

# Guide to Aboriginal Engagement in Tasmania



**Aboriginal Partnerships**  
Policy and Reform  
Department of Premier and Cabinet



## Acknowledgement of Country

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges and pays respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work and live. The Government honours Aboriginal people's enduring connection to Country, including the lands, seas, skies, and waterways of Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Government acknowledges the strength, resilience, and wisdom of Aboriginal people, and commits to engaging with and learning from Aboriginal knowledge and experience.

## Abbreviations used in this document

**ACCO** \_\_\_\_\_ Aboriginal community-controlled organisation

**TSS** \_\_\_\_\_ Tasmanian State Service

## Notes on language and terminology

- The Guide to Aboriginal Engagement in Tasmania provides guidance for engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations. The original inhabitants of Tasmania were Aboriginal people, and the ongoing custodians of Tasmania are Tasmanian Aboriginal people. For that reason, we use the term 'Aboriginal' to describe all First Nations people in Tasmania.
- The phrase 'On Country' generally means being on land that has Aboriginal cultural significance.
- There are differing opinions across Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in Tasmania about whether there is a single Tasmanian Aboriginal community or multiple communities. It is best to use the phrases 'Aboriginal people', 'Aboriginal organisations' or 'Aboriginal community-controlled organisations' (ACCOs).
- The word Aboriginal should always be capitalised in the context of Australian Aboriginal people.

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## About the artwork: *As We Journey Together*

'*As We Journey Together*' is a reflection on the many paths we traverse in life, emphasising the connections that bind us. Each journey is unique, yet we are intertwined in a collective narrative that shapes our shared future. This

artwork invites viewers to pause, share their experiences, and engage in meaningful reflection, fostering a sense of community and understanding.

Central to this artwork is acknowledgment of Aboriginal peoples as navigators of our own journeys. Our wisdom and deep connection to the land provide invaluable insights into sustainable living, caring for the earth, caring for each other and coexistence in harmony with Mother Earth. By honouring our perspectives, we recognise the importance of collaboration in building a future that respects and uplifts our voices.

Through the act of sharing our stories and experiences, we create a tapestry of understanding that transcends differences and cultivates openness.

'*As We Journey Together*' is a call to action: an invitation to connect, learn, and grow alongside one another. By embracing our connections, we can navigate the complexities of our shared existence and work towards a future that is inclusive, harmonious, and nurturing for all.

Shells at Killecrankie, Flinders Island. Photo: Fred and Hannah / Tasmanian Partner Toolkit.





Emma on a sunset trip to gather shells.  
Photo: Bec Woolley

## About the artist

Emma Robertson is a proud palawa woman, artist, and cultural practitioner. Her passion for the environment and sustainability is reflected in her art and jewellery, which often use or are inspired by natural materials like kelp, quills and shells.

Emma strives to create meaningful art that is rooted in her ancient culture yet resonates with people worldwide, evoking emotions and inspiring people to connect with nature and create positive change to protect Country.

By incorporating traditional palawa elements in her art, Emma fosters a sense of identity and pride in her community and cultural heritage, while also embracing contemporary aesthetics.



# Preamble

Engaging and building partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and people helps governments get it right when planning and delivering services and programs for Aboriginal people.

The Guide to Aboriginal Engagement in Tasmania (the Guide) supports the Tasmanian Government's commitment to engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal people in fair, respectful, meaningful and consistent ways. It will assist staff and contracted service providers to engage and work in partnership with Aboriginal people through a set of guiding principles and tools.

The Guide was developed with extensive input from Aboriginal people and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations throughout Tasmania. Thank you to everyone who generously shared their time, knowledge and expertise.

*The National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020* (the National Agreement, [www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement](http://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement)) commits all Australian governments to a fundamentally new way of working in full and genuine partnership with Aboriginal people in developing and implementing policies and programs that affect them.



piyura kitina / Risdon Cove. Photo: Moon Cheese Studio / Tasmanian Partner Toolkit.

The National Agreement recognises that better life outcomes are achieved when Aboriginal people are partners in the design and delivery of policies that affect them, and the programs and services they use. Under the National Agreement, the Tasmanian Government has an obligation to listen to and be guided by Aboriginal people.

Beyond formal commitments, there is also great benefit in working in partnership with Aboriginal people and organisations to hear new perspectives and ideas, with benefits flowing to the whole Tasmanian community.

Partnerships offer unique opportunities:

- to combine knowledges and perspectives to achieve broad social, health, cultural and economic benefits, including to identify novel solutions to challenges
- to identify the needs and priorities of local communities
- for Aboriginal values and diverse lived experiences to influence the design and delivery of government services and programs for sustainable and broad community benefits.

This Guide lays the foundation to improve how we engage and deliver programs and services to Aboriginal people in Tasmania. Using it will lead to inclusive practices and increased confidence in the government's approach to working with Aboriginal organisations and people.

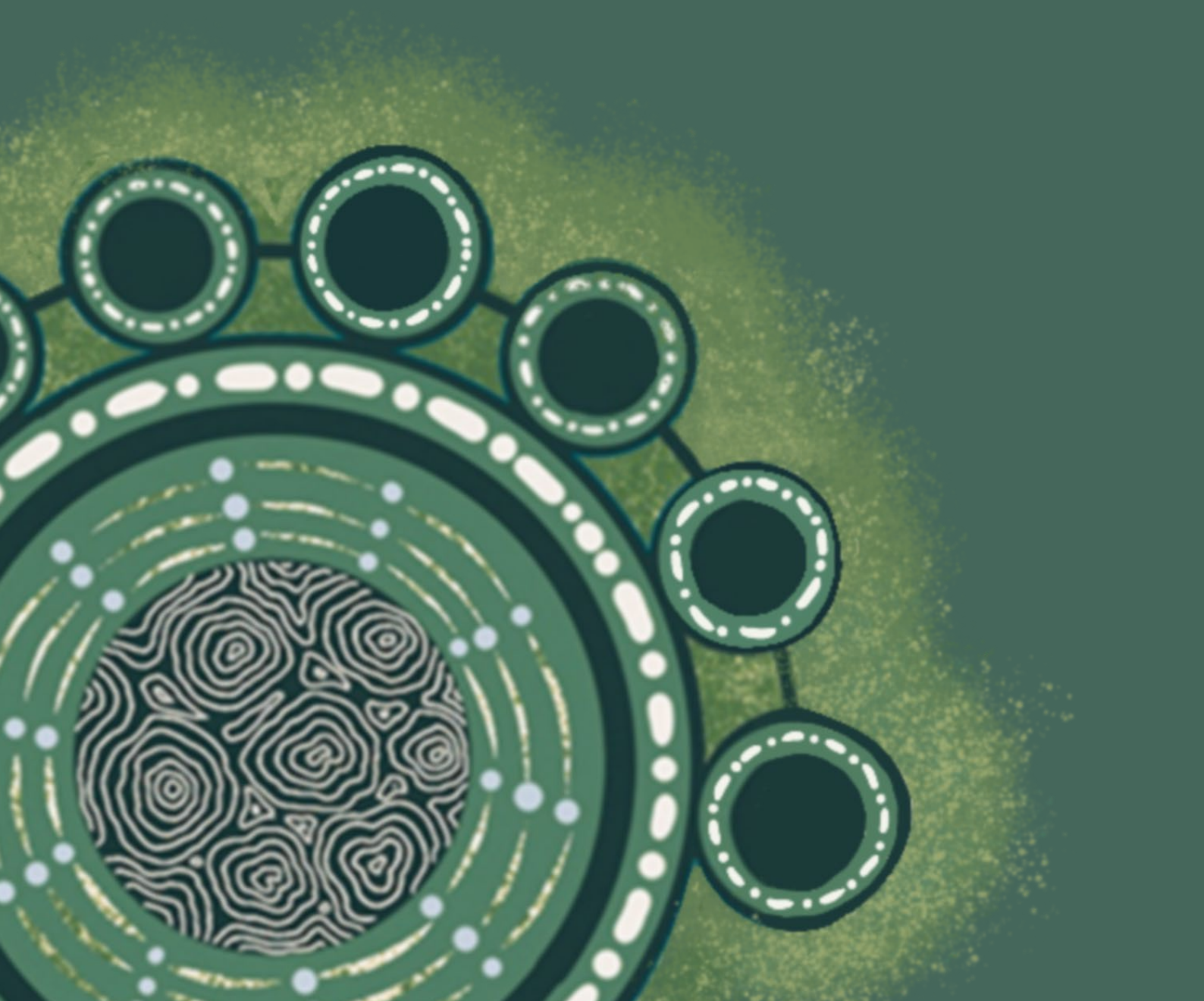
This Guide does not replace the need for Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural respect training for everyone working with, providing services to and/or engaging with Aboriginal people in Tasmania. This includes everyone working in the Tasmanian State Service (TSS), even if similar training has been completed interstate.

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy team in the State Service Management Office offers fundamental one-day Aboriginal Cultural Respect training tailored to the needs of people working in the TSS.

See the 'Additional information' section of this guide.



# Introduction





# Introduction

## Purpose of the Guide

The Guide to Aboriginal Engagement (the Guide) in Tasmania was designed to provide high-level guidance to engaging and working in partnership with Aboriginal people in Tasmania.

It was written for TSS employees and Tasmanian Government contractors and funded organisations.

The Guide does not seek to detail specific protocols for individual issues, nor does it seek to offer a step-by-step procedure. Every engagement with Aboriginal people will be different and requires respect and diplomacy.

## A pillar for Closing the Gap

Development of the Guide is an action committed to by the Tasmanian Government in the first [Tasmanian Implementation Plan for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#).

Under the National Agreement, Tasmania committed to 17 socioeconomic target outcomes (see Appendix 1) and the following four transformational priority reforms:

1. Formal partnerships and shared decision making
2. Building the community-controlled sector
3. Transforming government organisations
4. Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

The Guide is integral to implementing the four priority reforms and achievement of the socioeconomic target outcomes.

In going about your day-to-day work, be aware of the four Closing the Gap priority reforms and opportunities to progress them.





kunanyi Waratah. Photo: Natasha Mulhall / Tasmanian Partner Toolkit.

## United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People

The Tasmanian Government is committed to advancing the rights of Aboriginal people by ensuring government programs and services are developed in culturally appropriate ways.

Australia is a signatory to United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and wellbeing of the Indigenous peoples of the world. Article 3 of the UNDRIP states that Indigenous people have the right of self-determination.

Formal partnerships and shared decision making with government organisations “is a step on the journey towards the ultimate goal of self-determination.” (Productivity Commission 2024, Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Study report, volume 1, Canberra).

### Updating this document

This Guide will be updated over time to ensure it remains relevant and respectful, and in response to ongoing feedback and evaluation.



# About engagement





# About engagement

## What is 'engagement'?

In a government context, 'engagement' is the process through which government organisations interact with communities, stakeholders and the public to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower them in decision-making processes. The goal of engagement is to enhance the effectiveness, transparency and accountability of government initiatives and policies.

Engagement is more than consultation.

The table below, informed by the [Business Lab](http://www.businesslab.co.nz/insights/consultation-versus-engagement) ([www.businesslab.co.nz/insights/consultation-versus-engagement](http://www.businesslab.co.nz/insights/consultation-versus-engagement)), outlines the key differences between consultation and engagement.

**Table 1: The difference between engagement and consultation**

Consultation tends to:	Engagement tends to:
Be a one-off process for a specific purpose.	Be an ongoing process.
Be top-down, with the government organisation deciding what to discuss and how.	Be an equal process, with the government organisation and community members deciding what to discuss and how.
Be one-way, with community members providing information to the government organisation.	Be two-way, with the government organisation providing information and listening to the community.
Be focused on what the government organisation needs.	Be focused on what the community needs to achieve their aims.
Not build the community's capability and capacity to act.	Build community capability and capacity to act.
Offer little long-term value.	Add ongoing and broad value.



Consultation and engagement are the middle steps on a ladder of participation, as shown in Figure 1. Co-design and co-production are considered deeper forms of participation that are more empowering.

This Guide begins with engagement. The Priority Reforms of the National Agreement ask us to transform government and consider ways we can move towards genuine partnership, where we are working with Aboriginal people in an equal and reciprocal relationship. Building those relationships starts with engaging and moves to coproduction.

**Figure 1: The ladder of co-production**



*Updated from Arnstein's Ladder of Engagement (1969) – The New Economics Foundation, 2014*

Source: <https://traumainformedoregon.org/what-do-you-mean-by-community-engagement/>

## The cycle of engagement

Engagement is not a single step or activity. Genuine engagement means establishing and maintaining trust. This can take time.

Trust is strengthened by:

- development of relationships
- respectful, two-way communication
- early engagement, including to set goals and define the outcomes being sought
- sharing information and data
- formal partnerships and sector capacity building
- the provision of feedback on engagement, including how engagement influences outputs and outcomes
- time.

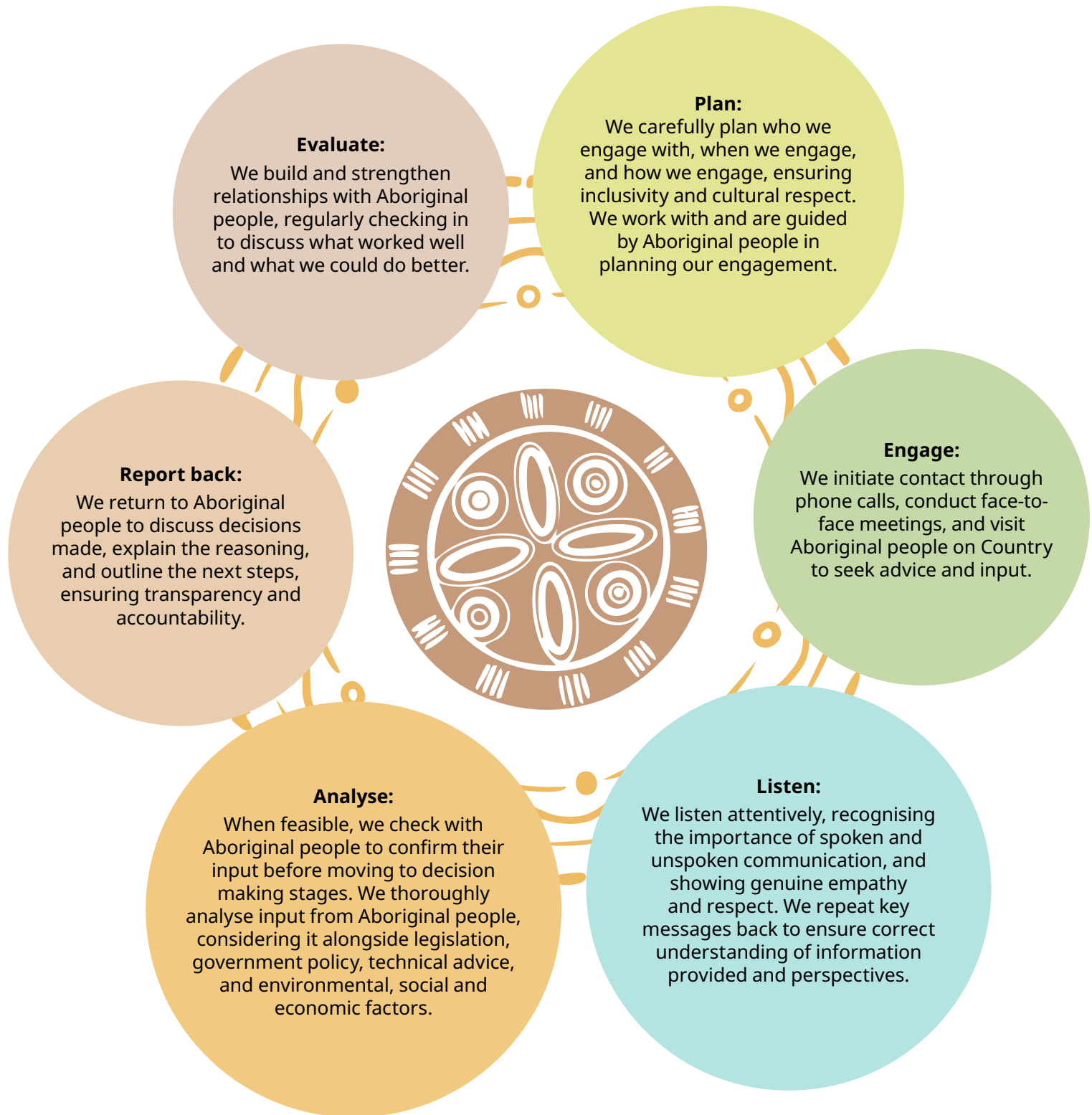
Figure 2 outlines the cycle of engagement for state servants engaging directly with Aboriginal people and organisations. The process of engagement may vary, including when Aboriginal people are project team members, coordinate or lead engagement, and/or co-design strategies.





## Figure 2: The cycle of engagement

Underpinning each engagement stage is trust.  
Without trust, there can be no genuine engagement.



# Principles for respectful engagement





# Principles for respectful engagement

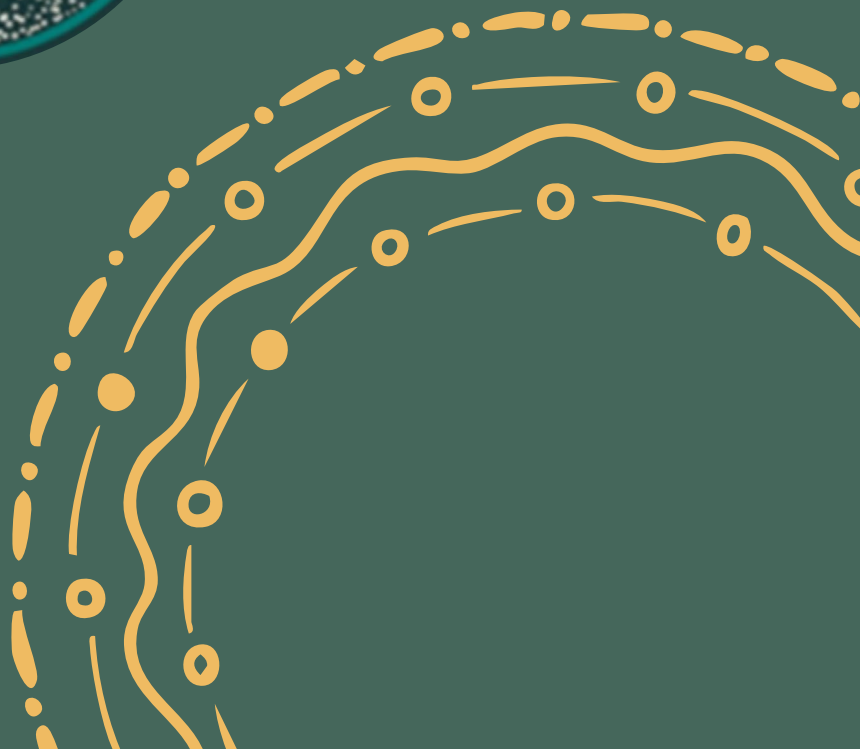
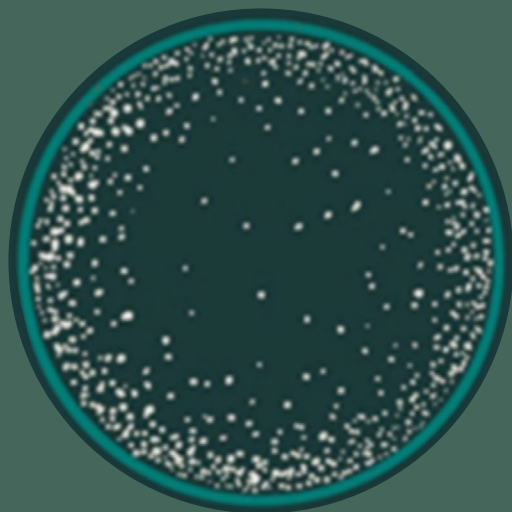
Respectful engagement with Aboriginal people is underpinned by the following principles developed in partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal people and organisations.

- 1**  **Respect for Aboriginal custodianship**  
We value, respect and acknowledge Aboriginal custodianship of Country, culture, language and heritage.
- 2**  **Meaningful participation**  
We include Aboriginal people in matters that directly affect them and support their involvement throughout the life of projects.
- 3**  **Building relationships**  
We prioritise strong and enduring relationships with Aboriginal people, based on trust, mutual respect and consistency.
- 4**  **Diverse and inclusive input**  
We seek engagement with and value input from Aboriginal people and organisations across Tasmania and strive to understand and respect varying perspectives while acknowledging the importance of elevating the voices of Elders and those with cultural knowledge and authority.
- 5**  **Time for authentic engagement**  
We allow sufficient time for authentic engagement, acknowledging the importance of patience and flexibility.
- 6**  **Empathy and respect in communication**  
We listen, learn, and share with empathy and respect, valuing the experiences, knowledges and insights of Aboriginal people.
- 7**  **Integrity and trust**  
We act with integrity and seek to build trust through openness and transparency, and by delivering on our commitments.

As well as following these principles, TSS staff are expected to undertake Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural respect training, even if similar training has been completed interstate.



# What the principles mean in practice





# What the principles mean in practice

## 1 ● Respect for Aboriginal custodianship

We value, respect and acknowledge Aboriginal custodianship of Country, culture, language and heritage.

Recognition of the importance of Aboriginal cultural tradition and knowledge is fundamental to successful engagement with Aboriginal people. Tasmanian Aboriginal people maintain a connection to Country that spans over 40,000 years.

Tasmanian Aboriginal people are recognised as the rightful custodians of Tasmania's lands, seas, skies and waterways, and possess an inherent right to self-determination. The strength and resilience of Tasmanian Aboriginal people is acknowledged and respected. This understanding is central to our engagement approach, which values Tasmanian Aboriginal people as genuine partners and the architects of their own futures.

There are significant differences between the culture of Tasmanian Aboriginal people and ways of working within government agencies. These differences include communication styles (verbal and non-verbal), the distribution of power, decision-making processes, and the fundamental truths we accept.

### **What this means in practice**

- ✓ Seek to improve your understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, history and cultural heritage, as well as the cultures of non-Aboriginal Tasmanians and government entities.
- ✓ Be aware that Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, history and modern contexts differ from those of interstate Aboriginal communities.
- ✓ Consider that your assumptions may not be obvious or shared by people from different backgrounds.
- ✓ Be aware of your own cultural assumptions and how they shape your interactions with others.

## 2 Meaningful participation

We include Aboriginal people in matters that directly affect them and support their involvement throughout the life of projects.

Including Aboriginal people in matters that directly affect them helps ensure government policies, projects and programs are fair, culturally respectful, effective and sustainable. Aboriginal people and organisations generally know and understand their needs.

Government activities focused on Aboriginal people are more likely to succeed and be supported when decisions are shared, and programs and services are co-designed.



Genuine inclusion builds trust, respects inherent rights to self-determination, and helps address historical injustices. It also enhances the legitimacy and acceptance of initiatives, contributing to stronger and more resilient outcomes.

Genuine inclusion means sharing information and data, as per Closing the Gap Priority Reform 4: Shared access to data and information at a regional level.

Sharing information is vital to support Aboriginal organisations to develop programs and services. A whole-of-government Closing the Gap Data and Data Sovereignty Strategy will be developed to support sharing of data.

### What this means in practice

- ✓ Consider Aboriginal input first and foremost in matters that will affect Aboriginal people.
- ✓ Engage genuinely with the intent to create change. Explain how Aboriginal input will be used, to minimise the risk that engagement seems tokenistic.
- ✓ Engage early, to support co-creation of programs and services tailored to local needs. Avoid late engagement when there is limited ability for Aboriginal people to influence decisions and outcomes.
- ✓ Allow for genuine co-design processes and flexibility to adapt programs to meet local needs, rather than imposing one-size-fits-all solutions.
- ✓ Respect Aboriginal people's right to choose to be engaged, when and where.
- ✓ If engagement involves external consultants, provide this Guide to inform their planning and engagement.
- ✓ Share information collected through engagement and consider opportunities to share and provide shared access to additional information.



### 3 Building relationships

We prioritise strong and enduring relationships with Aboriginal people, based on trust, mutual respect and consistency.

Relationships are highly valued by Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Ongoing relationships build trust, making it easier to collaborate on projects and initiatives. They enhance cultural understanding and sensitivity, ensuring that plans are culturally appropriate, respectful, and fair. Ongoing relationships enable the early sharing and co-development of knowledge and ideas, enriching the development of solutions and policies.

Throughout engagement processes it is important to maintain regular communication and involvement with those being engaged.

Relationships and trust are undermined by:

- tokenistic engagement, where there is little intent to act on information provided
- engagement on irrelevant issues
- requests for information already provided to various government representatives.

It is important not to be there just to gather information and leave.



#### What this means in practice

- ✓ Value relationships for their own sake, not merely for potential gains.
- ✓ Establish and maintain relationships based on consistency, trust, and mutual respect. Work to protect those relationships.
- ✓ Be open and honest in your conversations. Do what you say you will or be honest about the barriers and limitations, or why you couldn't do what you said you would.
- ✓ Notify ACCOs of significant changes in senior/executive level staff.
- ✓ Try to minimise changes in the people representing government organisations over time. When changes are unavoidable, prioritise hand-over of relationships and introductions.
- ✓ Invest and build relationships from the foundation of broad partnerships, regardless of the initiative or project that is highest priority at the time.

- ✓ Remember time is valuable. Be strategic in engagement to avoid overburdening Aboriginal organisations, people and their families. Over-inclusion can result in engagement fatigue and reluctance to participate in future engagement.
  - Consider the necessity, impact and priority of the issues brought to Aboriginal people for input and advice. Is your issue relevant to Aboriginal people?
  - Check across your agency and with Aboriginal Partnerships if there has been recent engagement about a similar issue.
  - Keep records of engagement, including conversations. If appropriate, considering the subject matter and personal information protection requirements, ensure this information is accessible by staff.
  - Share information within and across government organisations to reduce duplication of consultations, improve efficiency in engagements, and genuinely respect the time and expertise of Aboriginal people.



wukalina Walk. Photo: Alastair Bett / Tasmanian Partner Toolkit.



## 4



## Diverse and inclusive input

We seek engagement with and value input from Aboriginal people and organisations across Tasmania and strive to understand and respect varying perspectives while acknowledging the importance of elevating the voices of Elders and those with cultural knowledge and authority.

There are Aboriginal organisations in all regions of Tasmania. Some are service providers and employers with established infrastructure, others are registered under Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) without established infrastructure to deliver services or programs. An Aboriginal person may be a member of multiple organisations or no organisation and may have their own views that are not shared by an organisation.

As with any population, there is diversity within Tasmania's Aboriginal population, including age, gender, locality, political views and needs.

While the input of every Aboriginal person is valued, no-one is an expert in all areas. It is important to identify subject matter experts and prioritise their engagement.

### What this means in practice

- ✓ Do background research to understand what types of services or functions an organisation provides, where they are located, and their strategic focus, to ensure your engagement is broad and inclusive, yet relevant.
- ✓ Understand your agency or organisation's existing relationships with Aboriginal organisations, and the mechanisms through which they are maintained. Consider these relationships and arrangements against these guidelines and strengthen your approach where needed.
- ✓ Consult with a broad range of Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal people and their families, to ensure comprehensive engagement and representation. When engaging with organisations, ask the organisations to invite community members to participate.
- ✓ Seek and listen to diverse voices, including Aboriginal youth, Elders, LGBTIQ+ community members and Aboriginal people with disability and/or lived experiences relevant to your topic of engagement.
- ✓ While it is important to listen to and learn from diverse voices, be diligent to identify and engage those with specific subject matter knowledge and expertise. Seek advice from Aboriginal Partnerships.

## 5 Time for authentic engagement

We allow sufficient time for authentic engagement, acknowledging the importance of patience and flexibility.

Aboriginal organisations are stretched thinly by their service delivery obligations. Similarly, many Aboriginal people have particular expertise and are frequently called upon to provide comment or advice. The capacity of staff and board members of Aboriginal organisations to commit to in-depth engagement may be constrained, and their priorities may not align with yours. Competing demands and constrained resources call for careful prioritisation of time and energy.

### What this means in practice

- ✓ Engage with Aboriginal people and organisations at the start of your project and regularly, at an agreed frequency. Don't engage halfway through or at the end of your project.
- ✓ Respect the time and pace needed for meaningful engagement, balancing this with the practical requirements of governmental timelines. Typically, at least four to six weeks is a realistic timeframe for Aboriginal organisations to consult with their members, though this may vary, and longer time may be required for complex matters.
- ✓ Identify the preferred contact person in an organisation, and touch base regularly to gauge the timeframe for feedback.
- ✓ Respect that engaging Aboriginal people and Aboriginal organisations in the lead-up to and during NAIDOC week is problematic. Waiting until after NAIDOC week is respectful.
- ✓ Research other significant dates for Aboriginal people in Tasmania, and whether these dates provide engagement opportunities or will make engagement difficult or disrespectful over that time.
- ✓ Plan your interactions and engagements over the life of a project.
- ✓ Written communication is not preferred. If you do not receive a response to written requests, do not assume that signifies either acceptance or disinterest.
- ✓ Conversations and yarning are preferred. Allow time for discussion and exploration of issues.
- ✓ Respect that Aboriginal people may not choose to engage on some issues, even if those issues are important to you. For example, an organisation may not want to share its priorities with the government.



## 6



## Empathy and respect in communication

We listen, learn, and share with empathy and respect, valuing the experiences, knowledges and insights of Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal voices are a valuable resource, and the input of Aboriginal people to relevant matters is essential.

Past unjust and discriminatory policies, including removal of Aboriginal children from their families, have resulted in intergenerational trauma at a population level. It is understandable that Aboriginal people and their families don't trust and may be hesitant to engage with government.

Engagement is usually led by Aboriginal organisations.

### What this means in practice

- ✓ Work closely with Aboriginal organisations when engaging or facilitating meetings. They are the experts on their lives and will ensure a culturally safe space for Aboriginal people meeting with government representatives.
- ✓ Engage with Aboriginal people in the setting they choose. This may be on Country (for example, on land that is culturally significant).
- ✓ Listen actively and empathetically, with awareness that there may be people of influence and authority in the room who may not speak up; it can be helpful to check with the meeting organiser after the session that all views were heard and to offer additional engagement options for people who may have further knowledge or perspectives to share.
- ✓ Apply your agency or organisation's policy for remunerating individual participants for providing expert advice in your engagement, if they are not participating in a paid role for an organisation. This is a point to discuss with the Aboriginal organisation.

## 7 ● Integrity and trust

We act with integrity and seek to build trust through openness and transparency, and by delivering on our commitments.

Transparency and openness are vital. It is important for Aboriginal people to know that their contributions will inform decision-making. Clear communication about the scope and limitations of Aboriginal involvement fosters trust and encourages genuine participation.

### What this means in practice

- ✓ Provide clear, ongoing feedback about engagement processes and outcomes.
- ✓ Tell those you meet that you are also meeting with other interested parties, if relevant.
- ✓ Ensure all relevant information is easily accessible and understandable (without jargon), providing necessary context for informed participation.
- ✓ Provide supporting information before the engagement session and give participants time to read it.
- ✓ Build trust through consistent actions and by fulfilling promises made.
- ✓ Respectfully communicate that while all input is valuable, final decisions may not always align with everyone's preferences.
- ✓ Be open about decision-making processes.
- ✓ It takes time to build trust. Be prepared for the conversations on what the government has not done for Aboriginal people during the engagement session.

# Guidelines





# Guidelines

## How to engage respectfully

### Do

#### Before engaging

- ✓ Complete Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural respect training before engaging with Aboriginal people.
- ✓ Educate yourself about Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture, including its distinct differences from Aboriginal history and cultures interstate.
- ✓ Discuss your proposed engagement with colleagues within your government organisation who coordinate Aboriginal affairs.
- ✓ Check what previous consultation and engagement there has been on your topic or issue.
- ✓ Identify and involve colleagues with existing relationships with Aboriginal organisations, as appropriate.
- ✓ Inform yourself about the services and programs delivered by Aboriginal organisations.



limilinaturi/Devonport NAIDOC Week. Photo: Moon Cheese Studio / Tasmanian Partner Toolkit.

## Do

### During engagement and ongoing

- ✓ Acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of Country.
- ✓ If you are hosting a meeting, demonstrate appreciation for Aboriginal people and culture by providing a welcoming space with the Aboriginal flag, posters or Tasmanian artwork or cultural objects.
- ✓ Be sensitive to the distinct historical and cultural differences between Aboriginal cultures interstate and in Tasmania (boomerangs, didgeridoos and dot paintings are not part of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture).
- ✓ Work at the pace of those you engage with.
- ✓ Ask the organisation if it would be appropriate to bring contributions such as food to share, or if they would like to provide a quote for catering.
- ✓ Listen actively, valuing both spoken and unspoken communication.
- ✓ Prioritise the term 'Tasmanian Aboriginal people' in your conversations and writings.
- ✓ Provide feedback about Aboriginal input – what you heard and how it will be used.
- ✓ When appropriate, offer fair remuneration in return for expert advice.
- ✓ Prioritise relationships:
  - Accept invitations to culturally significant events.
  - Ask friendly, respectful questions about Aboriginal culture.
  - Be patient, allow time for trust to develop.

## Don't

- ✗ Create intimidating conditions, such as outnumbering Aboriginal people, arranging seating in an 'us versus them' manner, or displaying symbols of historical dominance. This is important.
- ✗ Challenge people's identity or engage in discussions about people's Aboriginality.
- ✗ Presume knowledge or use jargon.
- ✗ Ask intrusive or provocative questions.
- ✗ Use Aboriginal language, art, or cultural practices without permission.
- ✗ Stereotype or generalise about Aboriginal people and cultures.
- ✗ Engage in tokenistic gestures.
- ✗ Rush engagements or consultations.
- ✗ Dismiss or minimise cultural protocols and practices.
- ✗ Interrupt when Aboriginal people are speaking.
- ✗ Take credit for ideas or contributions made by Aboriginal people.
- ✗ Use the term 'community' or 'communities' when referring to Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Use Aboriginal people, Aboriginal community organisations or Aboriginal community-controlled organisations/ services.

## Eligibility guidelines

The Tasmanian Government delivers Aboriginal programs and services to people who meet the requirements of the [Tasmanian Government Eligibility for Government Services guidelines](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/aboriginal-partnerships/eligibility-for-government-services) ([www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/aboriginal-partnerships/eligibility-for-government-services](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/aboriginal-partnerships/eligibility-for-government-services)).

The Eligibility Guidelines are not relevant when planning engagement and building partnerships with Aboriginal people and organisations.

The Tasmanian Government does not have a role in determining Aboriginality of individuals, and it is not appropriate for TSS employees to discuss the Aboriginality of individuals.



## Data and intellectual property

Data and intellectual property from Aboriginal people collected through engagement belongs to Aboriginal people. Data must be collected and stored ethically and responsibly. Discussions should be held with Aboriginal people about how and where data should be made available or preserved for future needs.

Consider whether formal ethics approval should be obtained for your project or initiative.

Work is underway through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reform Four to enable shared access to data and information at a regional level. This work will involve all Tasmanian Government agencies as it progresses.

## Working with Aboriginal colleagues in the TSS

It is inappropriate to approach individual Aboriginal colleagues about topics outside their scope of practice and expect them to speak on behalf of all Aboriginal employees.



Aboriginal employees in the TSS may experience an unfair burden of cultural load on top of their usual duties, and typically without acknowledgement or remuneration. This may include being called on to contribute to the development of programs and policies beyond their role, or being expected to:

- speak on behalf of all Aboriginal people
- provide policy advice on topics outside of their remit
- organise Aboriginal events
- deliver acknowledgements of Country
- educate colleagues about Aboriginal issues, people, history and systemic racism.

Support Aboriginal colleagues in the TSS by avoiding placing unfair cultural loads on them.

# Additional information



## Additional information

### **Tasmanian State Service Aboriginal cultural respect training**

All TSS employees are encouraged to undertake the TSS Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training delivered by Aboriginal people through the Aboriginal Employment Strategy Team of the State Service Management Office.

This fundamental training provides contextual information and introduces and explores work practices that can support engagement with Aboriginal people, development of respectful partnerships, and creation of culturally safe and respectful workplaces and service environments.

This training is tailored to the specific needs of people working in the TSS and is provided in Hobart, Launceston and Ulverstone. More information is available from the [Tasmanian Training Consortium \(www.ttc.tas.gov.au\)](http://www.ttc.tas.gov.au).

To continue your journey of learning and strengthen cultural competency and respect for Aboriginal people, prioritise training delivered by Aboriginal people on Country through well-established Tasmanian Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

### **Aboriginal cultural respect in health services**

The Department of Health Tasmania offers the Aboriginal cultural respect in Health Services online course for all Department of Health staff and non-government organisations. More information is available [here \(www.health.tas.gov.au/professionals/education-and-training-health-professionals/aboriginal-health-and-cultural-respect/aboriginal-health-and-cultural-respect-training-and-development\)](http://www.health.tas.gov.au/professionals/education-and-training-health-professionals/aboriginal-health-and-cultural-respect/aboriginal-health-and-cultural-respect-training-and-development).

### **Aboriginal heritage awareness training**

Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania provides a free online module to help people learn more about Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage. The module is available [here \(www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au/learn/awareness/index.html@export=1.html\)](http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au/learn/awareness/index.html@export=1.html).

### **The Orb**

The Orb is a freely available collection of online multimedia resources created in partnership between Aboriginal Education Services and Tasmanian Aboriginal people. It is designed to reflect the holistic nature of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and the interconnections between people, Country, culture, identity and the living community. You can access The Orb [here \(www.theorb.tas.gov.au\)](http://www.theorb.tas.gov.au).



## Calendar of significant Aboriginal events and dates

The State Service Management Office maintains a calendar of significant Aboriginal days and events (Tasmanian, national and international days). The calendar can be found [here](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo/aboriginal_employment_strategy/aboriginal_significant_dates) (www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo/aboriginal\_employment\_strategy/aboriginal\_significant\_dates).

## Aboriginal place names

The Tasmanian Government *Aboriginal and Dual Naming Policy* allows geographical features and places to have an English and Aboriginal language name.

The statutory Place Names Advisory Panel and Aboriginal and Dual Naming Reference Group lead the Aboriginal and dual naming process.

More information is available on the [Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania website](http://www.nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania/aboriginal-and-dual-naming) (www.nre.tas.gov.au/land-tasmania/place-naming-in-tasmania/aboriginal-and-dual-naming).

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre provides a map with an audio guide to the pronunciation of traditional Aboriginal place names. Information is accessible [here](http://www.tacinc.com.au/pk/GIS/index.html) (www.tacinc.com.au/pk/GIS/index.html).

## Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country guide

The State Service Management Office provides guidelines on providing an Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country.

The guidelines are available [here](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0032/164588/TasGov_Guide_Acknowledgement_and_WelcomeToCountry.pdf) (www.dpac.tas.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0032/164588/TasGov\_Guide\_Acknowledgement\_and\_WelcomeToCountry.pdf).

## National Indigenous Australians Agency

The National Indigenous Australians Agency leads and coordinates Australian Government policy development, program design and implementation, and service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes leading and coordinating development and implementation of Closing the Gap targets in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. More information is [here](http://www.niaa.gov.au/about-niaa) (www.niaa.gov.au/about-niaa).



### ***National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020***

The *National Agreement on Closing the Gap 2020* was signed by all Australian governments, along with the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations. The National Agreement recognises that closing the gap in life outcomes between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people will only be achieved when Aboriginal people are genuine partners in the design and delivery of policy, programs and services that are relevant to them.

The National Agreement is the first to include a non-government signatory, through the Coalition of Peaks. The National Agreement is available [here](http://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/national-agreement-closing-the-gap) (www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/national-agreement-closing-the-gap).

## **Useful contacts**

### **Aboriginal Partnerships**

Aboriginal Partnerships (Department of Premier and Cabinet) guides and advises the Tasmanian Government on policy issues affecting Tasmanian Aboriginal people and can assist Tasmanian Government organisations to implement these guidelines. This includes practical support such as providing introductions and consultancy-level advice on the design of engagement strategies. TSS employees should first seek advice through staff responsible for Aboriginal affairs in their own government organisation (see government agency/organisation contacts on the following page).

Aboriginal Partnerships can also advise on past consultations and the timing of consultations.

For further information: phone 03 6232 7569 or email: [AP@dpac.tas.gov.au](mailto:AP@dpac.tas.gov.au)

## Tasmanian Government agency/organisation contacts

Agency	Business unit	Email addresses
Department for Education, Children and Young People	Inclusion and Cultural Diversity	<a href="mailto:APPAC@decyp.tas.gov.au">APPAC@decyp.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of Health	Public Health Services	<a href="mailto:public.health@health.tas.gov.au">public.health@health.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of Justice	Office of the Secretary	<a href="mailto:Secretary@justice.tas.gov.au">Secretary@justice.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania	Strategic Projects and Policy	<a href="mailto:policyteamnre@nre.tas.gov.au">policyteamnre@nre.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management	Strategy and Support	<a href="mailto:strategy.support@dpfem.tas.gov.au">strategy.support@dpfem.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of Premier and Cabinet	Aboriginal Partnerships	<a href="mailto:AP@dpac.tas.gov.au">AP@dpac.tas.gov.au</a>
	Aboriginal Employment Strategy	<a href="mailto:AboriginalEmploymentStrategy@dpac.tas.gov.au">AboriginalEmploymentStrategy@dpac.tas.gov.au</a>
Department of State Growth	Policy and Coordination	<a href="mailto:coordination@stategrowth.tas.gov.au">coordination@stategrowth.tas.gov.au</a>
	Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery	<a href="mailto:tmagmail@tmag.tas.gov.au">tmagmail@tmag.tas.gov.au</a>





### **Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations contacts register**

The Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC), within the Australian Government National Indigenous Australians Agency, maintains a register of Aboriginal organisations that are incorporated under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006*. This includes contact details for each organisation registered.

The link to the ORIC contacts register for Tasmania is [here](https://register.oric.gov.au/PrintCorporationSearch.aspx?state=TAS) (https://register.oric.gov.au/PrintCorporationSearch.aspx?state=TAS).

### **Cultural and creative industries expert register**

Arts Tasmania and Screen Tasmania maintain a Cultural and Creative Industries Expert Register, which includes a list of identified Aboriginal creative professionals.

For enquiries, please contact [Arts Tasmania](http://www.arts.tas.gov.au) (www.arts.tas.gov.au), [Screen Tasmania](http://www.screen.tas.gov.au) (www.screen.tas.gov.au) or the [palawa Business Hub](http://www.palawahub.com.au) (www.palawahub.com.au).

# Appendix 1: Closing the Gap socioeconomic outcomes

1	Aboriginal people enjoy long and healthy lives.
2	Aboriginal children are born healthy and strong.
3	Aboriginal children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years.
4	Aboriginal children thrive in their early years.
5	Aboriginal students achieve their full learning potential.
6	Aboriginal students reach their full potential through further education pathways.
7	Aboriginal youth are engaged in employment or education.
8	Strong economic participation and development of Aboriginal people and communities.
9	Aboriginal people secure appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and need.
10	Aboriginal people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.
11	Aboriginal young people are not overrepresented in the criminal justice system.
12	Aboriginal children are not overrepresented in the child protection system.
13	Aboriginal families and households are safe.
14	Aboriginal people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing.
15	Aboriginal people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical, and economic relationship with their land and waters.
16	Aboriginal cultures and languages are strong, supported and flourishing.
17	Aboriginal people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives.

[www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets](http://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/targets)











Tasmanian  
Government

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