

Cultural Awareness



REGIONAL
INNOVATOR'S
NETWORK

Content

This content is specific to the cultural awareness that organisations or teams working on initiatives may find beneficial. It includes information for creating cultural awareness for diverse groups, but also aspects of cultural awareness specific to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- Definitions of ‘cultural awareness’ and other common terms
- Principles -- Guiding approaches for innovation that are specific to supporting Aboriginal self-determination
- Strategies for...
 - Building inclusive organizations and initiatives
 - Creating cultural safety for Aboriginal people
- Tools/activities...
 - Unwrapping the RAP – a tool for building understanding as to why reconciliation is important
 - Cultural Canvas – a tool that helps teams starting an initiative identify the cultural aspects that need to be considered during the project
- Opportunities to build bridges

What is 'cultural awareness'?

- **Aboriginal cultural awareness** - understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal cultures and the impacts of Western actions, laws and culture on Aboriginal peoples. Developing cultural respect so that white people can recognise and address the privilege they sit in
- **Cultural awareness** - understanding and knowledge of other cultures
- **Cultural integrity or competency** – acting in a way that demonstrates understanding and respect for other cultures
- **Cultural responsiveness** – working with people in ways that are culturally appropriate to them; having practices that include the practices of other cultures

Principles

Guiding approaches for innovation that are specific to supporting Aboriginal self-determination

Tell great stories
Visual, tactile and storytelling way of sharing and learning

Build on community knowledge
Recognising diversity and building on evidence.
Giving back to community



Furthering self-determination
Driven, governed and owned by community

Relationships first
Building trust and being flexible with timelines and pace.
Understand and navigate local politics

See the connection
Respond to the now and plan for the future

Building inclusivity

Building cultural awareness can mean being awareness of diversity more broadly. It can refer to a number of different cultures, including CALD groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Pacific Islander peoples and LGBTIQ people. In this broad definition, strategies for creating cultural awareness can include:

- Building knowledge of the different cultures that are encountered
- Respecting, honouring, sharing and celebrating those cultures
- Making room for cultural diversity in spaces, practices and customs
- Understanding that one's own worldview may vastly different from another's
- Understanding where mainstream culture and other cultures are not aligned
- Learning to spot and resolve issues that arise because of cultural differences
- Having a diversity strategy and plan (for organisations and initiatives)



Creating cultural safety for Aboriginal people

Cultural competency and cultural safety has very specific connotations for Aboriginal people, and in this context it pertains to everything we do. In order to work in a culturally competent way, each step along the process should be considered. For instance:

- Creating a **welcoming physical environment**, with flags, colours, artwork and imagery
- **Acknowledgement of Country** spoken, written, displayed as appropriate
- **Aboriginal leadership & participation** - including traditional owners and others
- **Aboriginal cultural training**
- **Culturally safe spaces** for sharing sensitive and confidential information
- Providing **cultural support** from other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people; offering mentoring, coaching, peer support programs, cultural supervision
- Creating and embedding a **Reconciliation Action Plan** if appropriate
- Holding **open events** for community
- Holding a **cultural debrief** after key activities or events

Tool: Unwrapping the RAP

In order to build cultural awareness and help staff to understand why reconciliation is so important and why a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is needed, Aunty Vickey & TACSI developed an activity called 'unwrapping the RAP'.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Unwrapping the RAP</p> | <p>Before contact, Aboriginal people have occupied Australia for at least 60,000 years.</p> |  |
| <p>In 1768, Captain Cook was ordered by the British Empire that if he discovered the great southern land he was to <i>'With consent of the natives'</i> take possession in the name of the King.</p> |  <p>THREE GENERATIONS (Reading from Right to Left)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Half-blood—(Fish-Australian father; full-blood Aboriginal mother).2. Quadroon Daughter—(Father Australian born of Scottish parents; Mother No. 1).3. Octaroon Grandson—(Father Australian of Irish descent; Mother No. 2). | <p>In 1997, the Bringing Them Home Report was launched. Which spoke to the suffering of the stolen generations, recognising acts of genocide and confirmed breaches to the UN Convention on Genocide.</p> <p>Australians were shocked by the findings.</p> |

Tool: Cultural Canvas

Cultural Canvas

For all projects at The Australian Centre for Social Innovation



Project Title

Location of Work

1 Where will the project take place?

2 Who are the traditional custodians and owners of the lands?

3 What considerations should be made around Welcome to Country? or Acknowledgement to Country?

4 Craft your written and spoken acknowledgement here:

Project Team

1 Who is on the project?

- Peer Researchers / Co-designers

- Respondents and participants

2 What key cultural considerations should be made around...
- The Project Team?

- Cultural Advisor Support

Principles to Hold (these may change with each proposal)

1 Treat people like people.

2 Don't make it feel like a process

3 Respect time and getting to know a person rather than rushing

4 Share where you're from too

5 Avoid 'us and them' language

Key Project Milestones and Transition Points

1 What are the key transition points in the project? At what points in time will it be important to check in with the Cultural Advisor?

2 At events, workshops and meetings, what norms need to be established in order to create cultural safety?

Helpful Connections

Who should we connect with and why?

Organisations

Potential Expert Informants

Community Members, Leaders or Elders

Other?

Context

What historical context or recent events should we keep in mind?

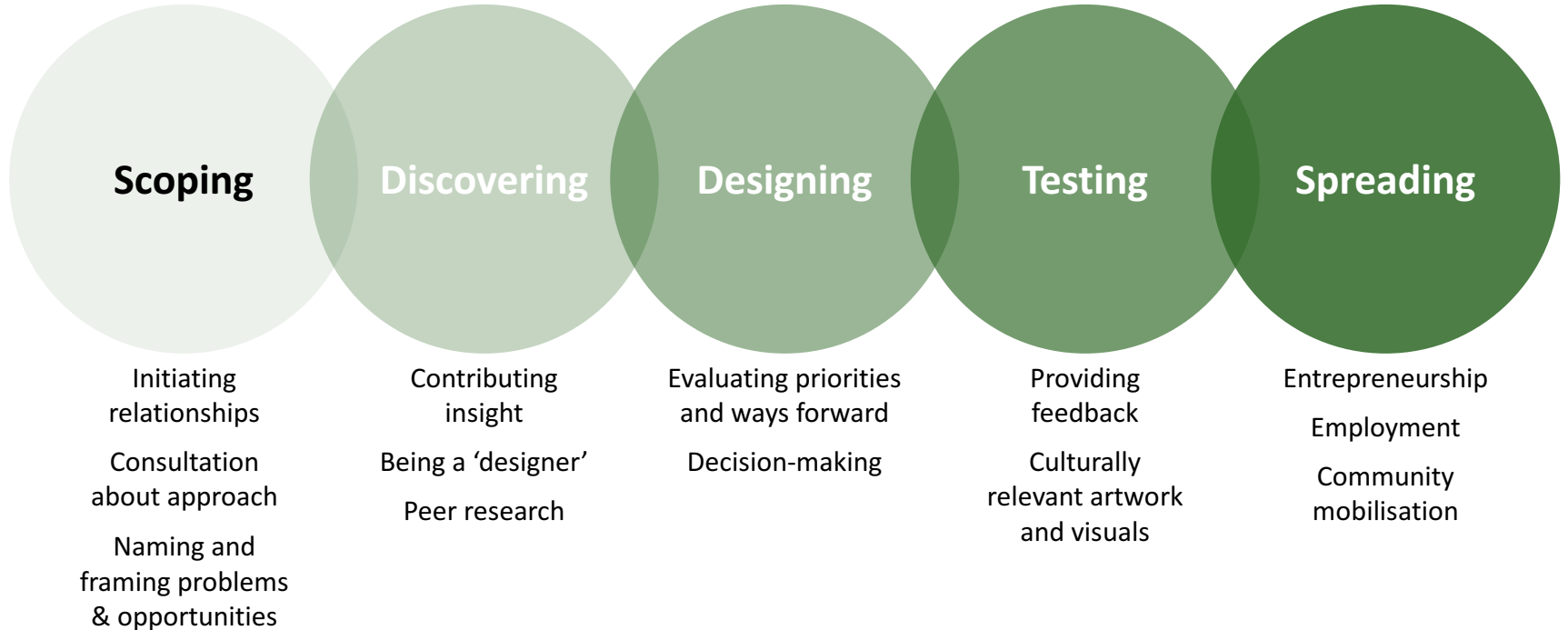
Question Corner

This is your space to ask the Cultural Advisor any questions you have. Remember – there are no stupid questions and this is a safe space.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians and owners of the land we work and live on. We pay our respect to Elders of the past, present and future. We are committed to creating a better future for all.

Opportunities to build bridges during initiatives

Across the process: Community leadership and engagement | Project and activity leadership | Governance



Opportunities to build bridges

How might we support young people, family & kin?

How might we understand local history & culture?

How might we engage appropriately?

How might we build relationships?

How might we support others to build awareness?

How might we embed culture?

How might we be inclusive of multiple cultures?

How might we address mistrust, scepticism and misunderstandings?

How might we navigate politics?

How might we address racism, bias and unconscious bias?

Thank you!