



Audley Weir Royal National Park - Ozphotoguy



# Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Engagement

Presenters: **Jon Staley**, Community Trainer, Institute of Community Directors  
**Karen Milward**, Consultant, Kinaway, Yorta Yorta.

Date: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021

# Get involved!

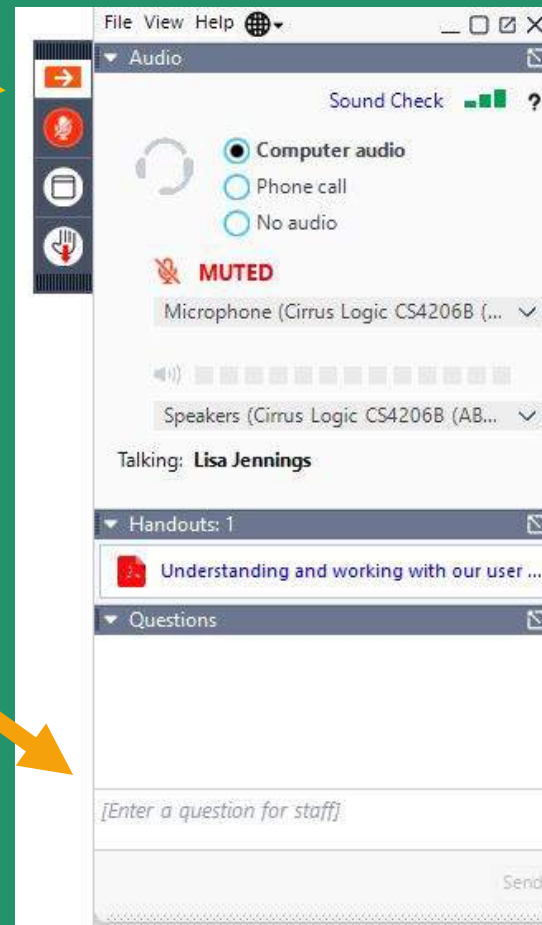
Use the arrow to expand the webinar control panel



Submit questions and comments - ask at any time



Click on the questions tab & type your question during the webinar



You can download a copy of the slides from Handouts



NB: Today's presentation is being recorded and will be available for watching at a later stage

# Introduction to the Presenters

## Karen Milward



- **KINAWAY Board Chair**
- Yorta Yorta
- Consultant
- Extensive experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at grass roots and organisational levels

## Jon Staley



- **ICDA Community Trainer**
- Social Entrepreneur
- Filmmaker
- Teacher
- 25 years experience collaborating with Aboriginal communities/individuals

# What We Will Be Covering

- Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country
- What should we know?
- Some key cultural principles
- Understanding and responsibility for our shared history – what does this mean?
- What could we be as a nation?
- What can you do?
- Creating culturally safe spaces
- Removing barriers/creating pathways
- Building relationships
- Taking small (important) steps

# Acknowledgement of lived experience

This webinar covers some important and at times challenging content – we acknowledge that for some participants this may be part of your lived experience, or that of close family, friends or the broader community of which you are a part.

**Aboriginal** and Torres Strait Islander participants are **warned** photographs/videos within this webinar may contain images of deceased persons which may cause sadness.

# Country

"The land is the mother and we are of the land; we do not own the land rather the land owns us. The land is our food, our culture, our spirit and our identity."

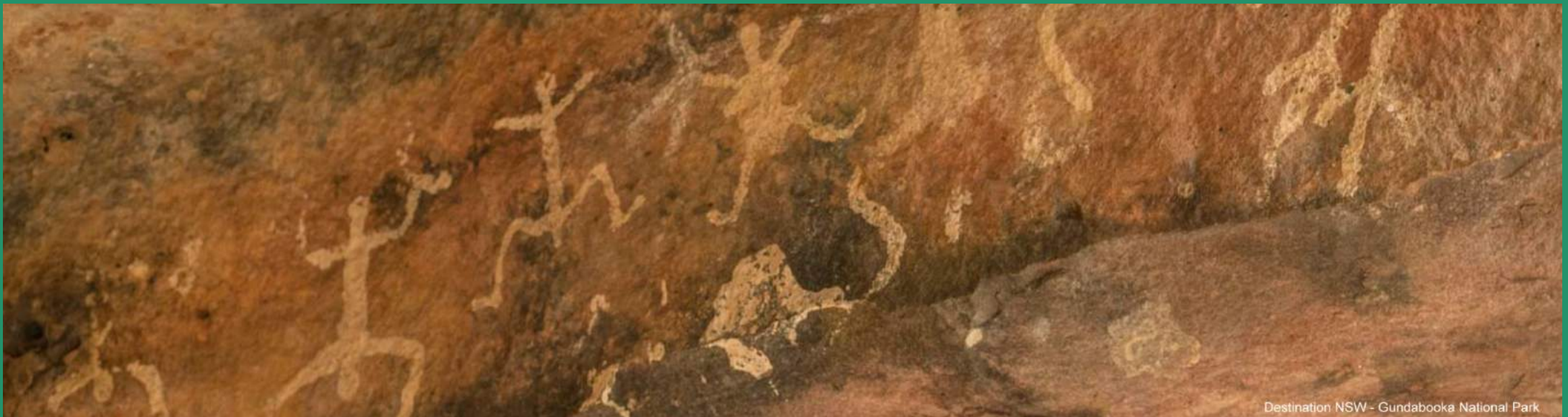
Dennis Foley, Gai-mariagal and Wiradjuri man, and Fulbright scholar.

‘To not know your country causes a painful disconnection, the impact of which is well documented in studies relating to health, wellbeing and life outcomes... It is this knowledge that enables me to identify who I am, who my family is, who my ancestors were and what my stories are. We are indistinguishable from our country which is why we fight so hard to hang on.’

Catherine Liddle, Arrente and Luritja woman, and Aboriginal activist

# Acknowledgement and Welcome To Country

- Role of Acknowledgement to Country
- Role of Welcome to Country



# Welcome to Country

Rhoda Roberts explains significance of welcome to country.





# Why Is This Important?

Background Context

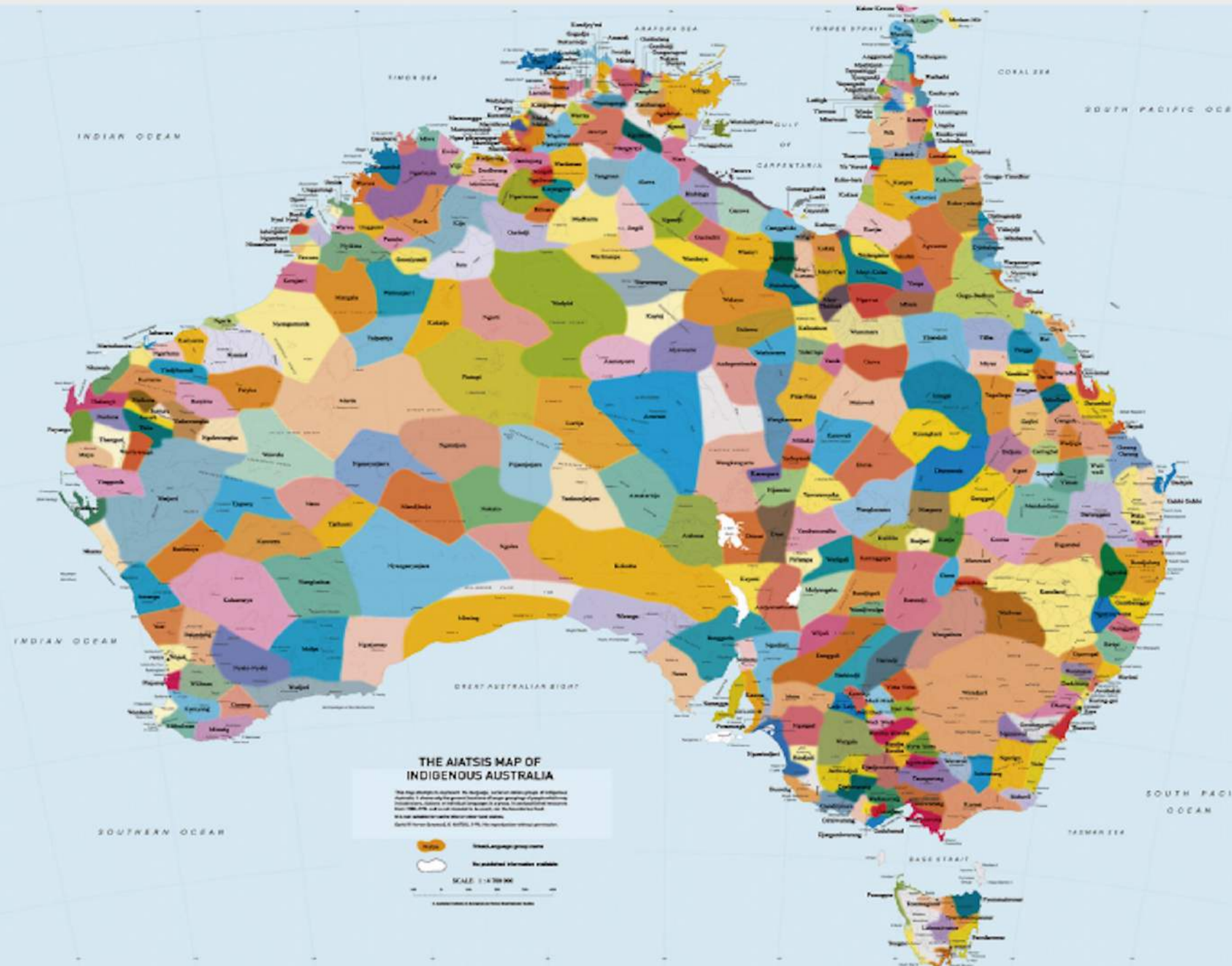


# What should we know?

## What is culture?



- Rich diversity in Aboriginal Australia
- Not homogenised



**THE AIATSIS MAP OF INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA**

The map shows the geographical distribution of Indigenous language groups in Australia. The legend indicates that orange areas represent 'Most language groups' and white areas represent 'No detailed information available'. The map includes a scale of 1:470,000 and is surrounded by labels for the Indian Ocean, Southern Ocean, and South Pacific Ocean.

Most language groups  
 No detailed information available  
 SCALE 1:470,000  
 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000

# Key cultural principles/practice that relate to traditional context

LAND

ELDERS

*Culture is a living ever changing thing – not static but has continuity as well*

FAMILY/KINSHIP

LANGUAGE

STORYTELLING

# Reflection

The next section touches directly on the impact of colonization on Aboriginal individuals and communities – we recognize that many of you would have reflected on these issues (or have lived experience) and acknowledge the profound pain and dislocation that has been part of this journey.

We highlight these challenges again here with an awareness that to move forward in new ways we need to continue to look with courage at what has been and understand the ground on which we sit together.



# Human rights – impact of colonialism

- One of the best ways to understand the past is through stories, particularly through hearing directly from Aboriginal Australians
- Intergenerational impact /trauma and ability to participate...



# Dislocation and Moving Past Stereotypes

‘There are a lot of negative stereotypes that persist around Aboriginal culture that have got nothing to do with Aboriginal culture. They are related to colonised culture. That’s what happens when you oppress and you dispossess people. It’s not how those people were, it’s not how we were.’

Oliver Costello, CEO Firesticks Alliance,  
Bundjalung Man

I’m Aboriginal But  
I’m Not ...



# Re-determining Culture and Moving Forward

*'If we lose it, you lose it too.'* Boori Pryor.



- Connection to country/culture/language being reinvigorated formally and informally
- Knowledge systems being reclaimed and recognised e.g.
  - language centres
  - land councils
  - traditional fire management
- Benefits for all



# WHAT COULD WE BE AS A COUNTRY?

- What would Australia look like if we had really dealt with our colonial past?



- What would Australia look like if Aboriginal culture was at its heart?

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

*Start with the vision of what we could be and ask yourself what part can I play, what part can my organisation play?*

- Removing barriers
- Building relationships
- Culturally safe spaces
- Pathways
- Small steps – through to active commitments
- Different for everyone



# Cultural Safety

- ‘Cultural respect can be defined as the recognition, protection and continued advancement of the inherent rights, cultures and traditions of a particular culture.’
- Safework NSW.

- At work, this means everyone, regardless of culture, needs to be treated with respect, inclusion, and transparent management and health and safety policies.
- Cultural safety is more than just being aware of other cultures and respecting all people. It is about creating a workplace where everyone can examine our own cultural identities and attitudes, and be open-minded and flexible in our attitudes towards people from cultures other than our own.
- It also requires everyone to understand that their own values or practices are not always or only the best way to solve workplace problems.



<https://antarvictoria.org.au>

# QUESTIONS?

- How do we respectfully engage with Aboriginal individuals/communities e.g around care for country ... desire to engage but no way in and also awareness of how stretched a lot of key people are ... Any suggestions?
- Some organisations say they are keen to have Aboriginal representation on boards but don't have the networks in place to facilitate this?
- What are some of the barriers and pathways to board involvement?
- In this webinar, will you be advising on appropriately addressing an aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person? I have been told that the use of the word "aboriginal" alone is not appropriate.

# International Perspectives – New Zealand

- Like all other Commonwealth countries (except Australia) New Zealand negotiated a treaty (1840)
- Maori culture is an integral part of daily life
- New Zealand has three official languages: English, Te Reo Māori, and New Zealand Sign Language.
- The Māori language is considered a national taonga (treasure) and is undergoing a revival.



# Further resources & information

Kinaway: <https://kinaway.com.au/>

Supply Nation: <https://supplynation.org.au/>

Uluru Statement from the heart: <https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement>

First Languages: <https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/>

The Healing Foundation: <https://healingfoundation.org.au/>

Firesticks Alliance: <https://www.firesticks.org.au/>

ANTAR: <https://antarvictoria.org.au/>

Reconciliation Australia: <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

Landcare NSW: <https://landcarensw.org.au/projects/aboriginal-communities-engagement-program/>

The Australian Indigenous Governance Institute: <https://www.aigi.com.au/our-history-brand-story/>

Indigenous Governance Toolkit: <http://toolkit.aigi.com.au/>

Children's Ground: <https://childrensground.org.au/>

Maybe Tomorrow Book: <https://www.allenandunwin.com/browse/books/childrens/young-adult-non-fiction/Maybe-Tomorrow-Meme-McDonald-and-Boori-Monty-Pryor-9781742372440>

# Film Links:

Welcome to Country:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0McQIIZCA0&feature=emb\\_logo&ab\\_channel=CityofSydney](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0McQIIZCA0&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=CityofSydney)

Intergenerational Trauma Animation:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlqx8EYvRbQ&ab\\_channel=TEDxTalks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlqx8EYvRbQ&ab_channel=TEDxTalks)

'I'm Aboriginal But I'm Not ...'

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSNvfk0zFNc&feature=emb\\_logo&ab\\_channel=As%2FIs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSNvfk0zFNc&feature=emb_logo&ab_channel=As%2FIs)

Cultural Fire Burning: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-13/victor-steffensen/12141036?nw=0>

Land: <https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/indigenous-culture/the-importance-of-land/#video>

Brown Paper Bag Short Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuA4rLU7Ry0>



THANKYOU!