



AUSTRALIAN  
INSTITUTE OF  
BOTANICAL  
SCIENCE



The Royal  
BOTANIC GARDENS  
& Domain Trust

Royal Botanic Gardens  
and Domain Trust

# FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2021-2026

## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that the Gardens are significant historical, ceremonial and traditional trade grounds for the local Gadigal, Dharawal and Darug peoples.

We pay respect to all Elders and Traditional custodians of these lands and waters that our Gardens sit on, including their continuous custodianship, protection and management of these sacred lands.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are the oldest living continuous cultures in the world, which the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust will ensure that all visitors acknowledge that this land always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.





## Our goal

To be a leading organisation for embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, knowledge and perspectives in all aspects of our activities.

We will embark on meaningful and authentic avenues for learning, collaboration and support with, and respecting the knowledge of, all First Nations communities, Cultures and Country.

Connections Garden, the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan





## From the Chief Executive

I am proud to be leading the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, an organisation made up of passionate, dynamic and influential professionals who are committed to creating positive change for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through employment opportunities, promotion of First Nations Australians excellence and talent and providing culturally competent training, mentoring and support for all staff, volunteers and partners.

The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust is responsible for the management and stewardship of the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, the Domain, the Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan and the Blue Mountains Botanic Garden Mount Tomah. The Trust incorporates the Australian Institute of Botanical Science, a national leader in plant sciences and is also one of the country's leading international tourism businesses.

For over 200 years, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney has been dedicated to discovering, researching and protecting plants. Integral to our plant knowledge and our stewardship of these incredible green spaces is the Garden's relationship with the land's Traditional Custodians and cultural heritage. We recognise that our understanding of plants and their environment is informed by thousands of years of knowledge embedded in culture and lore by First Nations Australians in plant taxonomy, ecology and ecosystem engineering that sustainably managed the landscapes of Australia for tens of thousands of years.

Our First Nations culture is the oldest living culture in the world and our Gardens' sites are significant historical, ceremonial and traditional trade grounds for the local Gadigal, Dharawal, and Darug peoples. We are committed throughout our work at the Gardens to support our First Nations staff, students, visitors, suppliers and communities and provide role models for the young and inspire the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs.

**Denise Ora**  
Chief Executive  
Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust



Australian Botanic Garden  
Mount Annan  
Dharawal

Royal Botanic Garden  
Sydney  
Gadigal

Blue Mountains Botanic Garden  
Mount Tomah  
Darug

Research  
Centre for  
Eco System  
Resilience

Science,  
Education &  
Conservation

Experiences,  
Partnerships &  
Engagement

Finance,  
Property &  
Corporate  
Services

Horticulture

Asset  
Management,  
Planning &  
Projects

National Sorry Day event at the Stolen  
Generations Memorial, the Australian  
Botanic Garden Mount Annan

# First Nations Engagement Strategy 2021- 2026

Cultural awareness  
and change

Aboriginal procurement  
and business support

Aboriginal employment  
and retention

Community engagement  
and outcomes

## Trust 5-Year Strategic Priorities

1

**Increase the national and global community's understanding of our value and rich cultural heritage**

Our brand, value and rich cultural heritage is known and strongly advocated

2

**Increase our engagement, influence and profile**

Our expertise is recognised, trusted, shared and sought out locally, nationally and internationally by communities, governments and industry

3

**Ensure sustainable funding**

We have a diverse and secure business model that allows us to maintain and improve the quality of our science, horticulture, visitor experience, meet Trust Objects and continuously expand our capabilities

4

**Solve critical environmental challenges**

The Australian Institute of Botanical Science, our facilities, research capabilities, expertise and collections are recognised as a global leader in plant science

5

**Have a truly meaningful effect on our visitors and their experiences**

We enrich lives and deliver memorable lasting experiences

6

**Build the capacity of our people and strengthen our culture**

Our people are empowered, engaged and motivated, with the capabilities, diversity and expertise to deliver this strategy





Koorri perform during our NAIDOC 2020 celebrations at the Yurong Precinct, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney

# Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust

## First Nations Engagement Strategy 2021-2026

### Cultural awareness and change

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- ▶ Our workforce and sites encompass and promote authentic and ongoing cultural learning, protocols and values.
  - ▶ We proactively engage all visitors to be culturally aware and increase the national and global community's understanding of our Garden's rich cultural heritage.
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### Aboriginal employment and retention

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- ▶ We are a workplace of choice for Aboriginal job seekers, university students and professionals, with succinct career progression pathways from frontline to leadership positions.
  - ▶ All levels of our organisation have a high level of competency in managing and supporting Aboriginal staff, through creating culturally safe working environments.
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### Aboriginal community engagement outcomes

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- ▶ Our local Aboriginal communities are supported physically, culturally, socially and economically through our works and opportunities.
  - ▶ We are able to provide a variety of avenues for authentic engagement, service delivery and support for Aboriginal community-led initiatives.
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### Aboriginal procurement and business support

- ▶ We actively seek and procure quality Aboriginal businesses for a variety of works and initiatives within our organisation.
- ▶ We provide support avenues and collaborate with known Aboriginal business networks for promoting our upcoming projects, tenders and requests.





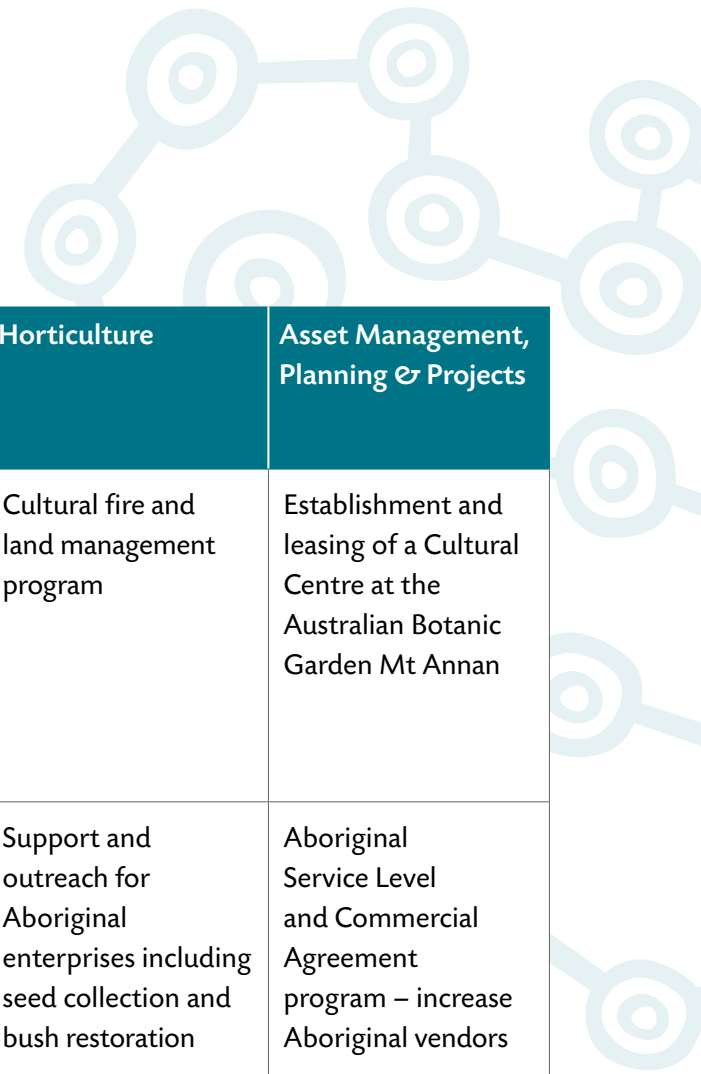
Our First Nations Education programs support our next generations of youth, to learn about and connect with Country  
Photo: Tad Souden



# Our top actions

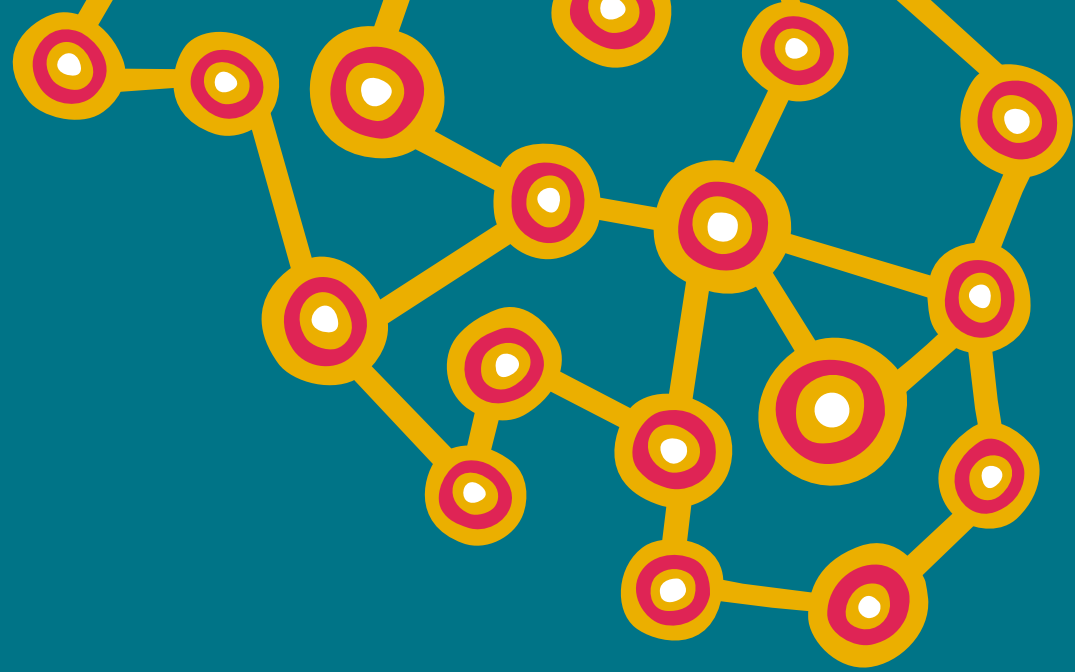
	Research Centre for Ecosystem Resilience	Science, Education & Conservation	Experiences, Partnerships & Engagement	Finance, Property & Corporate Services	Horticulture	Asset Management, Planning & Projects
<b>Cultural awareness and change</b>	Native fungal and plant species – incorporating local languages into species names	First Nations Knowledge Centre; Cultural Awareness program, First Nations Education and Engagement programs and interpretive signage	Acknowledgement of Country integration; website, signage and collateral all sites	RBGDT cultural inclusion implementation plan	Native garden and trail redevelopment to each Garden site including; Cadi Jam Ora, Stolen Generation memorial trail and Fruit loop, BMBG	RBGDT Building and Precinct interpretation plans - New buildings and construction areas to adopt Aboriginal place names/ languages
<b>Aboriginal employment and retention</b>	Cultural fire burning PhD research program support and supervision	First Nations Knowledge Centre; Work Experience, TAFE pre-employment programs	Identified communications role	RBGDT Aboriginal employment strategy; Hiring manager support/ FAQ, employment experience streams for Aboriginal job seekers and students	Aboriginal Apprenticeships	AMPP annual Aboriginal Internships





	Research Centre for Ecosystem Resilience	Science, Education & Conservation	Experiences, Partnerships & Engagement	Finance, Property & Corporate Services	Horticulture	Asset Management, Planning & Projects
<b>Aboriginal community engagement and outcomes</b>	Plant material collection training and education - LALCs' Aboriginal nurseries and businesses	First Nations Knowledge Centre; Aboriginal Community Engagement Programs and Youth Community Greening	Cultural Civic Events Program	NAIDOC: annual internal staff engagement program all sites	Cultural fire and land management program	Establishment and leasing of a Cultural Centre at the Australian Botanic Garden Mt Annan
<b>Aboriginal procurement and business support</b>	Pant/seed collection and cultural burning procurement - Aboriginal businesses	Support Aboriginal enterprises in procurement of materials for Education and Engagement Centre	Aboriginal Tourism Strategy	Aboriginal supplier lists; all categories of work at RBGDT (in collaboration with Supply Nation)	Support and outreach for Aboriginal enterprises including seed collection and bush restoration	Aboriginal Service Level and Commercial Agreement program – increase Aboriginal vendors





### Strategy Artwork

'Connections' was created by artist Darren Charlwood, a Wiradjuri man from the Yibaay Wagaan kin group. He belongs to Wellington area in central New South Wales. He is a contemporary Aboriginal artist as well as an educator at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.

### Graphic Design

Our First Nations Engagement Strategy was designed by Mumbulla Creative, a Sydney-based Aboriginal creative agency who are passionate about working on projects that support reconciliation and social justice.

### Contact details

**E** [feedback@botanicgardens.nsw.gov.au](mailto:feedback@botanicgardens.nsw.gov.au)

**W** [botanicgardens.org.au](http://botanicgardens.org.au)

