

Connecting the dots

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Information Network

CAMPUS SPACES

Cultural Reflection Space Complete

The second cultural reflection space on the Joondalup campus has been completed. Located lakeside at the base of the central thoroughfare, the shaded deck presents a picture of inviting calm - the perfect spot for reflection! Design highlights include the Nyoongar words for wind, stone, fire and wood incorporated into the materials used. Why not take the time to wander down to the space the next time you need to reflect and recharge? ■



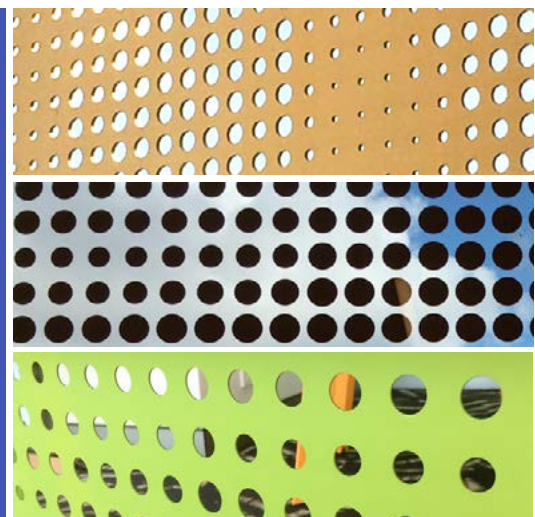
CULTURE ON CAMPUS

Orange lights signal *Bunuru* season

The buildings at all three ECU Campuses have changed colour – from red (*mirda*) to orange (*yoorn t mirda*), indicating the Nyoongar season *Bunuru* has arrived.



During the 25th anniversary year the Chancellery building at Joondalup, the Library at Mount Lawley and entrance at ECU's South West Campus will light up at night in the colour that represents each of the Nyoongar seasons. Read more about *Bunuru* (season of the adolescence) [here](#). ■



News

One million site visits in a year!

ECU's Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet has passed one million visits (or sessions) by users of our web resource in a single year. There were also over two and a half million page views in 2015. Now in its 18th year, this figure reflects the importance of having a credible high quality, up to date web resource that can be freely accessed nationally by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

HealthInfoNet Director, Professor Neil Drew said 'Every user of our resource is important to us and passing one million visits in a single year is a very significant milestone. My sincere thanks to all users for their ongoing support.'



SIGNIFICANT DATES

- 13 Feb Anniversary of the Apology (2008)
- 21 Feb International Mother Language Day
- 17 Mar National Close the Gap Day

Did you know....?

Balga (Grass Trees)

- The Balga (*Xanthorrhoea preissii*) is the dominant variety of grass trees found in Australia and originates in Western Australia.
- The presence of Balga is an indication you are in Nyoongar country.
- The plant was a useful food source to Nyoongar people. You can eat the young leaf stalks and make a sweet drink from fermenting the rich nectar on the emerging flower stem.
- The long, straight flower spikes make great fishing spears.
- Flowers on the sunny side of the spike can open earlier than on the cooler side, thus often revealing North.
- The resin from the trunk was used as an adhesive in spear-making and repairing holes in carrying containers.
- The Balga is an ancient plant and can take up to 75 years to grow a metre tall.

The Balga pictured below stands adjacent to carpark 6 on the Joondalup campus. At several metres tall this old giant could be as much as 300 years old!



RARE OPPORTUNITY

Travel on Country with Noel Nannup

Journeys on country with Noel are an extraordinary opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Nyoongar Boodjar (Nyoongar country) and Nyoongar culture. During a three day camping trip following important Nyoongar Songlines, participants listen to stories, visit sites, learn language and experience flora and fauna in ways that give insight into the traditional practices of past times. The evenings are spent yarning, sharing food, and hearing stories of the night skies.

Past attendees have described these journeys as deeply moving, inspiring and life altering. Participants return home with an entirely new way of seeing and being.

Journeys in 2016 are scheduled for: July 22/23/24, Sept 9/10/11 and Nov 18/19/20. There is also a one night Family Camp on August 20/21. For more information contact jaime@rrafft.com.au or to register your interest [here](#). ■



UPCOMING CULTURAL EVENTS

10th March

Yarning: Tour of Campus (JO)

Would you like to know more about Aboriginal culture? Tour the JO campus with Nigel Andrews from HR who will show you some of the traditional uses of plants by Aboriginal people. The tour culminates at a centuries old Balga. (Register via Staff Kiosk)

27th April onwards (JO)

Art exhibition commemorating Aboriginal servicemen. Details will be sent out soon in a separate flyer.

29th April onwards

Nyoongar Documentary Season

The first screening will be *The Forgotten* by Glen Stasiuk to coincide with the Art Exhibition (above). Details will be sent out soon in a separate flyer.

5th & 12th May

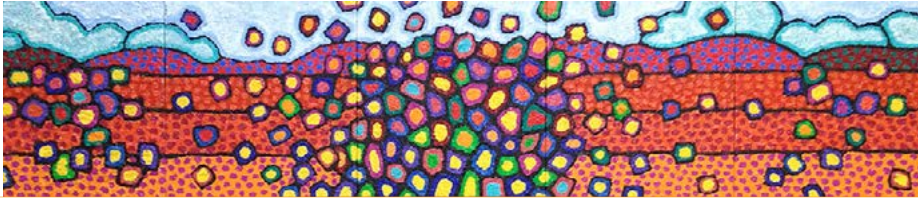
Yarning: Create your own hiking stick (ML & JO)

In this Yarning session you will learn how to create your own hiking stick from a Balga and learn the Aboriginal perspective on the nature of walking. (Register via Staff Kiosk)

Spotlight on campus art

Where: Building 5, South West Campus.

What: A series of 5 panels done in acrylic sand texture paste on canvas with gloss by artist Julie Weekes (Walters). The title of this work is "Country Metro". Julie Weekes (Walters) is of Torres Strait Island descent although she grew up on the Australian mainland. Connecting with her Islander family and heritage has had a profound influence on her art.



MOORDITJ MOB:
SHARING INTERCULTURAL
PERSPECTIVES

2016 Dates:

17th March (JO)

23rd June (ML)

23rd September (JO)

8th December (ML)

(Register via Staff Kiosk)

Learning Connections

The 8 Ways of Aboriginal Learning is a framework that depicts the best ways of learning at the interface between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worlds. It is not a set of pedagogies unique to the Aboriginal world that must be somehow incorporated into Western pedagogy, but rather a depiction of equal balance and overlap between the two ways of learning.

While each symbol represents a single way of learning, the whole picture is modelled on a kinship system to show the dynamic and interactive nature of these complex processes. In each issue of *Connecting the Dots*, two of the 8 ways of learning will be featured as a guide to assist teaching academics.



**The First Way
(Story Sharing)**
Symbol of the killer boomerang

Aboriginal Perspective

The oral nature of Aboriginal culture means that storytelling is the primary means of both sharing knowledge and learning. Similarly, the collectivist nature of Aboriginal culture means that narrative and discussion are highly valued and are therefore a central feature of both communication and learning.

Teaching & Learning Perspective

This way is about approaching learning through narrative. This can mean learning from others' narratives, or through sharing our own. Lessons drawn from narrative can serve as the starting point for further reflection and analysis.



**The Second Way
(Learning Maps)**
Symbol of the winding path

Aboriginal Perspective

This way refers to the way in which Aboriginal people picture their pathways to knowledge.

Teaching & Learning Perspective

Learning journeys can be drawn as maps with points of understanding indicated along the way, not just at the end. Learning is facilitated through explicitly mapping or representing processes, structures or concepts in a diagrammatic manner.

03-10
JULY
2016



Songlines:

The living narrative
of our nation

NAIDOC WEEK 2016

This year's theme has been announced. *Songlines - The living narrative of our nation* will celebrate Songlines and their importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

CLT has another great afternoon of events planned. Watch this space!

NATIONAL NAIDOC AWARDS

The National NAIDOC Committee also encourages people to acknowledge the contributions and talents of outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals by nominating them for a 2016 National NAIDOC Award. There are ten categories covering the fields of art, education and training, sport, environment and leadership.

Award winners will be honoured during NAIDOC Week at the National NAIDOC Awards Ceremony in Darwin on Friday, 8 July 2016.

Nominations are open now and will close - 5:00pm (AEST) Monday, 18 April 2016.

For entry forms and more information, visit the [National NAIDOC](#) website.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Research Assistants

The *Missing Voices* project is looking for Aboriginal applicants for two casual research assistant positions (Level 5). The roles will offer work for up to two days per week for six months, reporting to Professor Beth Armstrong.

Applicants will need to have a background in Aboriginal Health or Nursing. Applicants with experience in the health, aged care or disability sector, and or research experience, can also apply.

Training will be provided and there is flexibility for the activities of the roles to reflect the skills and abilities of the applicants.

If you know of someone who might be interested in this opportunity, please pass the details on. For more information, contact Meaghan McAllister. Email: m.mcallister@ecu.edu.au. Phone: 08 6304 5468. ■

USEFUL RESOURCE

Engaging respectfully and reciprocally

In 2015 the Australian Government (Indigenous Culture Support) released a guide for students and academics called "Engaging: A guide to interacting respectfully and reciprocally with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their Arts practices and intellectual property."



This guide is very useful to anyone who is uncertain about using Aboriginal artworks, interacting directly with Aboriginal communities, seeking consent, or conducting research. Download from http://www.zuckermann.org/pdf/ENGAGING_Guide_Zuckermann.pdf ■

Do you have something to share?

If you would like to include information in this newsletter about an event, a resource, your teaching, or even a community story, please don't hesitate to get in touch via email with either [Leitha Delves](#) or [Nigel Andrews](#).

To stop receiving this newsletter, please send an unsubscribe request via email to [Leitha Delves](#).