

Reconciliation Statement

The Australian National University (ANU) expresses its profound regret for the dispossession, inequalities and continuing disadvantage that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to suffer as a consequence of European settlement. The University is sorry for the harmful effects these actions, policies and attitudes have had on the dignity and spirit of Indigenous Australians.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the ANU recognises that it is situated on country for which the Ngunnawal people have been custodians for many centuries and on which they have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region and offer our deep appreciation for their contribution to and support of our academic enterprise.

As Australia's national university, the ANU acknowledges and embraces its special obligations in providing effective leadership for the reconciliation process within the area of higher education and research. The Australian National University is committed to strengthening its relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of the ACT and all of Australia through the development of meaningful initiatives which will advance and sustain the national reconciliation process. Specifically the University has committed to:

- Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educational outcomes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels;
- Implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategies with the aim of establishing effective campus-wide and long term employment profiles;
- Further develop and maintain links with other National institutions having a significant role in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues including the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the National Museum of Australia and the National Gallery of Australia;
- Collaborate with other leading institutions or bodies organising academic conferences, seminars and events relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies;
- Provide cross-cultural awareness programs that assist all University staff to gain an appropriate understanding of cultural issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students;

- Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and cultures within the campus physical structures and spaces;
- Develop an organisational culture that responds appropriately to the diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- Recognise and value cultural diversity as an asset which will enrich the life of the University community in the global academic environment; and
- Promote links with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at the local, regional and national levels.

The ANU wholeheartedly endorses the principles and sentiment of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and affirms that there is a strong desire within the University community ...“to make amends for the past, to recognise and value the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to work towards a future where all Australians enjoy their rights, accept their responsibilities, and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.”¹

In fulfilling these commitments, the ANU acknowledges its leadership role and capacity to provide an academic environment in which staff and students benefit from mutual respect, greater cultural diversity and achieve progress towards reconciliation.

¹ Adapted from the Final Report of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, last paragraph of the section: *Overview: The Challenge of Going Forward*; cf. <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/finalreport/prelim05.htm>