group.





Mutual Accountability

MA 1.2 – Understand the relevance of Indigenous people's use of place and space

- Projects develop creative and scholarly connections to Indigenous people's learnings among University and Faculty activities, to be incorporated into the built environment and landscape
- Projects facilitate an inter-cultural approach to design, and facilitate shared journeys in which solutions are co-designed with the University
- Projects demonstrate appropriate cultural knowledge recognition and distribute value to the owners of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property.

Case study: CampusFlora app

In October 2014, the CampusFlora app became the first learning and teaching app available in the University of Sydney's online app store.

One version was developed in partnership with botany students and colleagues from the University, and another in partnership with computer science students.

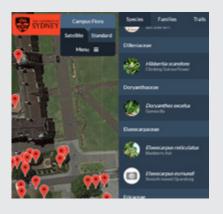
In early 2017, the CampusFlora project was selected for the prestigious CSIRO On Prime entrepreneurial and mentoring program.

The app can be downloaded at:

- https://apps.apple.com/au/app/campusflora/id918408102

"CampusFlora has become a tool to offer layered narratives as exemplified by the Patyegarang 'Sydney language' trail in the CampusFlora's WebApp. This trail was developed in collaboration with colleagues across the University, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and offers content from Professor Jakelin Troy's work on Indigenous languages. I pay my deepest respects to Patyegarang for sharing her language."

Associate Professor Rosanne Quinnell School Life and Environmental Sciences





Xanthorrhoea sp. Sol. ex Sm.

Grass tree 9 <u>View species on map</u>

Arborplan: Located at (-33.888196, 151.188804)

Family name Xanthorrhoeaceae

Indigenous Name Sydney language: gulgadya

Mutual Accountability MA 1.3 – Engage in a creative process that respects ceremony as a significant aspect of place

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences and expressions are not distinguished from cultural practice.

- Projects draw a connection to Country and explore opportunities to establish spaces that support cultural programs and contemporary community practices
- Projects consider deliberate landscape features that signal and highlight the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and practices on Country.



Louise Cooper, *Gadi outside F23, Camperdown Campus*, 2019, University of Sydney

Case study: Ceremonial places

An important aspect of the design of our public domain is the creation and reinstatement of places for ceremony. All photos are used with consent.

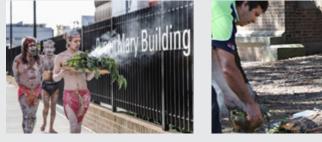




















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Wingara Mura Design Principles alignment template Making it happen

The template below is for teams, stakeholders and reviewers to use - it is a simple way to use the Walanga Design Principles in proposals and projects. From the development of project briefs through to design development and completion, we encourage you to work through each of these creative and critical considerations.

Walanga Wingaré	Walanga Wingara Mura Design Principles Project Elements	What is possible in your area?	Who is important to include?	Key steps in the process?	Resources and permissions required?	Time frame?
	EE 1.1 What would a uniquely Australian university in your area feature? E.g. a feature of the traditional use of the land, or local flora					
Enguiry	EE 1.2 What Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and knowledges could you explore and support as design narratives? E.g. information about how the land was used over thousands of generations					
	CoP 1.1 What cultural experiences from your local area are physically and visually tangible?					
Community of	CoP 1.2 Which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values could you reflect in your environment?					
	CoP 1.5 What elements in the environment would resonate with the narratives of the University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and generate opportunities to exchange shared knowledge?					
	MA 1.1 What processes for dynamic engagement with relevant stakeholders have been in place already that you could follow, and use throughout the life of the project?					
Mutual Accountability	MA 1.2 What is the Indigenous peoples' engagement with relevance to the space, and what is envisioned for the future?					
	MA 1.3 What ceremonies are relevant to the localarea and creative and scholarly community, that could be incorporated into place?					

		Projects are grounded in a dialogue with our place – they should be climatically and culturally responsive and explore opportunities to work with local languages, materials and crafts.
	EE 1.1	In the treatment of buildings and spaces, projects seek to convey and express meanings legible to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
Engaged Enquiry		Projects explore initiatives that encourage the sharing of Country and development of spaces that recognise shared history and our future together.
-		The siting and orientation of buildings, activities and spaces are considered within the context of a larger landscape of Indigenous narratives.
	EE 1.2	Our design ideas seek to understand and explore relationships with Country and community, knowledges and storylines past and present. Relationships with the cultural present and future across all age demographics of Indigenous peoples is embraced.
		Projects explore an appropriate translation of 'intercultural space,' spaces for deep listening, sharing, learning and attempting to understand different world views.
	CoP 1.1	Projects explore the physical, emotive and spirituality of relevant storylines and the materiality of the contextual natural world to develop meaningful interpretation in the physical forms of the University.
		Designs reflect Indigenous knowledge and values: community, kinship, social responsibility, social interaction and the importance of place.
Community of Practice	CoP 1.2	Projects explore the creation of spaces that strengthen community ties and facilitate community obligations and requirements to create spaces that are designed to fit the community's requirements, both now and in the future.
		Sensitively explore opportunities to employ naming in projects. Naming brings language and vocabulary. It implies a notion of belonging to group or country. When a building or a place is named by a traditional owner, it is a recalling of connection to an existing ancestral history and place.
	CoP 1.3	Where relevant, the achievements and contribution of significant Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander graduates will be considered as opportunities for acknowledgement and celebration in the naming of spaces and places.
		Projects explore opportunities to use the environment to educate and reveal the local vocabulary of place to ignite informal conversations to share cultural knowledges.
		Through project engagement, teams seek to create responses that avoid perpetuating stereotypes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia for non-Indigenous audiences.
		The project team and client adhere to the University's consultation process to establish common creative ground and generate a dialogue about the physical manifestation of Indigenous design relevant to each project.
Mutual		Projects develop scholarly connections to Indigenous learning of the relevant faculty/University activity and be incorporated in the build environment.
Accountability	MA 1.2	Projects adopt an intercultural approach to design and facilitate a shared journey in which solutions are co-designed with the University.
		Projects demonstrate appropriate cultural knowledge recognition and distribute value to the ownership of indigenous cultural and intellectual property.
	MA 1.3	Projects draw a connection to Country and explore opportunities to establish spaces that support a cultural program and contemporary community practices.
		Projects consider deliberate landscape interventions that signal and highlight the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and practices of Country.

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Useful links

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