



Aboriginal Culture, Heritage and Arts Association NSW

Volunteer Museums: Engagement with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

Murrook Culture Centre (Worimi Country, Port Stephens)
Tuesday 12 May 2026 (9:30am–4:30pm)

Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre (Gumbaynggirr Country, Corindi Beach)
Thursday 14 May 2026 (9:30am–4:30pm)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ACHAA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of these lands and their Elders Past and Present. We celebrate and embrace their enduring connections to Country, Culture and Community in all that we do.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Developed by ACHAA in partnership with M&G NSW, this one-day training program supports museums to work respectfully, confidently and ethically with Aboriginal cultural heritage, collections and communities.

Developed in response to sector consultation, it recognises the challenges faced by volunteer-run and regional museums – while addressing a strong need for practical, accessible guidance. The program provides clear tools, expert insights and achievable pathways to best practice.

Participants will build confidence in engaging with Aboriginal communities, strengthen their understanding of cultural protocols and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP), and learn practical approaches to interpreting and caring for collections in culturally respectful ways.

Grounded in real-world museum contexts, the program equips participants to reduce risks, access trusted resources and implement meaningful improvements in their own organisations.

Project supported by:

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THE PROGRAM

- 9:30am **Registration**
Tea and coffee available.
- 10:00am **Welcome to Country**
- 10:15am **Introduction to the Centre**

A short introduction to the Cultural Centre

Focus:
- understanding the cultural context of the venue and Country
 - the role of Aboriginal cultural centres in caring for and presenting cultural heritage and arts.
- 10:30am **Program Overview**

Overview of ACHAA's role, the sector consultation findings and the purpose of the training program.

Focus:
- key findings from the museum volunteer survey
 - common challenges and confidence gaps in working with Aboriginal heritage
 - opportunities for improved practice in engagement, interpretation and collection care.
- 10:45am **Industry Guidelines, Standards, Resources, ICIP**

Introduction to national frameworks, cultural protocols and practical guidance to support respectful museum practice.
- 11:30am **Morning Tea** (provided)
- 12:00pm **From Principles to Practice: Cultural Awareness and Aboriginal Engagement**

A panel discussion sharing practical experiences of working with Aboriginal communities in museum and cultural settings

Focus:
- building respectful relationships with Aboriginal communities
 - applying cultural protocols in interpretation, programming and collections
 - recognising risks such as misrepresentation and cultural harm
 - practical approaches including consultation, co-design and ongoing partnerships.
- 1:15pm **Lunch** (provided)

- 2:00pm **Exhibition Tour**
- A guided tour of the current exhibition exploring its development, including consultation, research, interpretation and storytelling.
- Focus:
- understanding how Aboriginal stories and cultural materials are interpreted in exhibitions
 - exploring approaches to consultation, narrative development and display.
- 2:45pm **Interactive Workshop: Collection Management and Aboriginal Cultural Engagement**
- A hands-on session exploring culturally respectful approaches to caring for Aboriginal cultural materials in museum collections.
- Focus:
- cultural protocols and ICIP in collection care
 - object identification, documentation and significance
 - ethical accessioning and decision-making
 - storage, handling and basic conservation principles
 - digitisation, record keeping and appropriate community access
 - legal and ethical considerations including repatriation.
- 3:45pm **Afternoon tea** (provided)
- 4:00pm **Wrap-Up and Reflections**
- A discussion reflecting on key insights from the day and how they may be applied in participants' own museums.
- Focus:
- key learnings and reflections
 - practical next steps for museums
 - available resources, networks and ongoing support.
- 4:30 pm **Close**

PRESENTERS AND PANELLISTS

Murrook Culture Centre – Tuesday 12 May 2026

Panellists:

- Nicole Chaffey, Museum Curator at Worimi LALC, Murrook Culture Centre
- Nathan Mudyi Sentence, Head of Collections, First Nations, Powerhouse
- Julie Baird, Director of Museum Archive Libraries & Learning City of Newcastle, President Australian Museums & Galleries Association
- Zoe Pegler, Collections Assistant, Newcastle Museum.

Other Speakers/ Facilitators:

- Steve Miller, ACHAA CEO
- Emily Cullen, Sector Development Manager, Museums & Galleries NSW
- Debbie Abraham, Project Consultant.

Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre – Thursday 14 May 2026

Panellists:

- Alison Williams, Wadjar Creative Director, Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre
- Aunty Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley, Aboriginal Eder, Cultural and Creative Producer
- Marcus Ferguson, Nyangbul artist and historian

Other Speakers/ Facilitators:

- Steve Miller, ACHAA CEO
- Emily Cullen, Sector Development Manager, Museums & Galleries NSW
- Debbie Abraham, Project Consultant.

BURSARIES

The travel bursary supports participation by museum volunteers in this training, which focuses on strengthening how volunteer-run museums across regional NSW care for and engage with Aboriginal Cultural Heritage.

The bursary (up to \$200) assists with travel and accommodation costs, reducing barriers for volunteers to attend this community-led professional development opportunity. Applicants must choose one of the two available training sessions. Please note that a registration form must be completed in addition to this bursary application.

For a bursary form please email: Debbie Abraham c/- aa@achaa.com.au

REGISTRATIONS

[Murrook Culture Centre](#) (Tuesday 12 May 2026)

[Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre](#) (Thursday 14 May 2026)

