THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Focused Initiatives in Social Work and Education Conference 2026

**Monday 22 & Tuesday 23 June 2026, 9.00am-4.30pm**

**In-person attendance at the University of Sydney**

## *Centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices leading collaborative, and culturally grounded practices in social work and education*

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Focused Initiatives in Social Work and Education Conference brings together practitioners, educators, students, and community leaders to promote practice through the guidance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, sovereignty, and lived experiences. This gathering is more than a conference; it is a platform for truth-telling and shared learning that centres Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in shaping the future of both social work and education in Australia and aims to foster collaborative and culturally responsive approaches across these professions.

With keynote addresses from respected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, academics, and community allies, the program highlights innovative, culturally grounded approaches to teaching, learning, practice, policy, and research. Workshops and panel sessions will explore strength-based models that challenge deficit discourse and dense frameworks; and instead, focus on strong cultural leadership and partnerships that elevate these professional fields using Community-Led approaches that honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing.

Participants will be invited to reflect critically on the legacy of social work and education in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, while also engaging with practices of accountability, respect, and partnership. By foregrounding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, the conference seeks to transform not only how social work and education engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, but also how these professions themselves are defined and practised more broadly.

## For enquiries please contact:

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## Keynote presentations from:

**Patricia Dudgeon,** Professor, School of Indigenous Studies, The University of Western Australia

**Tracey Bunda,** Professor of Indigenous Education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, The University of Queensland

**Jessica Russ-Smith,** Associate Professor of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences, Australian Catholic University

## Keynote panel facilitated by:

**Jioji Ravulo,** Professor and Chair of Social Work and Policy Studies, Sydney School of Education and Social Work, facilitates a panel discussion with University of Sydney colleagues in education and social work.

## Further presentations delivered by:

Practitioners of social work, education, health, justice and policy, academics, interdisciplinary agencies, teachers, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community allies.

## Call for presentations:

Presentations are being sought for the delivery of papers, panels, workshops, yarning circles and posters. This collaborative space welcomes submissions from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples. For submission details see: Call for presentations.

Submission deadline: Thursday 30 April 2026

## Registration, fees and location:

**General admission fee:** $585 per person (GST Incl).

**Student & community admission fee:** $365 per person (GST Incl). Students must be currently completing a PhD, Master of Philosophy or master's coursework. Community representatives must be currently contributing to, or employed in a community based program. Scholarships available.

**Not-for-profit** organisations: $200 per person (GST Incl).

**Daily fee:** $300 per person/per day (GST Incl).

**Location:** Education Building, Manning Road, The University of Sydney, Australia

For further information and registration please visit the conference website.