

# Reconciliation News

Stories about Australia's journey to equality and unity

## Rachael Hocking

NITV host talks representation and truth-telling

## Governance

Best practice and innovation

## Sustainability

Combining Aboriginal and Western approaches

**STATEMENT  
FROM THE HEART** poster inside

**TREATY**  
WHAT CAN IT ACHIEVE?

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RECONCILIATION  
AUSTRALIA

***Reconciliation News*** is a national magazine produced by Reconciliation Australia twice a year. Its aim is to inform and inspire readers with stories relevant to the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

## CONTACT US



[reconciliation.org.au](http://reconciliation.org.au)



[enquiries@reconciliation.org.au](mailto:enquiries@reconciliation.org.au)



02 6273 9200

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Reconciliation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

Reconciliation Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation promoting reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Visit [reconciliation.org.au](http://reconciliation.org.au) to find out more.

### Cover image:

Rachael Hocking (by Nick Cubbin, The Deal Magazine)

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# RECONCILIATION RECAP

## SIX MONTHS IN REVIEW

1 March 2018

Vonda Malone named top emerging leader



Vonda Malone was named the inaugural McKinnon Emerging Political Leader of the Year by a judging panel including former prime ministers Julia Gillard and John Howard. Malone, who became the first female mayor of the Torres Shire Council in 2016, was recognised for her work in finding community-led solutions for critical issues in the Torres Strait Islands, such as waste management, housing shortages and healthcare. The prize was established by the University of Melbourne and the Susan McKinnon Foundation to recognise those in public office demonstrating integrity and courage.



27 May-3 June 2018

NRW asks: "What do you know?"

National Reconciliation Week 2018 called on Australians to ask themselves, "How much do I know about our nation's history?" The theme—'Don't keep history a mystery: learn, share, grow'—promotes the need to acknowledge, accept and address our shared history to become a more just and equitable Australia. Each year, National Reconciliation Week is celebrated across the country from 27 May to 3 June. These dates mark the anniversary of the 1967 referendum, when more than 90 per cent of Australians voted 'yes' to including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the count of our nation's citizens, and the landmark 1992 Mabo decision in the High Court, which overturned the doctrine of *terra nullius* ('land that belongs to no one'). This year, Canberrans kicked off National Reconciliation Week with the first Reconciliation Day public holiday in any state or territory in the country.



21 June 2018

Australia's first treaty legislation

The Victorian Government took a significant step towards reconciliation by establishing Australia's first treaty legislation. Gunditjmara woman and highly respected Victorian Aboriginal leader Jill Gallagher AO has been appointed Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner and will lead the establishment of the Aboriginal Representative Body. The body will be tasked with setting the framework for treaty negotiations with Aboriginal people and Traditional Owner groups in Victoria [see full story on pp. 8-9].

## 8-15 July 2018

### NAIDOC Week



The theme of NAIDOC Week 2018—‘Because of her, we can’—paid tribute to the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women make to their communities and the nation. Dr June Oscar AO, a Bunuba woman from Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley, was named 2018 NAIDOC Person of the Year, in recognition of her work championing the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially women and children, and her tireless work to preserve ancient languages. Alyawarre woman and passionate social justice advocate Patricia Anderson AO won the NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award for dedicating her life to improving the health, welfare and education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## 30 July 2018

### Interim constitutional recognition report



The Joint Select Committee for Constitutional Recognition released its interim report on 30 July 2018, constituting an important step in the long journey towards constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and towards reconciliation more broadly. The committee received 381 authorised submissions and heard evidence at hearings around Australia after it was appointed in March. The committee’s final report is due by 29 November 2018.

## 3–6 August 2018

### Garma festival calls for truth-telling



The 20th annual Garma festival in north-east Arnhem Land focused on the role of truth-telling in advancing reconciliation. The theme was a major influence on the discussions during the Garma Key Forum, which has become a major national platform for the discussion and debate of issues affecting Indigenous Australians. Thousands of business and political leaders, academics and journalists attended.

## 15 August 2018

### First comprehensive Stolen Generations data



For the first time, comprehensive data has revealed the direct link between the forced removal of tens of thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and the real-life symptoms of intergenerational trauma. A report from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Healing Foundation found that Stolen Generations members were almost twice as likely as other Indigenous Australians to rely on welfare payments and experience violence.

# CEO COLUMN



Welcome to *Reconciliation News*, issue number 40.

In this edition we focus on self-determination, and some of the great work being done by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations to advance reconciliation.

While there is upheaval and churn among our federal politicians, there remains a clarity of purpose among many of our country's leaders in the health, education, business, justice and community sectors on issues of significance to national reconciliation and unity.

In particular, the call for a Voice to Parliament has not faded. The Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples attracted hundreds of submissions supporting a Voice. The concept has also drawn public declarations of support from leading national organisations, including the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners; the Business Council of Australia; the Royal Australasian College of Physicians; the Human Rights Law Centre; the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples; the Australian Council of Social Services; the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union; and the Law Council of Australia.

Reconciliation Australia is also working to keep the call for a Voice to Parliament top of mind among our supporters, the politicians with whom we meet, and the voting public. In this issue, you will find a tear-out poster at the centre of the magazine. On the poster are the poetic and compelling words of the Statement from the Heart, presented to the Australian people at Uluru on 26 May 2017. Please hang it prominently in your workplace, school, community centre or club house—wherever it will be seen.

While we may feel frustrated by the politics in Canberra, it is very encouraging to see some real progress being made at the state level. In this issue we talk with Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner Jill Gallagher about her work and what treaty can do for reconciliation.

And, in our feature article on Indigenous governance, we explore the strength and impact of projects and strategies delivered by empowered, self-managed organisations and communities. A recent report completed by the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute provides fresh insight into current best practice and innovations in Indigenous governance in Australia. Highlights and key learnings are featured in these pages.

To wrap up this issue of inspiring stories of self-determination and strength, be sure to read our feature on Djirra and the work of tireless campaigner Antoinette Braybrook. Antoinette established the service 15 years ago to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing family violence. It is an incredible story of commitment and tenacity.

As Antoinette said, "Aboriginal women are strong and resilient, and we have the solutions to the problems affecting our lives."

I couldn't agree more.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Mundine'.

**Karen Mundine**  
CEO, Reconciliation Australia



# CALENDAR

## SPECIAL DAYS

**30**  
November 2018

Joint Select Committee final report on constitutional recognition due

**10**  
December 2018

Human Rights Day

**26**  
January 2019

Australia Day / Invasion Day / Survival Day

**13**  
February 2019

National Apology Day

**21**  
March 2019

National Close the Gap Day & Harmony Day

## EVENTS

### Tarnathi Art Fair

**When:** 26-28 October 2018 (Friday, 5pm-8pm; Saturday-Sunday, 10am-4pm)

**Where:** Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, Adelaide, SA

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [tarnathi.com.au](http://tarnathi.com.au)

### John Mawurndjui: I am the old and the new

**When:** 26 October 2018 - 28 January 2019 (10am-5pm every day)

**Where:** Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, SA

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [tarnathi.com.au](http://tarnathi.com.au)

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference

**When:** 20-21 November 2018

**Where:** Rendezvous Hotel, Perth, WA

**Price:** \$770

**Info:** [ispc2018.com](http://ispc2018.com)

### Healing Our Spirit Worldwide — The Eighth Gathering

**When:** 26-29 November 2018

**Where:** International Convention Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney, NSW

**Price:** \$440-\$1,236

**Info:** [hosw.com](http://hosw.com)

### 35th National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Art Awards exhibition

**When:** Until 11 November 2018

**Where:** The Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin, NT

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [magnt.net.au](http://magnt.net.au)

### Winhangadurinya: Aboriginal meditation

**When:** 1-2 December 2018

**Where:** Australian Museum, Sydney, NSW

**Price:** \$50

**Info:** [australianmuseum.net.au](http://australianmuseum.net.au)

### National Reconciliation Action Plan Conference 2018: Progressing Reconciliation

**When:** 5-6 December 2018

**Where:** Richmond Football Club, Swinburne Centre, Yarra Park, Richmond, Victoria

**Price:** \$200

**Info:** [swinburne.edu.au/rap-conference](http://swinburne.edu.au/rap-conference)

### Evolution: Torres Strait Islander Masks exhibition

**When:** Until 28 January 2019

**Where:** Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Melbourne, Victoria

**Price:** \$15

**Info:** [museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka](http://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka)

### Yalukut Weelam Ngargee Festival

**When:** 2 February 2019

**Where:** St Kilda O'Donnell Gardens, Melbourne, Victoria

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [ywnf.com.au](http://ywnf.com.au)

### Tjungu Festival

**When:** 26-29 April 2019

**Where:** Ayers Rock Resort, Yulara, NT

**Price:** Free (charges apply for select events)

**Info:** [ayersrockresort.com.au](http://ayersrockresort.com.au)



# TREATY NOW

**As several governments at state and territory level take steps to begin a treaty process, Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner Jill Gallagher tells *Reconciliation News* what treaty can do for reconciliation.**

## KEY TO PROGRESS:

Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner Jill Gallagher says treaty can help address historical injustices.

Australia is the only developed Commonwealth nation that doesn't have a treaty with its First Nations Peoples—but that may well be about to change. In June 2018, the Victorian Parliament passed Australia's first treaty legislation. *The Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018* will see Victoria become the first state or territory to enter into a formal treaty process with a group of Aboriginal people.

There has also been progress towards treaty in other parts of the country. Governments in Queensland and Western Australia are considering treaty talks, while the NSW Opposition has promised to begin the treaty process if it wins government at the next state election. South Australia began treaty negotiations with Ngarrindjeri, Narungga and Adnyamathanha people in late 2017, but processes were halted by the new Liberal government after its election in March. The Northern Territory was in the process of appointing a treaty commissioner at the time *Reconciliation News* went to print.

The achievement of a treaty or treaties in Australia would be the culmination of decades of campaigning. Calls for treaty have been made for decades by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with a particularly strong movement taking shape in the 1980s in the lead up to the 1988 bicentenary.

In June 1988, then Prime Minister Bob Hawke was presented with the Barunga Statement at the annual Barunga cultural and sporting festival. Written on bark, the statement called for Aboriginal self-management; a national system of land rights; compensation for loss of lands; respect for Aboriginal identity; an end to discrimination; and the granting of full civil, economic, social and cultural rights. The prime minister responded by saying he wished to conclude a treaty between Aboriginal and other Australians by 1990—but this commitment was never realised.

Other landmark documents have also highlighted the importance of achieving treaty. In 2000, the final report from the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

recommended that the Commonwealth Parliament enact legislation to “put in place a process which will unite all Australians by way of an agreement, or treaty, through which unresolved issues of reconciliation can be resolved”. In 2016, an alliance of 18 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations and 30 non-Indigenous organisations united to call for treaty as one of a range of measures necessary to achieve self-determination and address past injustices. And, in 2017, the historic Statement from the Heart called for a Makarrata Commission that would supervise agreement-making.

Agreement-making between Australian governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples could advance reconciliation in a variety of ways. Treaties with Indigenous peoples commonly establish agreements between parties on issues of sovereignty, Indigenous rights, and the relationship between Indigenous people and governments. The Victorian Government says it sees the treaty process as a way to recognise and



celebrate the unique status, rights, cultures and histories of Aboriginal Victorians; to heal the wounds of the past and, in doing so, to advance reconciliation.

Jill Gallagher AO, a Gunditjmara woman and respected Victorian Aboriginal leader, agrees that treaty can help address historical injustices and is key to “true self-determination”. She served as co-chair of the Aboriginal Treaty Working Group, which was established after the Victorian Government announced its intention to develop a treaty process. The group, made up of 16 Traditional Owners from across Victoria, worked on a voluntary basis for two and a half years to develop advice about next steps and to help draft the treaty act.

Treaty could deal with a range of matters, Gallagher says, including truth-telling processes, tax relief for Aboriginal people, reparations, and provisions to address loss of culture and language. Gallagher’s own experiences speak to the importance of such measures. Her mother grew up on a mission, where traditional ways of life were forbidden.

“I’m 63 years old and I, as an Aboriginal woman, have never danced in a traditional way—because my mum was never taught. It was illegal and so it wasn’t passed on,” she says.

“Wouldn’t it be awesome if in each of our Traditional Owner nations ... a treaty process could establish a living cultural learning centre where local Aboriginal people could learn and do research on family trees and our culture. And also non-Aboriginal people could visit that facility to learn about Gunaikurnai people [for example].

“When you look at it, that’s what colonisation impacted the most—on our cultural way of life, so it would make sense to address that with treaty.”

While treaty can help advance reconciliation, it doesn’t take away from the need for other important measures—including a voice to parliament, Gallagher says.

“Treaty is not the magic pill that will fix all our problems,” she says.

“We still have to ensure government is accountable for health outcomes, service delivery ... employment outcomes, education outcomes. I see a voice taking on some of that role.”

Although Gallagher has her own hopes about what treaties in Victoria will achieve, she is very clear that her role as Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner is not to develop or negotiate treaty. The Commissioner’s primary task is to establish a democratically elected Aboriginal Representative Body, which will work in partnership with the Victorian Government to facilitate future treaty negotiations. Gallagher’s aim is to have the body up and running in 2019. She envisions the body would need at least another year to develop a negotiating framework, which would pave the way for Aboriginal groups to negotiate their own agreements with the Victorian Government.

There’s still a long way to go—but Gallagher’s experience as the commissioner so far makes her feel hopeful about the future. Since her appointment, she’s travelled around Victoria speaking to communities about the treaty process, and she’s received widespread support from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians alike. One non-Indigenous couple, aged in their 70s, was particularly memorable to Gallagher.

“They said: ‘This nation, Australia—we can’t move on unless we deal with treaties’, and it reminded me, this is the right thing to do.”



**MAKING HISTORY:** Victorian Treaty Advancement Commissioner Jill Gallagher and members of the Aboriginal Treaty Working Group in Victorian Parliament for the tabling of the treaty act.



**DRIVING CHANGE:**

Djirra CEO Antoinette Braybrook says the justice and legal systems render Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women invisible.

# WHEN SISTERS GET TOGETHER, THEY FIND ANSWERS

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women victims and survivors of family violence are often silenced by systemic barriers. Leading advocate Antoinette Braybrook explains the importance of culturally safe and holistic support.**

The Victorian Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service marked its 15th birthday earlier this year with a change of name. The new name—Djirra—is the Woiwurrung word for the reed used by Wurundjeri women for basket weaving. Traditionally, when women gathered to weave, important talks took place and problems were solved.

“When sisters get together, we find answers,” Djirra CEO Antoinette Braybrook says.

“Aboriginal women are strong and resilient, and we have the solutions to the problems affecting our lives.”

Djirra provides culturally safe and holistic assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially women and children, experiencing family violence. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of family violence-related assault than non-Indigenous women, and 10 times more likely to die from assault.

A constant challenge in this line of work is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women victims and survivors of family violence are silenced by systemic barriers, Braybrook says. She became aware of this problem when she first started working in the justice field in the late 1990s.

“When I was working there [at the Victorian Department of Justice], I noticed that any time someone was talking about the over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system, everyone kept referring to Aboriginal men, and I was even doing that,” she says.

“And I know this is a massive issue for all of our people regardless of gender, but it was very clear to me early on that Aboriginal women were so invisible when it comes to these areas ... And that has really shaped where we’ve landed today as an organisation.”

*“Aboriginal women are strong and resilient and we have the solutions to the problems affecting our lives,” Braybrook says*

In July, Djirra launched the Hidden Figures campaign to raise awareness of the ways the justice and legal systems render Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women invisible. The story of Lynette Daley is one high-profile example of the ways the criminal justice system presents barriers that prevent or make it difficult for Indigenous women to access justice. No charges were laid for five years after the death of the 33-year-old mother of seven at a beach north of Iluka on the NSW North Coast in 2011. The NSW Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) twice declined to prosecute two long-time suspects, but the men were eventually charged and convicted after an investigation by the ABC *Four Corners* program in 2016 prompted a review of the DPP's decision.

“I’m sure everyone’s mind goes straight to those high-profile faces ... but what I need to say up front is those experiences are not unique. That system failure is experienced by just about every woman we work with,” Braybrook says.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence found that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face unique barriers to obtaining assistance. The report acknowledged the “understandable apprehension and reluctance many Aboriginal people have in seeking assistance from government agencies (particularly child protection) and the racism and lack of understanding some people experience when doing so”. Braybrook says many Aboriginal women fear their children will be removed if they seek help from a mainstream service, and find it easier to trust Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

“We know that the legal system has historically been used as a tool of oppression against our people. And I

think about how that plays out for our women today—they have fear and they distrust the system that is supposed to protect them,” she says.

“We’ve worked with so many women whose children have been removed because they’ve been pushed out on the street and made homeless, because they’ve got nowhere else to go ... Instead of supporting those women to get housing, safe housing, the first thing they do is to remove the child.”

Djirra’s approach is designed by Aboriginal women, for Aboriginal women. It is informed by the belief that every woman has a story to tell—and by listening to these stories, Djirra can identify systemic barriers and find the solutions to create change. Djirra’s signature early intervention and prevention programs—Sisters Day Out (a one-day workshop) and Dilly Bag (a three-day intensive residential program)—grew from the knowledge that Aboriginal women “won’t just walk through our door ... that we had to go to the women,” Braybrook says. The workshops are conducted in communities around Victoria, giving Aboriginal women the opportunity to access information and engage with lawyers, counsellors and social workers, in their own communities and in a culturally appropriate manner. Since 2008, Djirra has run workshops for more than 10,000 Aboriginal women across Victoria.

Djirra also works to drive systemic change that will improve Aboriginal women’s access to justice, safety and equality. Their policy and advocacy work includes running highly successful campaigns, maintaining a regular presence in decision-making forums and committees, and contributing expertise to important government initiatives and inquiries. Braybrook gave

evidence to the Royal Commission into Family Violence and was pleased to see, in stark contrast to previous key reports in the justice area, that the Royal Commission’s report put Aboriginal women’s voices and experiences “front and centre”. Braybrook is also the convenor of the National Family Violence Prevention and Legal Services Forum, and through this role ensures that voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women across the country are heard at the national level.

Perhaps most importantly, Djirra’s work is about celebrating the strength, resilience and courage of Aboriginal women. “Aboriginal women are more than just what these numbers represent,” the Hidden Figures campaign explains, in reference to the vastly disproportionate impact of family violence on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Despite these statistics, Aboriginal women have continued to nurture, lead and stand strong together to overcome barriers—to create life, family, community, joy, laughter and fun. Djirra’s Koori Women’s Place, in Melbourne, is a place where Aboriginal women can come to celebrate being Aboriginal women.

“It’s a space where we can celebrate our culture, and we can share our knowledge as Aboriginal women,” Braybrook says.

Being able to come together to design solutions can make a difference, she believes. And that’s why she can envision a time in the future when “family violence will not be a core part of our business”.

Whatever lies ahead, Braybrook knows one thing for sure: change can be achieved only when sisters get together to find answers.



#### SELF-EMPOWERMENT:

Indigenous Governance Awards finalist Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation helps Warlpiri youth learn about Indigenous governance and leadership.

## LESSONS ON INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE: BEST PRACTICE AND INNOVATIONS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have long called for greater control over decisions that affect their lives. Mounting evidence from Australian and overseas studies demonstrates the importance of effective and culturally informed governance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander socio-economic and community development.<sup>1</sup> But what kinds of governance processes work best to transform hard-won Indigenous rights into tangible results?

A new report published by the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute and Reconciliation Australia provides fresh insight into current best practice and innovations in Indigenous governance in Australia. *Strong governance supporting organisational success* is a comparative study of the 38 shortlisted applicants to the 2016 Indigenous Governance Awards (IGAs). The IGAs publicly recognise and celebrate outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations and projects that make extraordinary contributions to their communities and the nation. Some of the central themes to emerge from the report are discussed in this article, and the full report is available at [aigi.com.au](http://aigi.com.au).

### CULTURE AS THE FOUNDATION

Indigenous culture continues to be seen by Indigenous organisations as the foundation for building strong contemporary governance arrangements. Culture is the system of beliefs, behaviours, traditions, laws, technology, values, knowledge and meaning shared by a particular group of people, and forms a foundation for the way they live. By reproducing a shared culture, people are able to build a sense of common identity and belonging, communicate with each other, understand their responsibilities to each other, and do things together towards common ends. Accordingly, culturally informed governance solutions have the potential to mobilise support from group members, boost internal accountability and legitimacy, and enhance the overall performance of an organisation or project.

### EMBEDDING CULTURE

Embedding culture into governance is not as simple as it sounds, and some solutions work better than others. The 2016 IGA applicants use many creative and innovative strategies to align their deep cultural priorities, values and relationship principles with their organisational governance arrangements. Some solutions involve integrating cultural practices into structures, policies and procedures. Other solutions include the appointment of cultural advisory committees or cultural liaison staffing roles, and use the principle of subsidiarity in decision-making processes: a way of governing where the people most impacted by decisions have a greater say in the decision-making process.

The Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation (WYDAC) is among the 2016 IGA finalists to incorporate culture-smart solutions into many aspects of its governance. WYDAC was established by the Yuendumu community in 1993 and is nationally recognised for its leadership

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the Productivity Commission's 2014 and 2016 *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators* reports.

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# STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

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From 23-26 May 2017, around 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people gathered at Uluru to hold an historic First Nations Convention. This meeting resulted in the Statement From the Heart. It is a gift to all Australians. It is an invitation to join a national movement for a better future.

Take this poster of the Statement, read it and share it.  
Hang it in your home, workplace, community centre, school,  
sports club or wherever it can be seen.

Thank you.

# STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

.....

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from ‘time immemorial’, and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or ‘mother nature’, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

**We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.**

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: the coming together after a struggle. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

**We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.**

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

For more information about the Referendum Council process leading up to the Statement from the Heart, visit [referendumcouncil.org.au](http://referendumcouncil.org.au)

Stay up-to-date with developments in the national reconciliation journey by following Reconciliation Australia on social media





*“What we really want is to be more in control of our world,” WYDAC CEO Matt Davidson says*

in remote youth development and rehabilitation. “Our communities are really committed to self-empowerment,” WYDAC CEO Matt Davidson says. “What we really want is to be more in control of our world.”

WYDAC applied for the IGAs as a not-for-profit, Aboriginal-led corporation made up of senior and youth representatives from the four Warlpiri communities of Nyirripi, Willowra, Lajamanu and Yuendumu in the Northern Territory. In 2016, WYDAC was governed by a board of 48 Warlpiri directors and 137 members, all of whom were Indigenous and selected through a culturally inclusive process reflecting the structure of Warlpiri society. The cultural authority of ceremonial leaders and senior Elders elected to the board ensured that decisions made reflected the cultural values of Warlpiri society. Additionally, each WYDAC youth development and leadership program had its own youth sub-committee that provided young people with opportunities to learn about leadership and governance, which helped generate strong feelings of empowerment and ownership over programs.

## CULTURAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

Many shortlisted 2016 IGA applicants made a direct connection between their governance arrangements and their vision to provide Indigenous peoples with access to culturally safe and secure spaces, programs and services. The Australian Human Rights Commission<sup>2</sup> defines a culturally safe and secure environment as one where “people feel safe and draw strength in their identity, culture and community”.

Indigenous people in Australia have long regarded their collective cultural identities as being a source of strength and rights in intercultural contexts. The 2016 IGA applications suggest that cultural safety and security means having the power to make self-determined decisions and solutions that address contemporary experiences of cultural insecurity and entrenched socio-economic disadvantage. Applicants emphasised the importance of enabling Indigenous culture to live, change and develop for today's purposes.

Cultural safety and security are generated and governed through policies and practices within Indigenous communities and organisations, as well as in relationships with external governments, industry and non-government organisations. In 2016, IGA applicants designed a range of policies and practices to encourage a culturally safe and secure environment, including:

- active employment and retention of Indigenous staff;
- requirements for staff and volunteers to undertake cultural awareness or competency training;
- design and implementation of cultural protocols;
- appointment of cultural advisory committees or staffing roles to give the board and senior management advice on cultural considerations;
- ongoing and effective community engagement; and
- initiatives and ways of working targeted specifically to the idea of strengthening cultural vitality and collective identity.

## 2018 INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE AWARDS

The IGAs were established by Reconciliation Australia in partnership with the BHP Foundation in 2005 and are now co-hosted with the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute. Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine says it is important to showcase the high achievers in Indigenous governance, so they get the accolades they deserve—and so that broader Australia understands their important contributions.

“For more than a decade, the IGA winners have shown that so much is possible when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people develop innovative and robust systems of governance by putting culture at the heart of what they do,” Ms Mundine says.

Australian Indigenous Governance Institute CEO Michelle Deshong says governance is the foundation stone that enables Indigenous peoples and communities to build a prosperous future.

“The ability to come together, set goals, and put things in place to achieve their goals, allows people to build a self-determined future,” Ms Deshong says.

“For Indigenous peoples, this means navigating a complex and interconnected web of cultural, environmental, economic and political influences. Celebrating those who have done this well fills us with ideas, confidence and inspiration.”

**The 2018 Indigenous Governance Awards winners will be announced at an awards ceremony held in Melbourne on 23 November. Details of the winners will be available at [reconciliation.org.au](http://reconciliation.org.au).**



**LEARNING:** Chloe Matthews, Sophie Ransley and Ruby Dieren take part in NAIDOC Week celebrations as part of the vacation care program at Dominic Discovery Early Learning Centre.

## IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START WALKING TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

**Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning program is currently working with almost 3000 schools and early learning services across Australia.**

Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning program is currently working with almost 3000 schools and early learning services across Australia. The program supports teachers, educators and learning communities to develop Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) and environments that foster a higher level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions. Through the Narragunnawali online platform, school and early learning service communities are also provided with a wealth of professional learning and curriculum resources to help establish and extend reconciliation conversations and activities with learners of any age.

One of the organisations currently engaged with Narragunnawali is Discovery Early Learning Centres in Tasmania. Una Lalagavesi, director of the Dominic and Illara centres, has been working with the organisation for nine years. During this time, she has worked closely with local Elders and communities to build her knowledge and awareness of local Aboriginal peoples, histories, cultures and languages. She has established a trusting and respectful relationship with community members, leading to a greater connection between the local community and the centres.

Among the cultural learning programs implemented by Discovery Early Learning Centres is the Bush Camp initiative. During these sessions, local

Elders share knowledge and stories with young people. The children hear about traditional bush medicines and foods, as well as how to care for land, and the importance of doing so. Through such initiatives, children are hearing from our nation's great teachers, Aboriginal Elders, and becoming aware of the rich cultures and histories of their local communities.

Ms Lalagavesi says these kinds of experiences are really beneficial for children.

"It's important that our young ones grow up understanding what and who has come before them, what's been here forever, and the importance of caring for the natural environment so it doesn't disappear," she says.

*“It’s important that our young ones grow up understanding what and who has come before them,” Lalagavesi says*

Respected educator Geraldine Atkinson agrees with this view. Atkinson is a Bangerang/Wiradjuri woman who devoted her career to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education in Victoria and across Australia. She is the president of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association (VAEA) and the deputy chairperson of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), as well as a member of the judging panel for Reconciliation Australia’s inaugural Narragunnawali Awards in 2017.

Atkinson views training and relationship-building with non-Indigenous educators and the wider community as critical to achieving national reconciliation.

“If we want to deliver important cultural and historical truth-telling in our curriculums, we must train our teachers and educators,” she says.

“It’s about learning the protocols and supporting non-Indigenous educators to want to teach this content, and to see the importance of engaging with local Elders and community members.”

In addition to the positive impact that reconciliation initiatives have on the students and children involved, parents and families also gain valuable insight. A key strength recognised within the recent Narragunnawali Awards judging process was the number of parents and families who expressed their delight in learning so much more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories through their children. Many felt they had missed out on this learning during their own school years, and felt driven to commit to their own continued learning.

Bringing people together as a community, and as a nation, is also one of the benefits of reconciliation in schools and early learning services that Atkinson identified during the judging process.

“It’s bringing families and parents along on the journey so they can see the importance of education. And they can also learn with their children,” she says.

“Reconciliation is about relationship-building. So it’s important that this journey isn’t just for non-Indigenous [people], but for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities as well.”

Wollongong City Council Community Development Worker Tracey Kirk-Downey was involved in the development of Cullunghutti Early Learning Centre’s first RAP while on secondment there for 16 months. She views deep, ongoing engagement with local Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as a key factor in the success of the RAP development process. She also cites input from children at the centre as being influential in the successful implementation of their RAP commitments.

“We included the voice of the children in our vision statement by sitting and chatting with them, asking questions about friends and friendship and having them draw their thoughts”, she says.

Her experience suggests that young children are not only capable of absorbing reconciliation concepts, but can make a significant contribution to the development of reconciliation aspirations and activities.

It is never too early, nor too late, to start learning and talking about reconciliation. The respectful inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, histories and cultures in early learning and school environments enriches the understandings and experiences of Australia’s younger generation and will help us take the next steps towards national reconciliation.

**The support and resources available through the Narragunnawali program and online platform are free to access for all schools and early learning services in Australia, and anyone interested in reconciliation in education more broadly. Jump online and take a look: [reconciliation.org.au/narragunnawali](https://reconciliation.org.au/narragunnawali)**



**PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Aboriginal artist Janice Ross and Discovery Early Learning Centre director Una Lalagavesi at Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural awareness training.



# KEEPING OUR COUNTRY BEAUTIFUL

**INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS:**  
North West Alliance provides integrated environmental services in the Pilbara region.

**Today's world is more urbanised and populous than ever before, which means the earth's finite resources are becoming scarcer. Reconciliation Action Plan partner Veolia believes a melding of Western and Aboriginal approaches is part of the answer to this complex problem.**

Scientific opinion is increasingly certain about the planet's inability to support current models of production and consumption. Without significant intervention, average temperatures and sea levels around the world are predicted to rise, causing significant and possibly irreversible environmental change. It's clear that we need to develop innovative solutions to foster sustainable development.

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) partner Veolia – a global leader in sustainable development – knows there is much to learn about sustainability from Aboriginal knowledge systems. Aboriginal Australians have the world's oldest living civilization and have been sustainably developing the Australian environment for at least the past 65,000 years. Today, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to care for their Country and sacred places,

contributing significantly to maintaining Australia's biodiversity and unique cultural heritage. 'Caring for Country' is a term used to describe the different sustainable land management practices and initiatives that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples undertake, and the key role these practices play in continuing culture.<sup>3</sup>

Veolia's RAP is informed by an understanding that supporting Aboriginal people to care for Country and develop the local economy in their traditional areas is vital in creating long-term sustainable development in Australia. Perhaps the most successful product of this understanding is the North West Alliance, the company's joint venture with Our Country, an Aboriginal-owned sustainable development advisory based in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. The vision for the joint venture was to combine the best of

Veolia globally with the best of Our Country locally, to improve sustainability outcomes in the Pilbara region and build local capability.

North West Alliance director Dr Blaze Kwaymullina says the opportunity to work with a company that looked to combine Western and Aboriginal approaches to sustainability was part of what drew him to the job.

"I saw what they [Veolia] were doing – taking the cutting edge best of western knowledge and the world's oldest knowledge systems in Australia – and applying them to these big challenges ... That's what originally attracted me," Kwaymullina says.

"We like to say we take the best of both worlds."

<sup>3</sup> The Benefits of Caring for Country, a literature review prepared by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (June 2011).



#### TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY:

North West Alliance director Dr Blaze Kwaymullina with community ambassador Raquel Todd at the launch of *Benny bungarra's big bush clean-up* in Karratha.

Since its establishment in 2013, the North West Alliance has become one of the largest Aboriginal owned waste management companies in Australia. The company has operated waste management contracts for local government, mining, and oil and gas companies. In June, it signed a multi-year, multi-million dollar contract with iron ore mining giant Rio Tinto to provide waste management and recycling services across the company's Pilbara operations, including 16 mines and two ports. The contract will see North West Alliance work with a number of local suppliers and other Aboriginal businesses.

In the past five years, North West Alliance has created 44 million dollars of direct economic impact in the Pilbara region, Kwaymullina says. But the company's impact is about more than the local economy – it's also about providing opportunities for local people. The company provides significant return to local communities through employment, training and community scholarships.

"There's countless stories about people who can now take care of their family and community in a different way... whether through a job or a contract," Kwaymullina says.

The company is aiming to have 50 per cent Indigenous employment by next year and 100 per cent Pilbara residential employment by 2020. The focus on sustainability makes it easier to attract and retain Aboriginal staff, Kwaymullina says.

"Aboriginal people are more likely to want to work for a company that's about cleaning up Country, and dealing with the environment, because that's what we do.

"It makes it easy to recruit people – Indigenous and local – because they're like 'I can get on board with that'."

Environmental education with schools and communities in the Pilbara region is another aspect of the company's work. Their emphasis on behaviour change reflects an understanding that social, cultural, economic and environmental factors are all "intrinsically linked".

"The key to environmental preservation is changing behaviours. And as a waste company, that's a lot of what we do.

"We have to educate clients about what waste goes in what bin and why. And if we get to kids when they're young to teach them about recycling and landfill diversion, if we start with kids early, later on when they're adults we're more likely to have a cleaner world."

Kwaymullina noticed there was a lack of materials to teach sustainability to early childhood and lower primary students. He decided the North West Alliance should produce a book, as a community project, that could be used by schools around the country. He developed a concept for the book and just so happens to be in the right family to bring his idea to fruition. His mother, author Sally Morgan, and sister, author and illustrator Ambelin Kwaymullina, wrote and illustrated *Benny bungarra's big bush clean-up*. The book, published by Magabala Books, shows how animals are affected by rubbish left in their habitat by humans.

Kwaymullina is happy that children all over Australia can learn about environmentalism through a book from the Pilbara. He's also pretty chuffed that children from the Pilbara have access to a book that was designed for them and created in their community.

"It's important not to under-estimate the value, when they see a book produced by a Pilbara Aboriginal author and artist, and an Aboriginal publisher," he says.

"The environmental message carries extra weight. And it inspires them to keep Country clean."

Veolia CEO Danny Conlon says the company's RAP achievements to date are the result of a true commitment to reconciliation – not just lip service.

"We're not a business that wants an engagement plan with Indigenous Australians focused on short, sharp results or just for financial gain. That's not what we're about," he says.

"We want to make sure we've got a RAP that's all-encompassing, comprehensive, sustainable and lasting."

Kwaymullina says the key to the success of North West Alliance is that the partnership between Veolia and Our Country allows the companies to do more together than they could alone.

"I couldn't do what I'm doing in the Pilbara without Veolia, and likewise, they couldn't do it without me."

"In partnerships with mutual value, you can do some really cool stuff because you become more than the sum of your parts."



## IN CONVERSATION: RACHAEL HOCKING

**Rachael Hocking is a Warlpiri woman, journalist and television presenter. She co-hosts NITV's flagship news and current affairs program, *The Point*, with social commentator John Paul Janke. In August, she was named Rising Star at the Women in Media Awards.**

### *Why did you become a journalist?*

I didn't set out to be a journalist. I set out to be a writer. I was good with words, but I didn't know what that meant. I set out to write about – I really didn't know what. Grandma said "you're going to find it really tough if you just want to write novels". That was pretty good advice. At university I picked up a journalism course, not knowing what it would lead to. I also did some great Indigenous history and policy subjects, where I learned stuff I was never taught at high school. And I became really conscious of the fact that the journalists in my degree and the journalists we were reading weren't reflecting the Australia that I knew. So it became – I almost felt like I had a responsibility to go into Indigenous affairs reporting.

### *What's been the scariest moment so far in your journalism career?*

It was the first time I did live television. I did a live cross to NITV News when I was a cadet. I was crossing live to [Northern Territory Senator and former journalist] Malarndirri [McCarthy], my idol. A major story that day was about Machado-Joseph Disease (MJD) and there had been a flip in the government promise to give a huge amount of money, around 10 million, to the MJD Foundation, and that was a huge story which was going to affect a lot of Aboriginal people... So we were talking about how to cover it and I had been reading about it quite a bit that week. Malarndirri said "we'll do a live cross to Rachael – she said, "you seem to be across the issue". I said, "Malarndirri I can't do a live cross". And she said, "you'll be fine". I remember the way she smiled at me. And I thought, "if she thinks I can do it, I must be able to".

*What role should the media play in the reconciliation process?*

Representation is hugely important, but also visibility. We're never gonna reach a stage where the people in this country are on equal footing if we don't show those people on our screens. And that's people from all backgrounds, not just Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As far as achieving a sense of unity, it's important to interrogate the issues – don't shy away from talking about racism. Journalists need to delve into the problems to get to the crux of things. Out of that might not come a clear-cut solution but at least what you've given the public is an understanding, and from that solutions can be bred. It's about contributing to an informed discourse in Australia.

*What are your thoughts about the need for truth-telling in this country?*

We did a show on the Frontier Wars earlier this year and we got so much feedback from people who said they'd never heard that stuff before. I'm always shocked by how little people know. Obviously as journalist I see all sides of argument, but I think we need to get to a point where our war memorials recognise the Frontier Wars, where statues such as the one for James Cook doesn't say he discovered Australia ... So many electorates are named after people who murdered Aboriginal children and men and women. Why would we want to honour people who murdered our ancestors? It doesn't mean they disappear from the history books – but we need to be more honest, because the way things are talked about now isn't honest.

*Can you tell us what it means to you to identify as a Warlpiri woman?*

I go back to my community [in Lajamanu] once a year and it's a constant learning journey for me. We have a really big responsibility as young people to learn as much as we can while our old people are still around. And I've learned a lot of things from my *jajas* [grandmothers and grandfathers]. Our *jukurpa* – our dreaming, our country – it's everything. I know that I'm Nungarrayi, which is my skin name [or kinship group]. We've got four groups in our community and our kinship system. I'm in yellow group – we have an affinity with the wedge-tailed eagle. Also the kangaroo and emu are pillars of strength. We have a relationship with the Southern Cross. Most tribes, we all have a relationship with our constellations, our stars, because they were our map.

*What's Warlpiri country like?*

There's really hard country but then there's water holes, which are life-giving. And what's really cool is our people could walk for thousands of kilometers and they'd always find water. It might seem dry but there is so much water under the desert, you just have to know how to find it. Lajamanu is pretty much on Gurindji country. People were marched up there to Hooker Creek [by the government] because Yuendumu was overcrowding, and in the middle of the night they walked all the way back down south, back onto their country [in Yuendumu, 600 kilometres away], because they didn't want to live off country. They were taken back in cattle cars, and they walked all the way back [to Yuendumu] again. By the third time, a mixture of things – like women being pregnant, and babies being born on country [in Lajamanu] – meant they stayed put. So Lajamanu isn't technically Warlpiri country. But agreements have been made over the years regarding the sharing of sacred sites and songlines, so Warlpiri and Gurindji came together through their shared experience of colonisation and dispossession.



Rachael Hocking on location with a crew from NITV.

# STYLE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed and crafted fashion, homewares and more



**A-line dress, \$260**  
magpiegoose.com  
ft. Nancy McDinny's 'Munjimunjingu Manma' print. Photo by Kate Harding. Model: Esmeralda Philomac

**Birmba brooch, \$25**  
milicairns.bigcartel.com



**Honey Ant T shirt, \$40**  
mydreamtimearts.com



**Goanna Dreaming opal necklace, \$520**  
occulture.com  
ft. artwork by Ruth Nungarrayi Spencer

**Weaving Through Time bag, \$30**  
lifewear.com.au



**Handbag Honey Ant Dreaming, \$89.99**  
bwtribal.com



**Takayna Forests pendant, \$150**  
kurina-art.com.au

**Emu Dreaming tie, \$30 and pocket square, \$18**  
lifewear.com.au





Two Dog Dreaming cuff, \$255  
occulture.com  
ft. artwork by Murdie Nampijinpa Morris



Chocolate variations, \$11 per 100g bag  
facebook.com/ChocolateOnPurpose

Erosion ring, \$240  
kurina-art.com.au



Warta Tjitan tote bag, \$45  
desertgem.com.au

Cowboy shirt, \$130  
magpiegoose.com  
ft. Rhonda Duncan's Pandanus Story print

and Man shorts, \$140  
magpiegoose.com  
ft. Injalak Arts Ladies' 'Manme' print. Photo by Kate Harding. Model: Travis Alum



Travel Mug Colours Of Our Land, \$18.50  
bwtribal.com

Strength Through Language leggings, \$48  
lifewear.com.au

'Parna' (blue) and 'Kapi' (brown) flip flops, \$15  
desertgem.com.au  
Available in men's and women's sizes



If you would like your products to feature in the next issue of *Reconciliation News*, please contact us at [enquiries@reconciliation.org.au](mailto:enquiries@reconciliation.org.au)

# TEN ESSENTIAL FILMS ON INDIGENOUS CULTURES, HISTORIES AND POLITICS

Storytelling is an important aspect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The following films, created or inspired by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, provide insight into Indigenous perspectives, histories and contributions. Four of the films are available through the Reconciliation Film Club—a joint initiative of Reconciliation Australia, NITV and SBS. The film club supports organisations to host screenings of a curated selection of Indigenous documentaries from Australia’s leading Indigenous filmmakers. To access screening kits, discussion guides and other resources, visit [sbs.com.au/reconciliationfilmclub](http://sbs.com.au/reconciliationfilmclub).



## *The tracker (2002)*

In rough bush country in 1922, an Aboriginal tracker played by David Gulpilil leads three white men in the hunt for a black fugitive. The senior policeman in charge murders ‘bush blacks’ on sight; a young constable joins in, but then takes a stand; a third man, probably a farmer does nothing to stop the killing, even though he disapproves. The tracker watches and waits for his chance to turn the tables, as the party rides further into the bush.



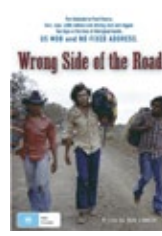
## *Samson and Delilah (2009)*

*Samson and Delilah* delivers a painful yet profound story of two Indigenous teenagers growing up in a socio-economically disadvantaged community in central Australia. Addicted to sniffing petrol, Samson begins his courtship by throwing pebbles at Delilah, whose grandmother’s traditional artwork is sold by white men in the CBD for exorbitant profits the family never sees. When tragedy strikes, Samson and Delilah turn their backs on home and embark on a journey of survival.



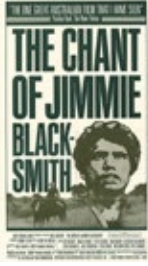
## *Rabbit-proof fence (2002)*

Based on a true story, *Rabbit-proof fence* is the story of three young girls who are forcibly taken from their Aboriginal mother and sent over a thousand miles away to a training camp where they are forced to assimilate. The girls escape and attempt to walk more than 2400 kilometres, following the rabbit-proof fence, to return to their families in Jigalong. The film is credited with helping to shift the national conversation around the Stolen Generations in the years leading up to former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s Apology.



## *Wrong side of the road (1981)*

*Wrong side of the road* is based on the real-life experiences of two Indigenous bands gigging between Port Adelaide and Point Pearce in South Australia. It’s the first Australian feature film to be made with an all-Indigenous cast, and one of the first to give a positive account of Aboriginal life. It was very well received by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, at the time of its release, for its realistic portrayal.



### *The chant of Jimmy Blacksmith (1978)*

The film, based on Thomas Keneally's book of the same name, follows a young Aboriginal man who kills most of a family of white farmers after an argument about his wages. The film received critical praise for its examination of racism and collective guilt, and was nominated for the Cannes' highest honour—the Palm d'or prize. It's credited as one of the first Australian feature films that tells its whole story from an Aboriginal viewpoint.



### *Walkabout (1971)*

*Walkabout* uses a simplistic plot line—a young boy and teenage girl stranded in the outback befriend an Aboriginal boy on walkabout—to frame a coming-of-age story complicated by questions of race, civilisation and sexuality. The film launched the career of David Gulpilil—in his late teens at the time of filming—who would go on to become one of Australia's finest working actors.

## RECONCILIATION FILM CLUB FILMS



### *We don't need a map (2017)*

*We don't need a map* is an epic telling of Australia's history, told through an examination of our diverse relationships to one famous constellation—the Southern Cross. The film proudly explores Aboriginal peoples' law and longstanding spiritual relationships with the land as fundamental to this nation's identity. It also explores how, despite the many unjust and injurious impacts on the relationship between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples since colonisation, we are all connected now, under one night sky.



### *Occupation: native (2017)*

Most Australians grew up with a very one-sided history of our nation. *Occupation: native* sets out to change perspectives by adjusting the narrative to include the experiences of First Australians. There's always more than one way to look at a story, and this documentary presents—without judgement—a perspective that's been disregarded for too long.



### *Servant or slave (2016)*

*Servant or slave* is an emotional and confronting insight into the history and legacy of the domestic servitude enforced upon Aboriginal girls in Australia. The film follows the lives of five Aboriginal women who were stolen from their families and trained to be domestic servants. In bringing to light the heartbreaking experiences of Rita, Violet, Adelaide, Valerie and Rita, *Servant or slave* celebrates their fortitude in pursuing justice for the crimes committed against them. Theirs is a David and Goliath battle, waged not only for personal healing, but to shed light on a barely acknowledged part of modern Australia's history, the consequences of which are still felt today.



### *Connection to Country (2017)*

*Connection to Country* follows a group of Indigenous people from the Pilbara as they battle to preserve Australia's unique cultural heritage from the ravages of a booming mining industry. At the same time, the one-hour documentary explores the relationship that exists between Indigenous people and their land, which has been unbroken for more than 65,000 years and survives today.

# National Reconciliation Action Plan Conference 2018: Progressing Reconciliation



5-6 December 2018 | Swinburne Centre, Richmond Football Club, Richmond, Victoria

**Reconciliation Australia, along with the Moondani Toombadool Centre at Swinburne University of Technology and the Korin Gamadji Institute at Richmond Football Club, are proud to co-host the National Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Conference 2018: Progressing Reconciliation.**

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement. More than 1100 organisations across the country have developed a RAP since the program was launched by Reconciliation Australia 12 years ago.

The conference will explore the role of RAPs in the reconciliation journey, share RAP stories, explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on RAPs and consider national reconciliation issues.

Speakers include ABC journalist and television presenter Stan Grant, historian and Aboriginal rights activist Jackie Huggins AM, Reconciliation Australia co-chair Professor Tom Calma AO, as well as RAP partners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

RAP partners and organisations interested to know how they can contribute to reconciliation in Australia are invited to attend. For details and to register, visit: [swinburne.edu.au/rap-conference](http://swinburne.edu.au/rap-conference)

