

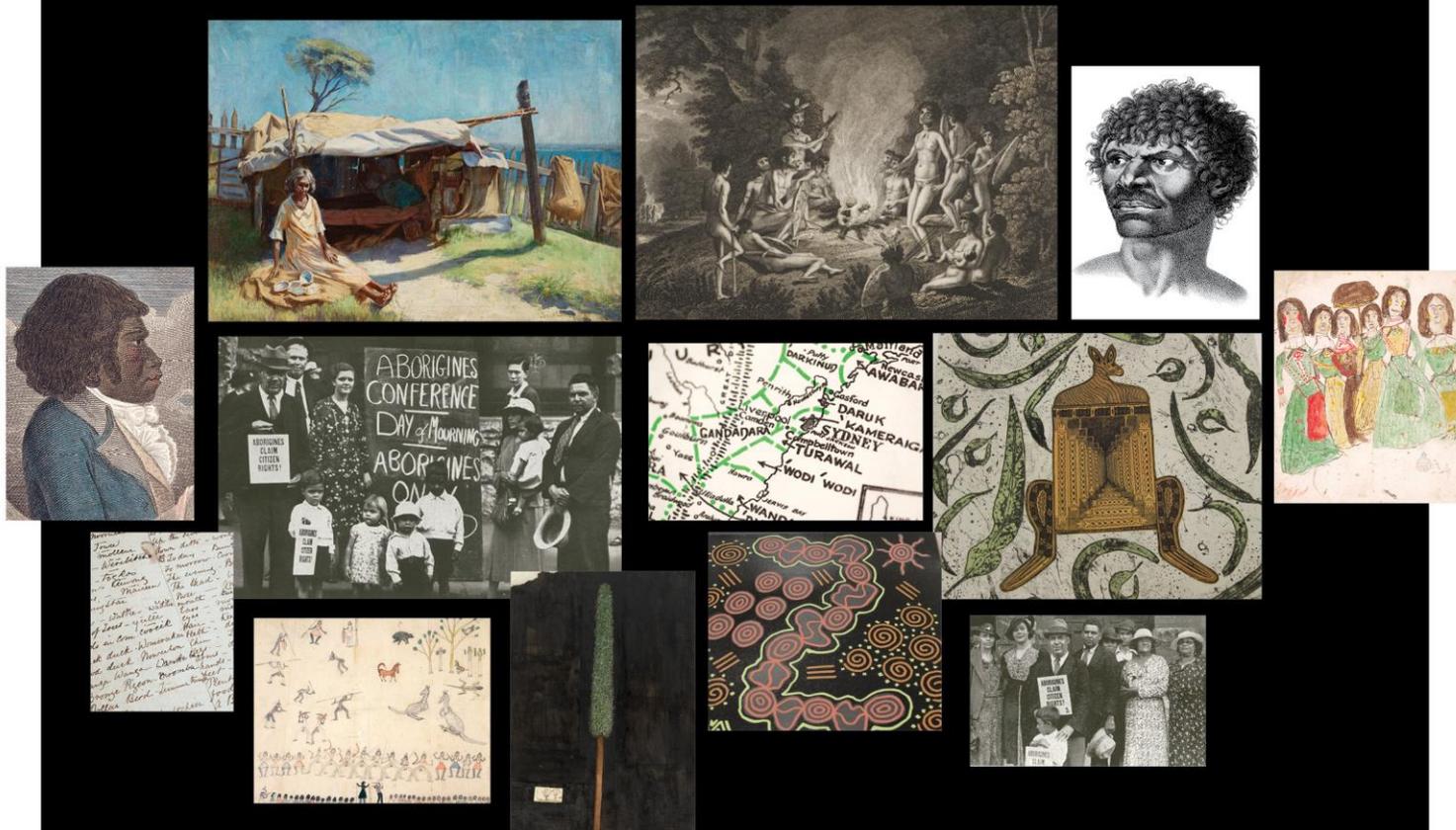


STATE LIBRARY®
NEW SOUTH WALES

INDIGENOUS SERVICES

Indigenous Collecting Strategy

Version 1.0 – 28 August 2015



Introduction

The Indigenous¹ Australian people, the first people of Australia, are recognised as having one of the oldest and longest continuing cultures in the world.² There is great diversity of Indigenous people and language across Australia, including distinct Aboriginal nations speaking a range of different languages.

New South Wales is home to the largest number of Indigenous people in Australia.³ It is the responsibility of the State Library of New South Wales to document life in New South Wales, from the earliest pre-contact times to the present day. This Indigenous Collecting Strategy outlines the collecting areas for the Library over the next three years – 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2018 - so as to document, articulate and animate Indigenous life in New South Wales. The Strategy supports the Library's goals to connect broadly with diverse communities and to increase reach to Indigenous people and communities.

The Indigenous Peoples of New South Wales

There are many substantial communities of Indigenous people across NSW, including those living in suburban areas of Sydney and other cities, in country towns and in smaller, often regional and remote, predominately indigenous, communities. In Sydney and other major centres are Indigenous people from all over Australia. The lives and desires of the Indigenous people of NSW vary enormously but all share a core concern that their identity and culture be respected.

State/territory	Population number	Indigenous population - percentage	Total state/territory population - percentage
New South Wales	208 476	31%	2.9%
Victoria	47 333	7%	0.9%
Queensland	188 954	28%	4.2%
South Australia	37 408	6%	2.3%
Western Australia	88 270	13%	3.8%
Tasmania	24 165	4%	4.7%
Northern Territory	68 850	10%	29.8%
Australian Capital Territory	6 160	1%	1.7%
TOTAL	669 881 (includes other territories)	100%	3%

The Sydney (including Western Sydney), Wollongong and Central Coast regions of NSW have the highest percentages of Indigenous people, with up to 9.5% of the proportion of the population.⁴ The NSW Government OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment) Plan notes that within the Indigenous population of NSW 51% live in regional areas, 44% live in major cities and 5% live in remote or very remote areas. With a median age of 21, compared to 38 for the non-Indigenous population,

¹ The term Indigenous is used in this document to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

² <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-indigenous-cultural-heritage>

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census Counts — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, available at: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2075.0main+features32011>

⁴ 2011 CENSUS COUNTS — ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES(a) – Indigenous Regions with largest counts:

<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2075.0Main%20Features42011>

Indigenous people make up a higher proportion of Australia's children and young people and a lower proportion of the elderly.⁵

The Library's Collection

The Library's collection contains extensive material relating to Indigenous peoples in NSW and all other States and Territories in Australia. It comprises original and published material created by non-indigenous and indigenous people and date from the earliest times to the present.

The materials created by indigenous people includes the materials of:

- Leaders Pearl Mary (Gambanyi) Gibbs and Faith Bandler;
- Author Ruby Langford Ginibi;
- Author and inventor, David Unaipon, including the original manuscript of *Legendary Tales of the Australian Aborigines*, 1924-25, the first published work of an indigenous author;
- Artists, Mickey of Ulladulla and Tommy McRae;
- Political organisations: Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship, the Aborigines Progressive Association and the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs;
- The Aboriginal National Theatre Trust Limited.

There are collections compiled by European organisations and individuals – colonists, explorers, surveyors, landowners, missionaries, and government officials. These include the materials of:

- George Augustus Robinson, government administrator;
- The Anglican Board of Missions, Australian Indigenous Ministries (formerly Aboriginal Inland Mission), and the Presbyterian, Uniting and Methodist churches;
- Explorers Sir Thomas Mitchell and Ludwig Leichardt;
- Anthropologists Herbert Basedow and Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer.

The recent landmark *Rediscovering Indigenous Languages Project* supported by Rio Tinto, uncovered a wealth of vocabularies and language materials relating to Indigenous communities across Australia. The language project has highlighted the importance of Library collections being made available to Indigenous communities to assist with language and cultural revitalisation projects.

Collecting

The Library will collect materials, published and unpublished, from Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations, individuals, communities and events that document, articulate and animate Indigenous life, past and present, in New South Wales. To intersect and complement these collections, the Library will collect materials relevant to specific contemporary topics. Finally, the Library will seek to collect material that strengthens and expands its existing Indigenous collections.

The Library will collect the materials of, and document the, significant Indigenous persons in NSW. Indigenous peoples across a wide range of fields have contributed and continue

⁵ NSW Government OCHRE Aboriginal Affairs plan: <http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government-aboriginal-affairs-strategy/>

to contribute, meaningfully to the life of NSW and its communities. The Library will collect material that illustrates individual contributions in areas such as:

- Professional life (public service, professions, sporting, business);
- Community life;
- Individual experience;
- Indigenous writers, artists and musicians;
- Indigenous Academics;
- Contemporary excellence.

The Library will also seek to collect the materials of, and document, 'everyday' Indigenous people to complement the collections of the significant Indigenous persons and to ensure the diverse range of life experience is documented and articulated in the collection.

The Library will collect the materials of, and document the, Indigenous organisations in NSW. These include government and non-government organisations working in a range of fields – political, business, language, culture, land management, education, housing, health, legal, art, media, tourism, and sport – across the state.

The Library will collect the materials of, and document the, Indigenous communities in NSW. This includes communities identified through nation, place, language, age, gender, occupation, and way of life.

There are number of significant contemporary events to be documented. These include annual festivals specific to Indigenous communities – for example, NAIDOC Week, National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week, the Koori Knockout Rugby League Festival, and the Yabun festival. It includes days commemorating significant historical events: 27 May, the date in 1967 of the referendum held to alter the Constitution recognising Indigenous people in the census; 3 June, the date in 1992 when the High Court delivered the Mabo judgement recognising native title; and 26 January, the date in 1788 of the arrival of Europeans to Australia. It also includes indigenous participation in festivals, events and commemorations of the broader community - for example, Indigenous contributions to the military commemorations and participation in the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.

Contemporary subjects to be documented include recognition, reconciliation, land rights, the environment, mining, and housing. Material documenting present attitudes and beliefs of non-Indigenous people towards the Indigenous people will be collected. This will include documenting episodes of discrimination and racism. An area of special focus will be to collect material that documents language and cultural revitalisation that is occurring in communities.

To supplement its present Indigenous collections, the Library will seek to collect material articulating the Indigenous perspective of European contact.

The Library will collect material across the range of formats – published materials, unpublished materials, books, journals, newspapers, photographs, manuscripts, maps, pictures, audio, audio-visual and digital. The Library will collect material through legal deposit, donations, purchases, cultural gifts and the harvesting and capture of digital content.

The Library will, where suitable, commission material to document Indigenous experiences. These projects should where possible be developed in partnership with Indigenous people and key organisations. The Library will find opportunities to seek

community generated content. Opportunities exist to capture this content online for example with the *Rediscovering Indigenous Languages* project.

Consultation

The Indigenous Advisory Board assists the Library Council and the State Library to respond to the needs of the Indigenous population of NSW and to build relationships with communities. Its Terms of Reference are to:

1. To advise the Library Council of NSW on matters relating to the Indigenous population of NSW including the needs for library and information services.
2. To assist the Library Council and the State to build relationships with the Indigenous communities of NSW.
3. To advise the Library Council on the development and progress of State Library of New South Wales strategies relating to Indigenous peoples.

The Advisory Group will assist the Library to identify relevant individuals, organisations, communities, events and subjects of interest. It will also assist the Library in its approaches to the Indigenous community.

Beyond the Indigenous Advisory Board, the Library will seek to consult more broadly with Indigenous communities in regards to collection development and acquisition. This could be done by approaching networks such as:

- NSW Aboriginal Land Council Networks
- NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)
- Wider NSW Government and Local Government Aboriginal networks
- Traditional Owner groups and Aboriginal corporations

The Library will also seek to partner with and support Indigenous keeping places across NSW including, for example, Dhiiyaan Aboriginal Centre in Moree.

The Library will consult with cultural institutions including the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the National and State libraries to seek advice on their collecting priorities and ensure the coordinated collection of Indigenous materials.

ATSILIRN Protocols

It is my view that you need to look carefully at the way Aboriginal people are portrayed in libraries, and you need to reach out to Aboriginal people and show us that we are welcome to participate in an area which we were excluded from for a long time. (Mick Dodson, 1993, quoted in [ATSILIRN Protocols](#))

The Collecting Strategy will follow protocols developed by ATSILIRN – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library and Information Resource Network – to guide libraries, archives and information services in working with Indigenous communities and content.

The content and perspectives area of the ATSILIRN Protocols is of direct relevance to this strategy. It promotes that Libraries:

Content and Perspectives

Consult in an appropriate and ongoing manner with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in regard to the development and management of the collections.

Seek to balance collections by acquiring material by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In the case of government archives, consult through the relevant government agency. Agencies should be advised of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content of materials and appropriate access policies.

Promote the existence and availability of collections and provide clients with an explanation for any conditions governing access.

Facilitate the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge centres.

Governance

The Indigenous Collecting Strategy will be the responsibility of the Library and Information Services Division in partnership with the Indigenous Services Branch of the Mitchell Division, Education & Scholarship. The Indigenous Advisory Board will provide advice on collecting areas. Reports will be provided at each meeting of the Indigenous Advisory Board.

The Indigenous Collecting Strategy is informed by the guidance of the National State Libraries of Australasia (NSLA) Indigenous Working group. This includes the publications the [National Position Statement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections](#) (2014) and [Working with Community: Guidelines for collaborative practice between libraries and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities](#) (2013).