



SAGE

SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA
GENDER EQUITY

SAGE Cygnet Award Application



Name of Institution	Western Sydney University
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Prepared By	Dr Kiernyn McKay, Senior Advisor and Programs Manager, Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Contact for Application	Associate Professor Chloe Taylor, SAGE Academic Lead
Email	c.taylor@westernsydney.edu.au
Telephone No.	02 4620 3298

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in their lands across Greater Western Sydney and beyond.



Image Details

Those Who Came Before Us, 2021. Western Sydney University collaborative artwork.

Created by staff, students and community, under the cultural guidance of Allan McKenzie of Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi nations. On site for view in Chancellery foyer, Western Sydney University, Parramatta South Campus.

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GLOSSARY

Acronym/Abbrev.	Full Title
BLM Pledge	Black Lives Matter Pledge
DVCIL	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership
DVCREI	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research, Enterprise & International)
EA	Enterprise Agreement
EMCA	Early-Mid Career Academic
HASS Cluster	Humanities Arts & Social Sciences Cluster
HDR	Higher Degree Research
HIE	Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
HM Cluster	Health & Medicine Cluster
ICS	Institute for Culture and Society
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer
MARCS	MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development
NICM	National Institute for Complementary Medicine
NSW	New South Wales
OED	Office of Equity, Diversity and Wellbeing
PVC-IE	Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education
SAGE-AL	SAGE Academic Lead
SAGE-DAL	SAGE Deputy Academic Lead
SAGE-DRL	SAGE Deputy Research Lead
SAGE-PC	SAGE Project Coordinator
SAGE-RL	SAGE Research Lead
SAGE-SAT	SAGE Self-Assessment Team
SoB	School of Business
SCDMS	School of Computer, Data and Mathematical Sciences
SoE	School of Education
SEDBE	School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
SHCA	School of Humanities and Communication Arts
SHS	School of Health Sciences
SoL	School of Law
SoM	School of Medicine
SNM	School of Nursing and Midwifery
SoP	School of Psychology
SoSc	School of Science
SSS	School of Social Sciences
STEM Cluster	Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Cluster
Strategy	WSU Indigenous Strategy (2020 – 2025)
SWAG	SAGE Working Aggregate Group (SAT Subgroup)
TGD	Trans and Gender Diverse
THRI	Translational Health Research Institute
VC	Vice-Chancellor and President
VC-GERRAC	Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Committee
VC-GEF	Vice-Chancellor's Gender Equity Fund
WSU	Western Sydney University

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Indigenous / Non-Indigenous

Following WSU protocol, this document uses “Indigenous” as a collective term for people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. As a correlative, the document uses “non-Indigenous” as a collective term to refer to staff who do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Yarns

Methodology for assessing impact for this Cygnet included Yarns with and by Indigenous staff. Yarns, a common term within the Australian Indigenous lexicon and a common Indigenous research methodology, are a conversational process of sharing of Knowledges: they offer a culturally safe, respectful, and relevant research environment where relationships, built upon trust, honesty and openness can develop. While flexible and relaxed, and sometimes seen as ‘messy’ (Bessarab & Ng’andu, 2010), Yarns are not informal. Rather, Yarns have processes with rules, language and protocols (Barlo *et al.*, 2021). In keeping with Indigenous research methodology, all Yarns were initiated with a Social Yarn to create a culturally safe conversational environment for collaborators (Atkinson, Baird & Adams, 2021), followed by a semi-structured Research Topic Yarn. Research Topic Yarn questions were shaped to enable collaborators to determine the meaning or valency of key phrases (e.g., ‘equity’, ‘workplace culture’) and to encourage iterative discussion between the researcher and collaborator, allowing collaborators to direct discussions toward their own areas of interest and investment.

Collaborators

WSU’s SAGE Indigenous Staff SWAG uses the term ‘collaborator’ (rather than ‘participant’ or ‘staff member’) to refer to staff engaged in Yarns, in recognition of their sharing of Knowledges.

Equity

As an enlivened objective of the Australian higher education agenda and a declared Principle at WSU (see *Sustaining Success, 2021–2026*), the term ‘equity’ was operative across all research instruments for this Cygnet. However, WSU SAGE is conscious that a long legacy of inequity for Indigenous Australians, including in research contexts and within the higher education environment, may have bearing on how the term ‘equity’ is interpreted by Indigenous staff. Following Smith, Trinidad and Larkin (2017), WSU recognises that ‘synergies’ and ‘tensions’ between broad equity policy agendas (both nationally and at WSU) and more targeted Indigenous higher education policy agendas may be at play for Indigenous staff at WSU. As such, Research Topic Yarns for this Cygnet offered explicit questions for collaborators to locate their own meaning-making around the operative use of the term ‘equity’. Notions of ‘equity’ arising in these discussions revealed complex understandings of power and positionality, were informed by ideas of social justice, and were centrally invested in opportunity and success for future generations. For a full elaboration, see WSU SAGE’s impact report: Kennedy, S., McKay, K. & Talbot-Mundine, G. (2024) *Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements for Indigenous Staff at WSU*.



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY: SAGE CYGNET #3

	✓ Current Cygnet	Barrier <ul style="list-style-type: none">List the Barrier addressed in this CygnetList the Barrier for Cygnets already submitted
Institution-wide barrier		Flexible Work
Institution-wide barrier		Academic Promotions
Sub-group barrier	✓	Indigenous Staff

KEY BARRIER

Despite recurring national reviews, policies and campaigns, Indigenous Australians remain significantly under-represented across the higher education sector.¹ Currently, 1.6% of the university workforce identifies as Indigenous, well below population parity.² Western Sydney University (WSU) aims to be a national leader in Indigenous employment, education and research and to serve an anchor institution that empowers the Indigenous community of the Western Sydney region. However, organisational analysis across the Bronze Era (2015–2018) evidenced low Indigenous employment, limited strategic governance, and limited understanding of Indigenous staff workplace experiences and perspectives.

This Cygnet describes WSU’s work to bolster Indigenous staff equity by galvanising Indigenous strategy and governance, structurally embedding Indigenous cultural recognition, celebrating Indigenous excellence, actively supporting Indigenous staff cultural safety and wellbeing, and developing culturally relevant progress evaluations.

EVIDENCE OF BARRIER

Bronze Era Indigenous Staff Data

In 2017, a total of 43 Indigenous ongoing and fixed-term staff comprised approx. 1.7% of WSU employees (Table 1). Indigenous employment was especially low at senior academic levels D and above (total 2.0FTE) and at Executive levels (total 3.0FTE).

Table 1. WSU Indigenous Staff, 2017

WSU Indigenous Staff, 2017						
	WSU		Professional		Academic	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
2017	43	1.7%	33	2.2%	8	0.8%

Note: Bronze Era staff data was extracted at point-in-time, 31 March 2017.

Indigenous Governance

In 2012, the national Behrendt Review³ cited WSU for its progress across Indigenous outreach, education, employment and engagement (Table 2). Across the Bronze Era (2015–2018), WSU continued to install mechanisms for driving Indigenous priorities (Table 3). However, the University lacked a standalone Indigenous strategy and Indigenous Knowledges, cultures and priorities were yet to be embedded across WSU’s organisational practice. Two of the University’s most senior Indigenous staff (PVC Indigenous Leadership and Director OATSIEE) departed their roles in 2018, leaving a significant Indigenous leadership gap.

¹ See, for example: Department of Employment, Education and Training (1989). *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy*; Moreton-Robinson, A., Walter, M., Singh, D. & Kimber, M. (2011). *On stony ground: Governance and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in Australian universities*; Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (2011). *National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy*; Behrendt, L.S., Larkin, S., Griew, R. & Kelly, P. (2012). *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People: Final Report*; Universities Australia (2017). *Indigenous Strategy 2017–2020*.

² Department of Education (2023) *Selected Higher Education Statistics – 2023 Staff Data*. <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/staff-data/selected-higher-education-statistics-2023-staff-data#toc-visual-analytics>

³ Behrendt, L., Larkin, S., Griew, R., Kelly, P. (2012) *Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Final Report*. Department of Education, Canberra.

Table 2. WSU Citations in the Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Final Report (Behrendt Review), 2012

WSU Citations in Behrendt Review, 2012		
Citation	Citation Detail	p.
Outreach	Demystifying the university experience for prospective Indigenous students	53
Industry	Engaging industry partners, government and community in developing opportunities for Indigenous research	72
Education	'Indigenous Australia knowledge' as a graduate attribute for undergraduate students	100, 194
Employment	Efforts to engage Indigenous cadets and trainees in workforce employment	147
Strategy	Indigenous education strategy, Indigenous research strategy	147, 218
Engagement	Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement (OATSIEE), including Elders on Campus	223 - 224

Table 3. Bronze Era Drivers of Indigenous Priorities at WSU, 2015 - 2018

Bronze Era Drivers of Indigenous Priorities at WSU, 2015 - 2018		
Mechanism	Established	Purpose and Scope
Yarramundi Lecture	1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide a forum for the discussion of local and national Indigenous matters of importance.
Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide a representative voice for Indigenous employees, seeking to maximise Indigenous employment opportunities and commercial partnerships; ▪ led by Director, OATSIEE to 2018.
Pathways to Dreaming	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ widening participation outreach for yrs 8-12 Indigenous students across 40x high schools.
Heartbeat	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ engagement outreach for primary students yrs 3-6 across 17 schools to encourage aspiration toward health industry careers.
Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide programs, services, and facilities to foster the engagement and empowerment of Indigenous students across every WSU campus; ▪ led by Director, Badanami.
Elders on Campus Program	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide cultural support and leadership across mentoring, workplace relations, research and teaching for WSU staff and students; ▪ Elders engaged on a volunteer basis to 2018.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement Advisory Board	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide advice to WSU on relationships with industry, government and community and the direction of Indigenous employment initiatives; ▪ comprised WSU Indigenous staff, Elders and community leaders, with Elders engaged on a volunteer basis; ▪ Board suspended in 2018.
<i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement Action Plan, 2014-2017</i>	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set objectives for Indigenous priorities within WSU's Strategic Plan, <i>Securing Success (2014-2017)</i>, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increase participation and employment outcomes for Indigenous people at WSU; ○ ensure WSU has capacity to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples; ○ develop leading strategies to shape the national Indigenous education and employment agenda; ○ redress the past disadvantages experienced by Indigenous peoples; ○ create a culturally respectful and inclusive workplace culture; ○ build and develop a positive working relationship with Indigenous community to improve employment outcomes.

Pro Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership portfolio	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop strategies related to Indigenous employment, research and community engagement and lead Indigenous priorities articulated within WSU's Strategic Plan, <i>Securing Success (2018-2020)</i>; led by Pro Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership, embedded within the Division of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor.
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Workplace Experiences

Bronze Era (2015–2018) research into the experiences and perceptions of Indigenous staff was limited to two broad organisational culture surveys (*MyVoice*, Table 4).

Table 4. Indigenous Staff Participation in Benchmark Surveys, 2015 & 2018

Indigenous Staff Participation in Benchmark Surveys, 2015 – 2018				
		Number of Responses (n) by Cohort		
Year	Instrument	WSU	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous
2015	<i>MyVoice</i> Culture Survey	2,270	2,031	53
2018	<i>MyVoice</i> Culture Survey	2,254	2,098	81

While 2018 *MyVoice* data showed Indigenous staff were as likely ($\pm 5\%$) as non-Indigenous colleagues to report overall job satisfaction and a vision for continuing employment at WSU (Table 5), trends across both surveys saw Indigenous staff less likely ($\geq 5\%$) to report positivity across several workplace equity indicators: feelings of involvement, capacity to provide feedback, enabled performance ability, flexibility and work/life balance, and reward and recognition. These findings illustrated a pressing need to improve Indigenous staff engagement, recognition, and participation across the University.

Table 5. Benchmark Staff Responses by Indigenous Identity, 2015 & 2018

Benchmark Staff Responses by Indigenous Identity, 2015 – 2018						
Survey Prompt	Positive Response Rate by Cohort					
	2015			2018		
	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Gap \pm	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Gap \pm
I have input into everyday decision-making at WSU	48%	37%	-11%	44%	30%	-14%
I am encouraged to give feedback about things that concern me	64%	60%	-4%	62%	54%	-8%
I am given the opportunity to contribute to the best of my ability	n/a	n/a	n/a	63%	49%	-14%
I maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of my life	63%	64%	+1%	61%	46%	-15%
WSU has enough flexible work arrangements to meet my needs	79%	67%	-12%	79%	69%	-10%
The rewards and recognition I receive for my job are fair	59%	57%	-2%	55%	43%	-12%
Overall, I am satisfied with my job	80%	73%	-7%	65%	70%	+5%
I can see a future for me at WSU	70%	69%	-1%	65%	70%	+5%

ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Throughout the Cygnet Era (2020–2024), targeted activities were designed to advance equity for Indigenous staff, themed by strategic opportunity (Figure 1).

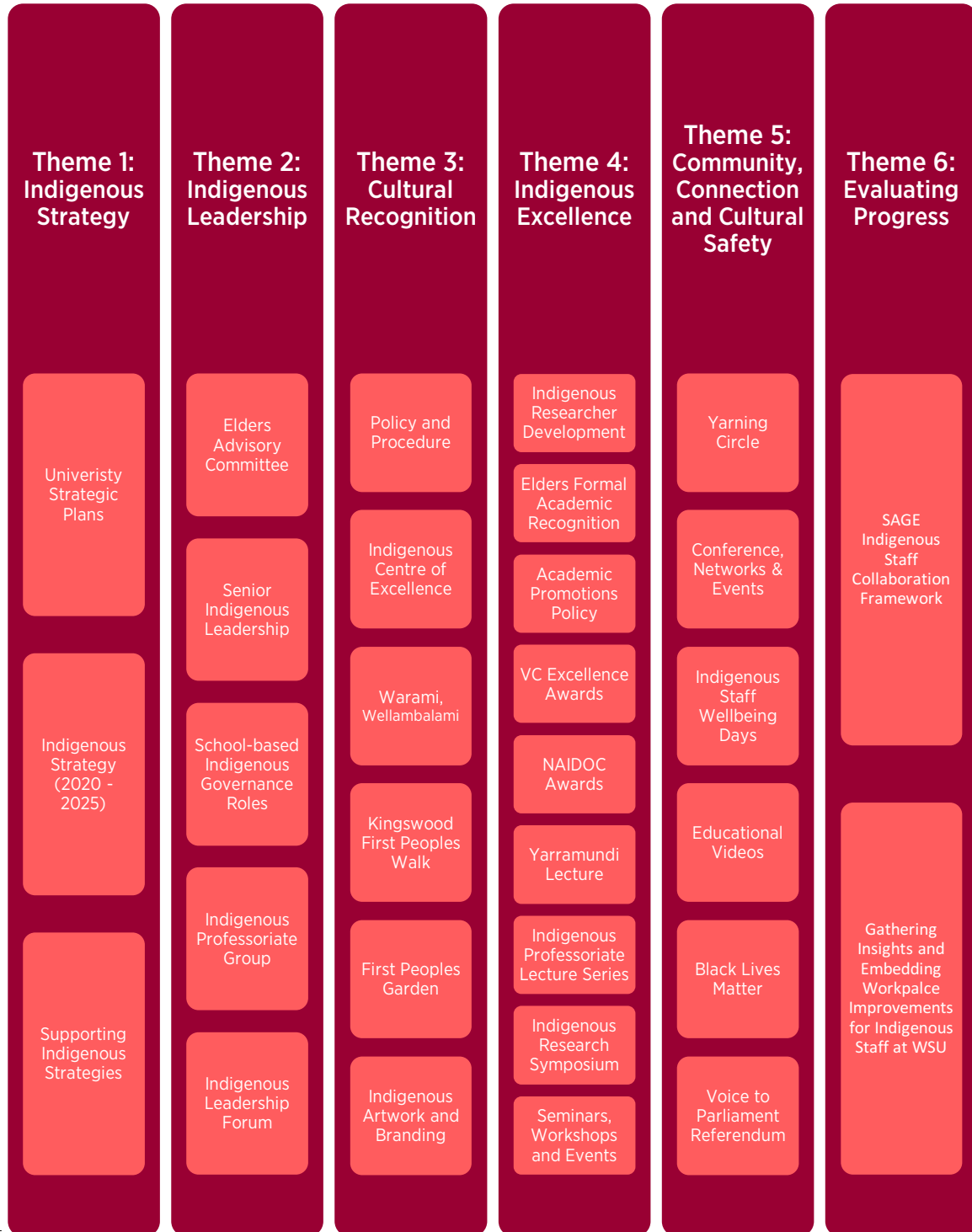


Figure 1. WSU's Themed Approach to Advancing Indigenous Equity, 2020 - 2024

An Indigenous Staff SWAG was convened to track success against objectives, with DVCIL as sponsor and two Indigenous staff SWAG Leaders (Talbot-Mundine and Kennedy, Table 6).⁴

Table 6. WSU Indigenous Staff SWAG Members, 2020 - 2024

Indigenous Staff SWAG Members, 2020 – 2024		
SWAG Role	Name	WSU Title
Executive Sponsor	Prof Michelle Trudgett	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership
SWAG Leader	Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine	Senior Indigenous Employment Coordinator, Office of the DVC Indigenous Leadership
SWAG Leader	Dr Sarah Kennedy	Senior Lecturer, Sport, Health & Physical Education, School of Health Sciences
SWAG Member	Prof Olivia Mirza	Convenor, Indigenous Aspire Engineering Internship Program and Associate Dean Engagement, School of Engineering, Design and Built Environment
SWAG Member & Coordinator	Dr Kiernyn McKay	Senior Advisor, Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Office of the DVC and VP (Research, Enterprise & International)

Theme 1. Indigenous Strategy

Across the Cygnet Era, WSU established a robust strategic framework to drive Indigenous priorities across the institution.

University Strategic Plans

Strategic Plans progressively foregrounded Indigenous values as fundamental to the University's functions and strategic directions (Table 7).

Table 7. WSU's Strategic Plan Commitments to Indigenous Priorities, 2020 – 2024

WSU Strategic Plan Commitments to Indigenous Priorities, 2020 – 2024			
Securing Success, 2015 – 2020			
Values		Beliefs	
Recognition and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their diverse knowledge systems.		Accountability to the traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodians and owners of the lands we occupy.	
Sustaining Success, 2021 – 2026			
Values	Principles	Enablers	Goals
Fairness. We support fairness when we pursue the University's <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> with commitment and dedication.	Equity. 2.1. To realise the principle of equity, we recognise the cultures, contributions and achievements of First Nations peoples through prioritising programs for everyone that are inclusive and personally transformative	Indigenous Perspectives. WSU acknowledges Indigenous history on our campuses so that all staff and students experience a strong sense of acceptance and belonging. [...] We are uniquely located to lead efforts in bridging the tertiary attainment gap in partnership with Western Sydney's Indigenous community.	Goal 2. As a globally recognised university of and for the Western Sydney region, we will set the benchmark for diversity, inclusiveness and equity.

⁴ In 2020 and 2021, two former Indigenous staff members also contributed to the formation and early progress of the Indigenous Staff SWAG: Manager, Indigenous Employment Dr Stacey Coates and Indigenous Employment Coordinator, Lazarus Brown.



Indigenous Strategy, 2020 - 2025

In 2020, WSU launched its first *Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)* to champion and embed Indigenous excellence. Led by then-newly-appointed PVC Indigenous Leadership Professor Michelle Trudgett and designed through widespread consultation with Indigenous staff, the *Strategy* sets WSU’s ambition to become a national leader in Indigenous higher education. The *Strategy* lays out seven strategic objectives (Table 8), sets an employment target of 3% Indigenous staff, promises to “position Indigenous Knowledge as an integral part of our business”, and commits to widespread, integrated implementation such that “staff, students and community will see significant positive outcomes that change their experience of Western” (p.4).

Table 8. WSU's Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025) Objectives

WSU Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025) Objectives		
#	Objective	Objective Statement
1	Indigenous Students	Provide opportunities for Indigenous Australian students to learn and succeed in an environment that promotes Indigenous excellence.
2	Indigenous Employment	Position WSU as a place of choice for Indigenous Australians to work in an environment that supports and nurtures their careers.
3	Indigenous Research	Develop the breadth and depth of Indigenous research with a vision to promote research that empowers Indigenous Australians.
4	Learning and Teaching	Ensure all students develop understanding and knowledge about Indigenous Australians through the Graduate Attribute.
5	Community Engagement	Promote WSU as a place that works with and for the Indigenous community.
6	Indigenous Leadership	Provide leadership opportunities for Indigenous Australians across staff, students, and community throughout WSU.
7	Cultural Viability and Knowledge	Build Indigenous cultural viability and Knowledge across WSU.



Supporting Indigenous Strategies

Under the leadership of the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (ODVCIL), various additional strategies have been progressively introduced, each designed to work in concert with the governing *Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)*. These supporting strategies take specialist concentration on fields of academic practice, localised implementation, and/or embedding future success (Table 9). With the launch of the *Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy (2023–3032)*, WSU became the 1st Australian university to implement both short and long-term Indigenous strategies.

Table 9. WSU Supporting Indigenous Strategies, 2020 - 2024

WSU Supporting Indigenous Strategies, 2020 – 2024		
Strategy	Established	Purpose and Scope
<i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy (2023–2032)</i>	2023	a blueprint for Indigenous growth and development, the <i>Decadal Strategy</i> aims to “position Western Sydney University as a place that fosters, develops and supports the next generation of Indigenous leaders” (p.3). Driven by values of Social Justice and Self-Determination and working with People, Place and Partnerships, the <i>Decadal Strategy</i> charts a bold strategic ambition to build “qualified, skilled and globally connected Indigenous graduates” who will “contribute to the ongoing advancement of their communities and the nation” (p.6).
<i>Indigenous Research Strategy (2024–2028) – Sharing Knowledges in Good Spirit</i>	2024	aims to promote Indigenous-led research innovation by establishing a “world-class” Indigenous Studies Research environment that centres “Indigenous voices, sovereignties and truth-telling” at WSU, by “empower[ing] and support[ing]” Indigenous scholars, by “build[ing] and strengthen[ing]” Indigenous research methodologies, and by assisting non-Indigenous scholars to “work ethically and productively with and for Indigenous Australian peoples and communities” (p.5).
School Indigenous Strategies (2020–2025) x 13	2020 – 2021	each of WSU’s thirteen Schools, one Institute, the STEM Cluster (including STEM Research Institutes), and the Library network have localised Indigenous Strategies in place, each of which detail commitment to and alignment with the University’s overarching <i>Strategy</i> and establish discipline-based or practice-specific strategic objectives, targets, and measures for advancing Indigenous excellence within their remit.
<i>STEM Cluster Indigenous Strategy (2022–2025)</i>	2022	
<i>WSU Library Indigenous Strategy (2024 – 2025)</i>	2024	
<i>Institute for Culture and Society Indigenous Strategy (2024 – 2027)</i>	2024	

Theme 2: Indigenous Leadership

WSU has renewed its investment in and commitment to strengthening Indigenous governance, ensuring that Indigenous views inform the decisions and activities of the institution.



Elders Advisory Committee

Reconstituted in 2021, the Elders Advisory Committee promotes cultural viability and Knowledge, including by providing cultural advice and guidance on matters impacting Western Sydney’s Indigenous communities. The Committee meets quarterly and includes nine Elders and eight WSU Indigenous staff of diverse Country, Mobs, and Language Groups.

Figure 2. Vice-Chancellor Distinguished Professor George Williams and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership Professor Michelle Trudgett (Wiradjuri) at centre, with WSU Elders Aunty Rayna St Julian (Kamilaroi), Aunty Rasme Prior (Torres Strait), Aunty Helen Riley (Wiradjuri), Uncle Chris Tobin (Darug), Aunty Fran Bodkin (Dharawal), Uncle Greg Simms (Darug) and Uncle Harry Allie (Kudjula), 2024

Senior Indigenous Leadership

Upon establishment of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership (DVCIL) portfolio in 2021, WSU became the 2nd Australian university to install DVC-level Indigenous seniority within their governance. In 2023, WSU became 2nd to hold both DVC and PVC Indigenous leadership positions. DVCIL Professor Michelle Trudgett is also Chair of Universities Australia Deputy/Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Committee and non-Executive Director of the GO Foundation.

Alongside DVCIL, the senior Indigenous executive (Table 10) lead the Divisional portfolio. Importantly, these roles are structured into peak governance bodies across WSU, enshrining Indigenous voices in the shaping of core operations (Table 11).

Table 10. WSU Senior Indigenous Leadership Roles, 2020 - 2024

Senior Indigenous Leadership Roles, 2020 – 2024		
Senior Leadership Role	Established	Change
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership	August 2021	new position, elevated from PVC
Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education	September 2023	new position, elevated from Director
Director, Indigenous Research	March 2021	new position
Director, Indigenous Learning and Teaching	March 2021	new position, since elevated to PVC
Director, Indigenous Futures	March 2024	new position
Director, Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education	2011	continuing position

Table 11. WSU Indigenous Membership of University-Level Committees, 2020 - 2024

Senior Indigenous Membership of University-Level Committees, 2020 – 2024		
University Committee	Appointment	Position
Board of Trustees	Ex-officio	Board member (Indigenous representatives x2)
Vice-Chancellor’s Leadership Group	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership
		PVC Indigenous Education
		Director Indigenous Research
		Director Indigenous Futures
		Director Badanami
Senior Executive Group	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership
Vice-Chancellor’s Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Committee	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership (Deputy Chair)
		Indigenous student representative
Academic Senate	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership
		PVC Indigenous Education
		Director Data Integrity, Quality and Operations
		Indigenous Student representative
	VC Appointed	Director, Indigenous Research
	Elected	Associate Dean Indigenous Engagement, School of Social Sciences
Senate Executive	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership
Research Committee	Ex-officio	Director, Indigenous Research

Teaching and Learning Committee	Ex-officio	PVC Indigenous Education
Western Growth	Ex-officio	DVC Indigenous Leadership
Human Ethics Review Committee	Ex-officio	Director, Indigenous Research
Academic Promotions Committee	Ex-officio (observer)	DVC Indigenous Leadership and/or Senior Indigenous Employment Coordinator
Academic Development Program Committee	Ex-officio (observer)	DVC Indigenous Leadership and/or Senior Indigenous Employment Coordinator

School-based Indigenous Governance positions

Two Schools-based Associate Dean Indigenous positions govern priorities at local levels (e.g., Indigenising curriculum, Indigenous student engagement, learning and teaching), provide leadership, cultural and career support for early-career Indigenous staff and students, and implement new initiatives in local contexts (Table 12). School- and Institute-based Indigenous Strategy Committees also steer implementation and track outcomes for local strategies.

Table 12. School-based Indigenous Governance Roles, 2019 - 2024

School-based Indigenous Governance Roles, 2019 – 2024		
Senior Leadership Role	Held By	Established
Associate Dean Indigenous Education, School of Social Sciences	Professor Corrinne Sullivan	2020
Associate Dean Indigenous Health, School of Medicine	Professor Aunty Kerrie Doyle	2020

Indigenous Professoriate Group

Recognising exceptional Indigenous academic achievement and leadership, the Indigenous Professoriate Group was established in 2023. Comprising eight members (Table 13), the Group shares Knowledges, pastoral care and culturally safe mentorship to Indigenous staff and students.

Table 13. Current members of WSU's Indigenous Professoriate Group, 2024

Indigenous Professoriate Group, 2024		
Title	Organisational Unit	Name
DVC Indigenous Leadership	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Michelle Trudgett
PVC Indigenous Education	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Susan Page
Director Indigenous Research	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews
Associate Dean Indigenous Education	School of Social Sciences	Professor Corrinne Sullivan
Associate Dean Indigenous Education	School of Medicine	Professor Aunty Kerrie Doyle
Professor of Creative Writing	School of Humanities and Communication Arts	Professor Alexis Wright
Clinical Chair of Midwifery	School of Nursing and Midwifery	Professor Donna Hartz
Professor Cybersecurity and Behaviour	School of Social Sciences	Professor Kris Wilson

Indigenous Leadership Forum

Established 2023, the Indigenous Leadership Forum brings senior Indigenous staff (HEW 8+ and Academic D+) together to engage in critical discussions and strategic planning, build connections and address concerns and opportunities (Table 14 & Figure 3).

Table 14. Current Indigenous Leadership Forum Members, 2023 - 2024

WSU Indigenous Leadership Forum Members, 2023 – 2024		
Title	Organisational Unit	Name
DVC Indigenous Leadership	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Michelle Trudgett
PVC Indigenous Education	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Susan Page
Director Indigenous Research	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews
Director Indigenous Futures	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Fiona Towney
Director Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Josh Mason
Senior Indigenous Employment Coordinator	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine
Executive Officer	ODVC Indigenous Leadership	Kelsie King
Associate Dean Indigenous Education	School of Social Sciences	Professor Corrinne Sullivan
Professor Cybersecurity and Behaviour	School of Social Sciences	Professor Kris Wilson
Associate Dean Indigenous Health	School of Medicine	Professor Aunty Kerrie Doyle
Clinical Chair of Midwifery	School of Nursing and Midwifery	Professor Donna Hartz
Senior Student Advancement Officer	Infrastructure Strategy & Planning	Wayne Clark
Senior Project Officer, Indigenous Engagement	Future Student Engagement	Tania Shepherd
Cultural Wellbeing Officer	Equity, Safety & Wellbeing	Heidi Duncan
Director	Data Integrity, Quality & Operations	Jess Gleeson



Figure 3. Western's Indigenous leaders at the 2-day intensive 2023 Indigenous Staff Leadership Forum

Theme 3: Cultural Recognition

WSU has prioritised structural and systemic changes to embed Indigenous cultural recognition, representation and responsibility to community across campuses and within policy and procedure.

Policy and Procedure

In alignment with the *Indigenous Strategy*, WSU has bolstered cultural recognition within policy and process to promote Indigenous cultural values, safeguard cultural inclusion, heighten cultural safety, strengthen research and business partnerships, and attract Indigenous talent (Table 15).

Table 15. Policy and procedure changes to enhance cultural recognition, 2020 - 2024

Indigenous-Specific Policy and Procedure Changes, 2020 – 2024			
Strategy or Document	Released	Purpose	Change Detail
Confirmation of Identity	2020	documentation to confirm Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultural descent for identified opportunities (e.g., scholarships and/or employment)	alternative, more culturally inclusive confirmation process established, including individual and community declarations
WSU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Ethics Framework	2020	assists WSU researchers with embedding ethical research principles and Indigenous cultural considerations into planning, developing, and conducting culturally appropriate research in partnership with Indigenous peoples	new guidance, focused on Indigenous leadership, impact and value, sustainability and accountability, and self-determination
Academic and Professional Staff Enterprise Agreements	2022	commitment to increase the number of ongoing and fixed-term Indigenous employees to 77 over the life of the agreement (March 2025); Language allowance provided to Indigenous employees required to use Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language in the course of their employment; Cultural and Ceremonial Leave granted upfront rather than by accrual.	explicit WSU commitment to increasing Indigenous staff employment; new language allowance entitlement \$1,794 - \$3,588); Cultural and Ceremonial Leave entitlement (5 days paid; 10 days unpaid) accessible for new Indigenous staff recruits.
Indigenous Brand Usage Guidelines	2022	draws on collaborative artwork “Those Who Came Before Us” (see Indigenous Artwork and Branding, below)	approval for merchandising under the Branding is tied to progress against Indigenous Strategy commitments
Procurement Plan for Indigenous Good and Services	2023	maps current Indigenous business procurement activities and commits to enhancing WSU’s engagement with Indigenous businesses	new framework, includes commitments to develop a WSU Indigenous supplier mentoring and training program
Cultural Providers Database	2024	provides information and contact details for Indigenous artists, performers, cultural educators, workshop presenters, and other cultural providers	new initiative
Deadly Talent Register	2024	expression of interest database for prospective Indigenous staff to receive notice of employment opportunities at WSU	new initiative

Indigenous Centre of Excellence

In 2022, WSU secured \$78.5 million funding to establish an Indigenous Centre of Excellence on Darug lands at Parramatta South Campus. Conceived as a landmark place of significance for Indigenous people across Western Sydney, the Centre will celebrate Indigenous Knowledges, cultures and histories and provide a place of gathering and growth for Indigenous staff, students and community. An Indigenous-led community-centred architectural design, rooted in Country and Indigenous Knowledges, was selected following a nation-wide competitive process (Figure 4). Scheduled to open February 2026, the Centre will house ODVCIL and Badanami and include an Indigenous Research Institute, a First Nations library, art gallery, theatre, cinema, discovery space, astronomy garden, sports facilities, Elders' rooms, community gathering spaces, amphitheatre, care space, and a yarning circle among its facilities.

Warami, Wellabalami: Embedding Indigenous Languages

First installed on WSU's Graduation Walk at Parramatta South Campus in 2022, WSU has erected permanent signage that acknowledge Country and feature Indigenous languages across WSU campuses (Figure 5). A purposeful act of place-making, this initiative combines with the naming of WSU's Ngara Ngura Building and Aunty Mae Robinson Foyer at Liverpool Campus to recognise traditional custodianship of the lands on which WSU campuses are built and to signal Indigenous peoples' rightful place of belonging at WSU.

Kingswood First Peoples Walk

Opened on Darug Country at Kingswood campus in 2023 and accompanied by a digital, interactive tour from 2024, the First People's Walk is a space of tribute and recognition of Indigenous peoples and cultures. As a place of gathering, education, and connection to the natural environment, this important site aims to teach the Indigenous cultural significance of plants and animals and provides for ecosystem restoration, Indigenous teaching and storytelling, and a bush tucker garden developed and informed by Indigenous Elders (Figure 5).

First Peoples Garden

Commencing construction on Dharawal lands at Campbelltown campus mid-2024, the First Peoples Garden will enliven Dharawal cultural histories through landscape, incorporating three lore/truth hills, running water, and diverse seasonal flora (Figure 5). The gardens have been co-designed with Dharawal community leaders and WSU's Elders Advisory Committee.

Indigenous Artwork & Branding

In 2021, more than 120 WSU staff, students and community contributed to a collaborative artwork, *Those Who Came Before Us*, under the cultural guidance of Allan McKenzie of Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi nations (Figure 5). This artwork signifies WSU's commitments to an inclusive culture, to connection with Country, to foregrounding Indigenous cultural recognition, and to positive action and joint collaboration. The artwork is the basis of an Indigenous Artwork and Brand package, which promotes a recognisable visual identity for ODVCIL and a sense of togetherness for WSU's Indigenous staff, students and community.

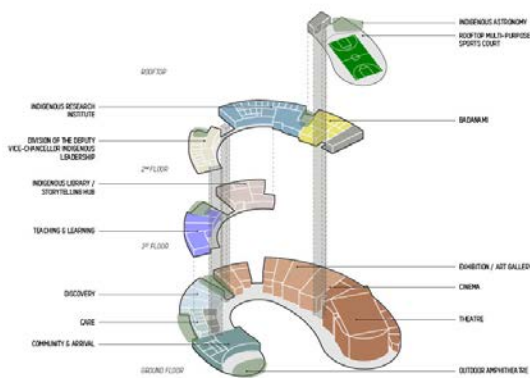


Figure 4. WSU's landmark Indigenous Centre of Excellence, located on Darug Country at Parramatta South Campus. The Indigenous Centre of Excellence is scheduled to open in 2026 and will house the Division of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership, an Indigenous Research Institute, the Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, an Indigenous Library and Storytelling Hub, a Teaching and Learning Centre, Discovery and Care centres, a community arrival and gathering foyer, outdoor amphitheatre, performance spaces, exhibition spaces, cinema, theatre, and sports court. Winning design by Sarah Lynn Rees, Jackson Clements Burrows Architects, Peter Stutchbury Architecture, Jane Irwin Landscape Architecture, Uncle Dean Kelly, Hills Thalys, and Flux Consultants.



Figure 5. From Left: Members of WSU's Senior Executive contribute to "Those Who Came Before Us", a collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous WSU staff, students and community in 2021; Western Sydney University campuses and digital spaces embedded with Indigenous Languages from 2023; the Futures Decadal Strategy is launched at the Kingswood First People's Walk in July 2023; Design for the First Peoples Garden, Campbelltown Campus (courtesy of Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects) with construction commencing August 2024.



Parramatta Campus Heritage Walk

Warami - Welcome



Theme 4: Indigenous Excellence

WSU's commitments to nurturing, rewarding, and promoting Indigenous excellence aim to mark accomplishment, grounded in an inclusive ethos of collective achievement, celebrating cultures, sharing Knowledges, and fostering future generations.

Sub-Theme I: Nurturing Indigenous Excellence

Indigenous Researcher Development Award

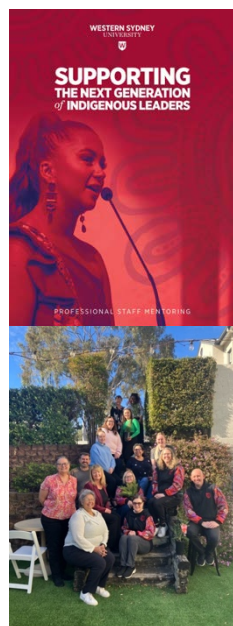
Introduced 2023, this internal Award funding supports early-career Indigenous academics who have experienced limited opportunity or success attracting significant external grant funding (Table 16). It provides \$30,000 for research development, including NTRO and/or community-reciprocity orientated work. The Award is administered by SDVCREG and centralises cultural, community, and kinship obligations within its ROPE frameworks of assessment.

Table 16. Indigenous Researcher Development Awards, 2023 –

Indigenous Researcher Development Awards, 2023 – Present		
Year	Winner	Organisational Unit
2023	Renae Coleman	School of Nursing & Midwifery

Vice-Chancellor's Professional Development (VCPD) Scholarships

Annual VCPD Scholarships furnish \$3,000 for academics and professionals (including casuals and adjuncts) to attend conferences, short courses, seminars or workshops that further leadership capability and development. Two Scholarships (7%) are dedicated for Indigenous staff, totalling ten awardees in the Cynnet Era.



Indigenous Professional Staff Leadership program

To support career aspiration and mature leadership capability for professional Indigenous staff, ODVCIL established an Indigenous Leadership module within WSU's broader Professional Staff Mentoring Program. The module draws on Indigenous scholarship to embed Indigenous cultural values into leadership development. Four participants have graduated with a Certificate of Indigenous Leadership.

Indigenous Writing Retreat

Designed to foster writing momentum for HDR theses and academic publications, the annual Indigenous Writing Retreat is held offsite over 2-3 days and includes writing workshops, methodological discussions, critical yarns, and free-writing sessions. 45 staff and HDR students have attended since the inaugural retreat in 2022 (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Indigenous academics and HDRs at the 3-day intensive Indigenous Writing Workshops, 2023

Ignite Traineeship Program

In 2022, ODVC-IL launched the Ignite traineeship program, offering entry-level employment and on-the-job training alongside VET enrolment (Table 17).

Table 17. Indigenous Ignite Trainees, Completions and Employment, 2022 - 2024

Ignite Traineeships, 2022 – 2024			
	Trainees	Completions	Post-Traineeship Employment
Year	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
2022	11	8	8
2023	3	3	1
2024	6	TBD	TBD

Sub-Theme II. Rewarding Indigenous Excellence

Formal Academic Recognition of Elders

Since 2021, WSU has taken corrective action to formally recognise the historically under-acknowledged academic contributions of Elders across the WSU community (Table 18).

Table 18. WSU Formal Academic Recognition of Elders, 2021 - 2024

Formal Academic Recognition of Elders, 2021 -2024		
Elder	Recognition	Year
Aunty Fran Bodkin	Honorary Doctorate of Letters	2021
Uncle Greg Simms	Honorary Fellowship	2022
Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Salik AO	Honorary Doctorate	2022
Uncle Wes Marne	Honorary Fellowship	2023

First Indigenous Distinguished Professorship

Previously awarded an Honorary Doctorate, Waanyi writer Alexis Wright is the first Indigenous person (and 13th overall) to receive WSU's most prestigious academic title, Distinguished Professor. The title recognises her remarkable career and ground-breaking contribution to Australian literature (Table 19 & Figure 7).

Table 19. Indigenous Staff Distinguished Professorship, 2024

Indigenous Staff Distinguished Professorship, 2024		
Name	Recognition	Year
Alexis Wright	Honorary Doctorate	2019
	Distinguished Professor	2024



Figure 7. Distinguished Professor Alexis Wright receives an Honorary Doctorate in 2019, is profiled in WSU's research impact magazine Future Makers in 2024, and is celebrated for her Lifetime Achievement Award for Literature by the Writing and Society Research Centre, 2024.

Academic Promotions Policy

Implemented from 2022, WSU’s renewed *Academic Promotions Policy* explicitly recognises Indigenous achievement and incentivises non-Indigenous contributions to Indigenous priorities across all Academic Fields of Practice (Table 20, see also WSU Cygnet #2).

Table 20. Key Equity Changes to WSU Academic Promotions Policy and Process, 2022

Key Indigenous Equity-driven Changes to Academic Promotions Policy and Process, 2022	
Change Type	Change Detail
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leadership and achievement aligned with the University’s <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025)</i> embedded across all Fields of Academic Practice, with a correlating report on achievement provided by DVC Indigenous Leadership (or nominee); pastoral care, academic citizenship and collaboration embedded within Engagement, Governance and Service field of practice.
Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Academic Promotions Procedures</i> and <i>Academic Promotions Guidelines</i> consolidated for simplicity and ease of use; expanded articulation of Achievement Relative to Opportunity (ARTO) and Equity Considerations, with emphasis on non-linear career paths, part-time work, career interruption, and non-traditional patterns of achievement; Natural Disasters or Global Events and Pandemic Circumstances included as an additional (optional) Equity Consideration; guidance offered on ARTO assessment principles.
Academic Promotions Committee (APC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APC composition reviewed to ensure ex-officio membership for Fields of Practice experts, with disciplinary and cultural diversity actively considered for other positions; DVC Indigenous Leadership or Manager Indigenous Employment added as an observer for all Indigenous staff applications and applications indicating achievement aligned with the University’s <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025)</i>; equity workshops embedded in APC training expectations, with workshop participation required at minimum every 3 years.
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> widespread awareness campaign conducted throughout 2022 to socialise policy and process changes; Gender UNLIMITED* feature session “Unlocking Equity in Academic Promotions” held in October 2022, including presentation about Indigenous Strategy inclusions from Acting DVC Indigenous Leadership Professor Susan Page.



Vice-Chancellor’s Excellence Awards

Annual WSU Excellence Awards celebrate significant and outstanding staff achievements across the University. From 2021, two Excellence Awards (9%) are dedicated to Indigenous priorities (Excellence in Indigenous Research and Excellence in Indigenous Teaching, Figure 8). WSU’s Indigenous staff have received at least 13 nominations, six high commendations, and have won seven Excellence Awards.

Figure 8. Professor Corrinne Sullivan receives WSU’s first Excellence in Indigenous Research Award and Dr Alana Kamp receives the first Excellence in Indigenous Teaching Award, 2021.

NAIDOC Awards

In 2024, WSU held its inaugural NAIDOC Gala Dinner and Awards to celebrate the exceptional contributions and achievements of Indigenous peoples within the University community (Table 21). Impressively, every WSU Cluster was represented in the Awards. 113 attendees joined the Gala, including Indigenous Elders, staff and students and non-Indigenous Senior Executive (Figure 10).

Table 21. WSU Inaugural NAIDOC Awards, 2024

WSU Inaugural NAIDOC Awards, 2024		
Award	Winner	WSU Unit
Student Awards		
Indigenous Student Stage One Academic Excellence	Tjanara Ridgewawy	School of Business
Indigenous Student Stage Two Academic Excellence	Gemma-Rose O'Brien	School of Law
Indigenous Student Stage Three Academic Excellence	Mia Bates	School of Social Science
Indigenous Student Stage Four Academic Excellence	Lillian Newton	School of Health Science
Indigenous Student Postgraduate Coursework Excellence	Aimee Woods	School of Law
Indigenous Higher Degree Research (HDR) Excellence	Dr Paul Saunders	Graduate Research School
	Matilda Harry	Graduate Research School
Outstanding Indigenous Student	Jess Oehm	School of Law
	Audree Campbell	School of Social Science
Staff Awards		
Indigenous Trainee of the Year	Jordan Janson	Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment
Indigenous Professional Staff Excellence	Amelia Corr	Future Student Engagement
Indigenous Academic Excellence	Ali Gebhardt	School of Health Sciences
Indigenous Leadership Team	Prof Corrinne Sullivan, Ellen Karimanovic, Dr Georgia Durmush, Kaiya Aboagye, Lindsay McCabe, Karen Fernando	School of Social Sciences
Contributions of Indigenous Excellence to WSU	Danielle Hromek	Indigenous Centre of Excellence (Design)
Indigenous Person of the Year	Prof Corrinne Sullivan	School of Social Sciences

Sub-Theme III: Promoting Indigenous Excellence

Yarramundi Lecture

Instituted in 1997 and a central feature of WSU's public calendar, the Yarramundi Lecture is a cornerstone of WSU's longstanding commitment to promote Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. Lectures by Elders, prominent Indigenous scholars, and community leaders provide a vital platform to discuss Indigenous matters of local and national importance (Table 22 & Figure 9). The Lecture includes intergenerational learning and connection through a Student Response component. Viewership averages 250 attendees.

Table 22. Yarramundi Lectures, 2019 - 2024

Yarramundi Lectures, 2019 – 2024		
Year	Speakers	Lecture Topic
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professor Tom Calma AO (Uni Canberra) ▪ Aunty Jenny Munro (Redfern Tent Embassy) ▪ Teela Reid 	Voice, Treaty, Truth
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aunty Fran Bodkin (WSU Elder) ▪ Dr Kerry Arabena (Karabeena Consulting Trust) ▪ Luke Hodge (WSU Indigenous student) ▪ Jessie Robinson (WSU Indigenous student) 	Always Was, Always Will Be
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distinguished Professor Larissa Behrendt (UTS) ▪ Uncle Harry Allie (WSU) ▪ Dr Paul Saunders (WSU) ▪ Leanne Markovic (WSU) 	Healing Country
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr Angela Dos Santos (Australian Stroke Alliance) ▪ Mr Allan McKenzie 	Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aunty Fran Bodkin, Uncle Chris Tobin, Aunty Rasmie Prior, Aunty Rayna St Julian (WSU Elders Advisory Committee Members) ▪ Kayden Edwards (WSU student) 	For our Elder
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sarah Lynn Rees (Jackson Clements Burrows Architects); ▪ Dr. Danièle Hromek (Indigenous Centre of Excellence) 	Keep the Fire Burning! Blak, Loud and Proud

Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series

Launched in 2022, this Series provokes critical engagement with senior Indigenous academic scholarship, extending its impact across the University (Table 23). Viewership averages 100 attendees.

Table 23. Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series, Presentations and Audience Participation, 2024

Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series, 2024		
Year	Keynote Speaker	Lecture Topic
2022	Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews	Resisting Genocide through D’harawal Relatedness: Understanding the Massacre and the Story of How Wiritjiribin the Lyrebird Came to Be
2022	Professor Susan Page	Recognising the Colonial Past in Order to Reconcile Educational Futures
2023	Professor Aunty Kerrie Doyle	Conflict Entrepreneurs, Identity and Fringe Dwellers
2023	A/Professor Sandra Phillips	Indigenous Writing and Australian Futures
2024	Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik AO	Interview with a Pioneer (Chaired by Professor Michelle Trudgett)
2024	Professor Corrinne Sullivan	Didgeridoo or Didgeridon’t? Indigenous Fetishism and Erotic Capital

Indigenous Research Symposium

Annual Indigenous Research Symposia foreground Indigenous-led research excellence at WSU and beyond. Keynote presentations engage sector-leading Indigenous scholars and ‘speed-presentations’ feature WSU academics and HDR students (Table 24). Sessions are facilitated by WSU’s Indigenous Professoriate and non-Indigenous Senior Executives. Viewership averages 50 attendees.

Table 24. WSU Indigenous Research Week Events and Participation, 2019 - 2024

Indigenous Research Week Events, 2019 – 2024		
Year	Session Topic	Keynote Speaker
2019	Building a Collective Voice	Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, WSU
2020	Sharing Indigenous Knowledges – Always Was, Always Will Be	n/a (Indigenous Research Forum)
2021	Bold Indigenous Futures	Distinguished Professor Bronwyn Carlson, Macquarie University
2022	Unlocking Indigenous Research Excellence	Associate Professor Karen Martin, Griffith University
2023	Indigenous Pathways to Future Knowledges	Dr Kirsten Thorpe, UTS
2024	Indigenous Research Symposium	Associate Professor Yvonne Clark, SAHMRI & University of South Australia

University-wide Indigenous-Focused Seminars, Workshops and Events

Further seminars, workshops and events promote Indigenous cultural viability and social justice by critically engaging with Indigenous research, learning and teaching, entrepreneurship, and creative practice (Table 25).

Table 25. Sample of Additional Indigenous-Focused Seminars, Workshops and Events, 2020 - 2024

Sample Indigenous-Focused Seminars, Workshops, and Events 2020 – 2024		
Year	Host	Session Topic
2021 – 2024	Social Sciences	Indigenous Learning and Teaching Showcase
2021 – 2023	SAGE, Writing & Society, Sydney Review of Books	Writing Gender (feat. Emerging, mid-career and established Indigenous writers)
2021	Business	Indigenous Business Month: Indigenous Finance and Business Perspective Series
	Learning Futures	Indigenous Education at Western
	Writing & Society	Radical Joy: Hope and Resistance in Contemporary Indigenous Poetry
2022	WSU	NSW Vice-Chancellor’s Committee Indigenous Professional Staff Conference
	Culture and Society	What Matters: Indigenous LGBTQ+ Pasts, Presents and Futures Symposium
	Law	Indigenising the Legal Curriculum (with Dr Ambelin Kwaymullin)
	ODVCIL	Dharawal Pharmacopeia launch (Aunty Fran Bodkin)
	Graduate Research School	Guest Lecture: What Does It Mean to be a Doctoral Researcher on Unceded Lands? (Dr Kate Harriden)
	Social Sciences	Indigenous Activism in Humanities and Social Sciences Research
2023	Engineering, Design and Built Environment	White Paper Launch: The Unconventional Strength of the STEM Cohort for Indigenous Australian Women
	Institute for Australian and Chinese Arts and Culture	Red Heart of Australia art exhibition
	Writing & Society	In conversation with Melissa Lucashenko
2024	People & Advancement	Services Unplugged Podcast (with Prof Michelle Trudgett)
	Future Student Engagement	Da Murrytoola Aboriginal Education Excellence Awards



Figure 9. 2023 Yarramundi Lecture. Michelle Locke (left) delivers a Welcome to Darug Country, members of WSU's Elders Advisory Committee, Aunty Rayna St Julian (Kamilaroi Elder), Uncle Chris Tobin (Darug Elder), Aunty Rasme Prior (Torres Strait Elder), Aunty Fran Bodkin (Dharawal Elder) and Aunty Cindy Laws (Darug/Darlingjung Elder) speak to the theme "For Our Elder", and Kayden Edwards (Darug) provides the student response.





Figure 10. Attendees shake-a-leg, members of the School of Social Science win the Indigenous Team Leadership Award, Indigenous Elders, staff and students celebrate being Blak, Loud and Proud, and WSU Chancellor Professor Jennifer Westacott AO and DVCIL Professor Michelle Trudgett deliver formal addresses as WSU's Indigenous community comes together to "Keep the Fire Burning" at the inaugural NAI DOC Gala Dinner, 2024.



Theme 5. Community, Connection and Cultural Safety

WSU recognises that Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are at the centre of culture. The establishing of community is essential for fostering ‘being’ and for promoting collaboration.

Sub-Theme I. Building Community



Yarning Circle

Launched in 2020 and released quarterly, the *Yarning Circle* profiles Indigenous achievements, announces ODVCIL news, and includes “Bold Conversations”, wherein Indigenous people can express views and ideas in a culturally safe environment. The *Yarning Circle* is a vital tool of communication and connection that receives high engagement among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, with at least 10,822 readers since its launch (Table 26).

Table 26. *Yarning Circle* Editions and Viewership, 2020 - 2024

Yarning Circle Editions, 2020 – 2024			
#	Edition	Feature Content	n
1	Winter, 2020	<i>Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)</i> launched; School of Social Sciences Associate Dean Indigenous Education appointed; Elders COVID-19 supports.	n/a
2	Spring, 2020	School of Medicine Associate Dean Indigenous Health appointed; Indigenous Research Network established; Black Lives Matter Pledge; NAIDOC Week; Deadly Challenge; “Those Who Came Before Us” collaborative artwork.	n/a
3	Summer, 2020	School of Social Sciences <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> released; Yarramundi Lecture; Jazz Money wins David Unaipon Award; Indigenous Research Week.	n/a
4	Autumn, 2021	Indigenous Aspire Engineering Internship launched; Indigenous student elected to Academic Senate; VC Excellence Awards; Indigenous doctorates.	n/a
5	Winter, 2021	Directors Indigenous Research and Indigenous Learning and Teaching appointed; Elders Advisory Committee reconstituted; “Those Who Came Before Us” erected in the Chancellery; Indigenous Spotify playlist.	780
6	Spring, 2021	DVC Indigenous Leadership appointed; NAIDOC Week; Aunty Fran Bodkin receives WSU Honorary Doctorate of Letters.	822
7	Summer, 2021	IGNITE traineeship program announced; Indigenous Staff Conference; Indigenous Research Week; WSRC Indigenous Poetry event.	792
8	Autumn, 2022	James Christian PSM appointed to Board of Trustees; new Indigenous artwork branding; Indigenous Excellence Awards; Darug language inscribed at Graduation Walk; Uncle Greg Simms receives Honorary Fellowship.	816
9	Winter, 2022	IGNITE traineeship program launched; Manager Indigenous Employment appointed; Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series inaugurated.	769
10	Spring, 2022	Indigenous Alumni Affinity Group launched; Blak Douglas wins Archibald Prize; NAIDOC and Reconciliation Weeks; Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Salik AO receives Honorary Doctorate; Indigenous ARC success.	823
11	Summer, 2022	Indigenous Staff Conference; new Coordinator of Indigenous Employment appointed; Indigenous Writing Retreat; Indigenous Research Week.	834
12	Autumn, 2023	Uncle Wes Marne receives Honorary Fellowship; Yarramundi Lecture; Indigenous LGBTIQ+ Past, Presents, and Futures Symposium.	1,011
13	Winter, 2023	Indigenous Centre of Excellence funding announcement; IGNITE Traineeship Program; Indigenous Staff v Student soccer match.	793

14	Spring, 2023	<i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy</i> launched; Indigenous Writing Retreat; Voice to Parliament; Yarramundi Lecture; NAIDOC Week; Indigenous Staff Conference; Indigenous Professoriate Lecture; Prof Corrinne Sullivan wins Institute of Australian Geographers William Jonas Award.	802
15	Summer, 2023	PVC Indigenous Education appointed; inaugural Indigenous Leadership Forum; Indigenous Research Symposium; Prof Alexis Wright wins Creative Australia Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature; inaugural Indigenous Staff v Student basketball match.	832
16	Autumn, 2024	Indigenous Centre of Excellence design winners announced; Indigenous Professional Staff Mentoring Program launched; Indigenous Staff Network event; Indigenous ARC success.	836
17	Winter, 2024	Indigenous Centre of Excellence design released; Social Sciences Indigenous Learning and Teaching Showcase; Director Indigenous Futures appointed; new Director Badanami appointed; new IGNITE trainees appointed.	912
18	Spring, 2024	Inaugural WSU NAIDOC Awards; <i>Indigenous Research Strategy</i> launched; Indigenous Staff Conference; Indigenous Writing Workshop; Uncle Greg Simms receives OAM; Indigenous ARC success.	TBC

Indigenous Staff Conference, Networks and Social Events

Annual Indigenous Staff Conferences, dedicated Indigenous networks and annual sports matches offer culturally safe contexts to foster community connection, build capacity and knowledge, promote sovereignty and cultural perspectives, and to establish research and professional partnerships (Table 27 & Figure 11).

Table 27. Average Participation for Indigenous Staff Conference, Networks, and Sporting Events

Indigenous Staff Conference, Networks and Sports Participation		
Network	Established	<i>n</i>
Indigenous Staff Conference	2014	70
Indigenous Staff Network	2014	125
Indigenous Research Network	2020	42
Indigenous Alumni Affinity Group	2022	21
Indigenous Staff v. Students Soccer Game	2020	80
Indigenous Staff v. Students Basketball Game	2023	95



Figure 11. DVC Indigenous Leadership Professor Michelle Trudgett gives a progress update on the Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025) at the Indigenous Staff Conference, 2023; participants gather at the Indigenous Staff v. Students Soccer Game, 2022

Indigenous Staff Wellbeing Days

Initiated in 2023, quarterly Indigenous Staff Wellbeing Sessions emphasise holistic staff wellness within and beyond the workplace (Figure 13). Reflective, themed sessions (e.g., music, meditation, art) integrate cultural practices, encourage mindful engagement, and engender a culturally supportive environment. Sessions typically attract 12-15 attendees.

Educational Videos

Produced by ODVCIL, a series of short, promotional videos aim to educate the WSU community about Indigenous cultures, Knowledges, experiences, and place-making initiatives (Table 28). The videos include a powerful anti-racism educational discussion with Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews (Figure 12). A compulsory staff cultural competence training module and classroom cultural safety videos are also in development, due for implementation in 2025.

Table 28. Viewership for ODVCIL Indigenous Videos, 2020 - 2024

Indigenous Cultural Videos, 2020 – 2024		
Video	Released	<i>n</i>
Acknowledgement of Country	September 2020	14,296
Yarning with the Mob	July 2020	717
Experiencing Racism	February 2023	237
Ignite Indigenous Traineeship Program	May 2023	542
First Peoples Walk	August 2023	751
Indigenous Centre of Excellence Design Unveiling Event	March 2024	598



Figure 12. D'harawal scholar and Director of Indigenous Research, Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, speaks about the cross-generational impacts of historical and contemporary, institutional, individual, and macro experiences of racism for Indigenous peoples, Experiencing Racism video 2023

Sub-Theme II. Solidarity

Black Lives Matter Campaign

In 2020, WSU coordinated a university-wide Black Lives Matter (BLM) campaign to stand against racism and in solidarity with Indigenous Australians and people of colour. The campaign included a BLM library archive of curated resources, two educative symposia and a BLM Pledge wherein staff signatories committed to call out racism, remedy social injustice and advance Indigenous self-determination (Table 29 & Figure 13).

Table 29. Black Lives Matter Campaign, 2020

WSU Black Lives Matter Campaign, 2020			
Action Type	Action	Date	<i>n</i>
Statement of Support	Black Lives Matter Pledge	June 2020	1,360
Resource	Black Lives Matter Library Collection	June 2020	n/a
Symposium	"Black Lives Matter and Education: Pathways to Action", Centre for Educational Research	July 2020	150+
Symposium	"#Indigenoulivesmatter: Speaking back/ with Social Sciences", School of Social Sciences	July 2020	150+

Voice to Parliament Referendum

WSU was highly active regarding the 2023 Voice to Parliament Referendum. Facilitated educational events, resources, all-staff webinars, and public statements of support received high engagement from Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff (Table 30 & Figure 13). Following the Referendum, ODVCIL held campus-wide gatherings, issued guidance for protecting culturally safe classrooms and workspaces, and all Indigenous staff were provided an additional five days Cultural Leave in recognition of heightened colonial load and to support health and wellbeing.

Table 30. WSU Voice to Parliament Actions and Initiatives, 2023

Voice to Parliament Actions and Initiatives, 2023			
Action	Action	Date	<i>n</i>
Resource	Indigenous Voice to Parliament Library Guide	March 2023	n/a
All-Staff Webinar	Indigenous Voice to Parliament Referendum, Session 1	May 2023	900+
Symposium	DVC Academic Divisional Forum: Voice to Parliament (Student panel)	May 2023	TBC
Symposium	"Exploring the Voice to Parliament: A Panel Discussion", Social Justice Network	July 2023	TBC
All-Staff Webinar	Indigenous Voice to Parliament Referendum, Session 2	August 2023	250+
Statement of Support	WSU Board of Trustees Statement of Support for the Voice to Parliament	August 2023	All Board Members
Statement of Support	WSU Staff Statement of Support for the Voice to Parliament	August 2023	714
Statement of Support	WSU Post-Referendum Reaffirmation of Commitment and Support (Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor)	October 2023	n/a
Resource	Post-Referendum Support and Inclusion Guide	October 2023	n/a
Wellbeing Event	2x Post-Referendum Support Events	October 2023	60
Entitlement	5x days paid additional Cultural Leave for all Indigenous staff	October 2023	n/a

Posted in All Company

Gabby Talbot-Mundine
Apr 12 • @14

1 share • Seen by 591 • ...

On Wednesday, April 10th, 2023, the Division of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Indigenous Leadership, in collaboration with the Equity, Safety, and Well-being Team, hosted a transformative Dadirri well-being session at the First Peoples Walk on Kingswood Campus for our Indigenous Staff.

Dadirri, rooted in the profound tradition of deep inner listening, shared by Aunty Mariam-Rose Ungunmerr from Daly River, formed the core of our session. Through the guidance of our facilitators, participants delved into the essence of Dadirri, discovering its power to cultivate a mindful cultural framework.

During the session, attendees embraced a moment of serene contemplation, engaging their senses to connect with country. This quietude fostered a harmonious unity of mind, body, and spirit, nurturing a tranquil energy and a profound sense of peace within. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Linda for her invaluable facilitation of this session. see less



Like Comment Share Maryanne Dever and 31 others

- Matilda Harry** Apr 12
Thank you for organising these sessions Gabby Talbot-Mundine! It was great to sit in circle and hold space with mob! I am beyond proud to be part of a University and Division that actively prioritises the wellbeing of Indigenous staff and cultural practices.
- Michelle Trudgett** Apr 12
Such a great post Gabby. Thanks for organising these amazing events. The wellbeing of our staff is so important.
- Jayne Chenhall** Apr 12
It was beautifully done, and we could not have asked for a more glorious morning of sunshine. Who knew you had such talents at writing this post so eloquently to set the scene, Gabby.
- Ali Gebhardt** Apr 12
Thanks Gabby for organising a much needed time out to connect.
- Sally Tsoutas** Apr 29
...such a beautiful place to hold sessions like these...love this!

Figure 13. WSU staff share culture and stand in solidarity.

Left: Senior Indigenous Employment Coordinator, Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine, posts about an enriching Indigenous Staff Wellbeing Session on WSU's in-house social media platform, Viva Engage.

Right from top: the Home page of the Black Lives Matter Library Collection; Dean of Law, Professor Anna Cody, educates WSU staff about the cultural and political history of the Voice to Parliament Referendum; Luke Hodge and Matilda Harry teach the WSU community some everyday Indigenous slang in the "Yarning with the Mob" video.

Theme 6: Evaluating Progress

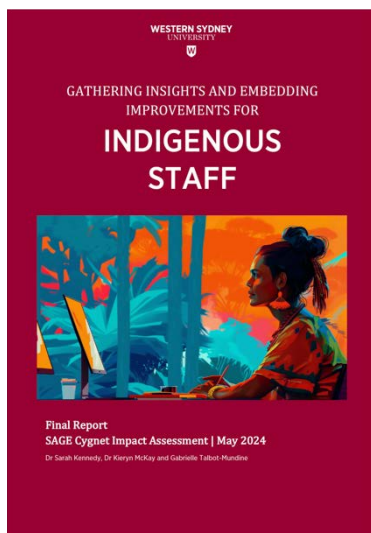
Recognising the importance of an Indigenous-led approach to measuring outcomes and impacts, WSU SAGE developed a Cygnet Impact Assessment principles framework and led comprehensive research that centralised Indigenous voices in a meaningful, collaborative evaluation project.

SAGE Indigenous Staff Collaboration Framework

Developed by the Indigenous SWAG, this Framework established principles for engagement with Indigenous staff to assess WSU's progress in advancing Indigenous equity across the Cygnet Era. Nine principles (Table 31) were established and embedded in research design for a WSU SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessment (below).

Table 31. WSU SAGE Indigenous Staff Collaboration Framework Principles, 2022

SAGE Indigenous Staff Collaboration Framework Principles, 2022		
#	Principle	Principle Detail
1	Social Justice	SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessments should be undertaken with genuine intent to progress social justice within the higher education sector
2	Indigenous Research Leadership	SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessments should be led by Indigenous researchers, in partnership with non-Indigenous team members.
3	Academic Independence	Funding and evaluation should maintain independence from ODVCIL, enabling researchers to objectively evaluate findings and propose recommendations
4	Cultural Inclusion	Research should seek to engage all Indigenous staff, regardless of contract type and employment level and regardless of COI status
5	Culture and Community Connection	SAGE research should employ Indigenous research methodologies, including Research Topic Yarns at data collection and Collaborative Yarns at data analysis, such that researchers and collaborators are situated in a relational engagement that privileges culture and community connection over institutional objectives
6	Participant Self-Determination	Participant self-determination should be upheld at all levels of engagement, including the decision to participate, the conditions of participation, capacity to direct discussions toward areas of interest, and the right to refuse, reject or amend the premise or principle of any question
7	Centring Voice	To centre the voices of Indigenous peoples in an effective and collaborative evaluation of progress at WSU, research should align with Indigenous Institutional Theory (see Coates, Trudgett and Page, 2022) by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ placing emphasis on the relationship between the institution and the Indigenous community; ▪ enabling productive, critical reflection on WSU's Indigenous leadership; ▪ critically evaluating the rhetoric and logics of the institution, including whether the <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> aligns with Indigenous staff values and priorities, and engaging critical reflection on the operative term "equity". Collaborator voices should remain paramount throughout analysis, with Collaborative Research Data Yarns by Indigenous members of the research team ensuring that expression, language, references, contexts, and other elements are interpreted collectively, rather than through any singular cultural or analytical perspective
8	Data Privacy and Cultural Safety	Data should be carefully managed to protect participant privacy and confidentiality; Non-Indigenous and ODVCIL-based research team members should be excluded from analysis until all data has been de-identified; research instruments should undergo a cultural risk assessment, with culturally appropriate support mechanisms in place
9	Reciprocity	De-identified project data and records will be made available for reuse by Indigenous staff and HDR students at WSU, with collaborator consent



Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements for Indigenous Staff at WSU

Following SAGE Framework principles and funded by SDVCREG, the Cygnet Impact Assessment *Gathering Insights*⁵ is a rigorous, collaborative evaluation of progress at WSU since the launch of the *Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)* and establishment of the DVCIL portfolio. Findings and recommendations highlight a critical opportunity to embed sustainable culture change at WSU into the future. Findings were formally presented at dedicated events and meetings for Indigenous staff, senior executive and equity-invested colleagues, and for broader internal and external audiences (Table 32 & Figure 14). Printed copies of the report were also delivered to all Indigenous and Executive staff across WSU.

Table 32. Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements for Indigenous Staff at WSU: SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessment Presentations and Audience, 2024

SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessment (<i>Gathering Insights</i>) Presentations, 2024	
Presentation Audience	n
Indigenous Staff Conference	70
Vice-Chancellor’s Gender Equity and Respectful Relationships Committee	35
SAGE Self-Assessment Team	27
Equity and Diversity Working Party (EDWP) Chairs	20
SAGE Research Week: Indigenous Cultural Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility	175
Indigenous Research Symposium	40



Figure 14. Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine delivers a moving Acknowledgement of Country, Dr Sarah Kennedy presents key project findings and PVC Indigenous Education Professor Susan Page hosts a panel discussion about culturally competent Indigenous allyship as WSU staff gather and external colleagues join online for the SAGE Research Week event, “Indigenous Cultural Safety is Everyone’s Responsibility”, July 2024.

⁵ Kennedy, S., McKay, K. & Talbot-Mundine, G. (2024) *Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements for Indigenous Staff at Western Sydney University*. SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessment, Final Report. Western Sydney University. <https://doi.org/10.26183/ywhw-7a13>

implementation of its *Indigenous Strategy* (Table 33).

Table 33. Top 10 Cygnet Achievements, 2020 - 2024

Top 10 Significant Achievements, 2020 - 2024			
#	Theme	Achievement	Date
1	Indigenous Strategy	1st Australian university to implement both an immediate and long-term Indigenous Strategy	2023
2	Indigenous Leadership	2nd Australian university to appoint a Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous position	2020
3	Indigenous Leadership	2nd Australian university to hold both DVC and PVC Indigenous leadership positions	2023
4	Indigenous Leadership	Increased senior Indigenous academics (Level D and above) from 2 to 9 staff	2024
5	Cultural Recognition	Substantial Language Allowance paid to Indigenous staff using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in the course of their employment	2022
6	Cultural Recognition	\$78.5 million to establish a landmark Indigenous Centre of Excellence	2023
7	Cultural Recognition	Met the EA commitment of 77 ongoing and fixed-term Indigenous staff by 2025	2024
8	Indigenous Excellence	100% inaugural Indigenous Ignite Traineeship graduates secured continuing employment at WSU	2022
9	Indigenous Excellence	First Indigenous Distinguished Professor recognised	2024
10	Indigenous Excellence	Substantially increased Indigenous staff recognition via Excellence Award nominations, commendations and winners	2021 - 2024

Cygnet Era Staff Data

WSU's Indigenous staff representation has increased year on year, now at 129 total staff and 2.7% of ongoing and fixed-term WSU employees (Table 34). Since the Bronze Era, ongoing/fixed-term Indigenous academic employment has more than tripled (+19 staff), professional employment increased by half (+19 staff).

Table 34. WSU Indigenous Staff (Ongoing and Fixed-Term), 2023

WSU Ongoing and Fixed-Term Indigenous Staff, 2023						
	WSU		Professional		Academic	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
2024	79	2.7%	52	3.2%	27	2.6%

Note: Data extracted at point-in-time 17 September 2024; 50 Indigenous casual staff are also employed at WSU.

Workplace Experiences

Workplace experience outcomes were measured by a comprehensive *Gathering Insights* survey (Table 35). Results demonstrate clear and convincing evidence of progress in advancing Indigenous equity at WSU.

Table 35. Indigenous staff participation in SAGE Cygnet Impact survey, 2023

Indigenous Staff Participation in Cygnet Impact Survey, 2023							
		Responses by Cohort					
Instrument		WSU	Ongoing	Fixed-Term	Casual	Academic	Professional
Gathering Insights Survey	n	35	22	7	5	7	26
	RR*	34%	55%	27%	13%	39%	53%

*Note: Response Rates are based on point-in-time staff data at survey release date and exclude DVCIL and the research team.

Outcome 1: Strategy Alignment

The *Indigenous Strategy* is well socialised (90% familiar) and the majority (73%) feel that it reflects their personal priorities for advancing Indigenous equity at WSU. Higher academic familiarity with the *Strategy* was consistent with higher certainty that it reflects personal priorities (Table 36).

Table 36. Outcome: Familiarity and Synergy with Indigenous Strategy, 2023

Familiarity and Synergy with Indigenous Strategy, 2023						
	Academic			Professional		
Familiarity with Strategy	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not at all familiar
How familiar are you with the University's <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020 – 2025)</i> ?	71%	29%	0%	38%	50%	12%
Synergy with Strategy	Yes	Unsure	No	Yes	Unsure	No
Does the <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020 – 2025)</i> reflect your priorities for advancing Indigenous equity at WSU?	86%	0%	14%	70%	30%	0%

All strategic changes across all themes of action were considered “Essential” or “Very Important” by the vast majority of staff (to a combined minimum of 74%, Table 37).

Table 37. Outcome: Agree Importance of Cygnet Era Actions, 2023

Agreed Importance of Cygnet Era Actions, 2023						
Q. In your view, how important are the following changes introduced by the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership?						
	Essential	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not at all important	n/a (not familiar)
Theme 1: Indigenous Strategy						
Design and implementation of the <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)</i>	61%	36%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Design and implementation of the <i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy (2023 – 2032)</i>	50%	39%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Theme 2: Indigenous Leadership						
Action to involve Elders in decision-making	70%	19%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Establishing of DVC Indigenous Leadership position	68%	18%	11%	4%	0%	0%

Establishing of PVC Indigenous Education position	71%	14%	4%	11%	0%	0%
Establishing of Director, Indigenous Research position	64%	21%	11%	4%	0%	0%
Theme 3: Cultural Recognition						
Simplified Confirmation of Identity process	64%	18%	11%	4%	0%	4%
Creation and implementation of Indigenous artwork and branding	61%	21%	14%	4%	0%	0%
Introduction of Procurement Plan for Indigenous Goods and Services	57%	21%	14%	4%	0%	4%
Securing funding and planning for an Indigenous Centre of Excellence	75%	14%	4%	7%	0%	0%
Establishing a First Peoples Walk	61%	21%	14%	4%	0%	0%
Theme 4: Indigenous Excellence						
Indigenous Professional Staff Leadership program	64%	29%	4%	0%	0%	4%
Indigenous Writing Retreats	57%	29%	14%	0%	0%	0%
Ignite Traineeship Program	71%	29%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Indigenous priorities in Academic Promotions Policy	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NAIDOC Awards & Gala	81%	15%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Yarramundi Lecture	57%	36%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series	39%	43%	14%	4%	0%	0%
Indigenous Research Symposium	46%	39%	11%	4%	0%	0%
Learning and Teaching Showcases	48%	37%	11%	4%	0%	0%
Theme 5: Community, Connection and Cultural Safety						
Yarning Circle	68%	21%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Indigenous Staff Conference	75%	14%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Indigenous Staff Network	79%	18%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Indigenous Research Network	57%	18%	18%	0%	0%	7%
Indigenous Alumni Network	43%	36%	11%	4%	0%	7%
Black Lives Matter Pledge	43%	36%	7%	4%	7%	4%

Outcome 2: Progressing Indigenous Equity

Indigenous staff identified significant advances since the *Strategy's* launch: more visible Indigenous excellence, greater transparency, more honest commitment, and “meaningful progress advancing Indigenous priorities at WSU” (Table 38).

Table 38. Outcome: Indigenous Equity Progress at WSU

Progressing Equity at WSU, 2023			
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Q. Reflecting on the period since the launch of the University's Indigenous Strategy in 2020, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?			
Indigenous excellence is more visible at Western	100%	0%	0%
There is greater transparency around Indigenous events and activities	88%	9%	3%
There is more honest commitment by WSU's Indigenous leadership team	88%	12%	0%
There has been meaningful progress advancing Indigenous priorities at WSU	88%	12%	0%

Outcome 3: Committed Culture

Indigenous staff perspectives on WSU's broader commitments to equity for its Indigenous workforce are strongly positive (Table 39).

Table 39. Outcome: Committed Culture, 2023

University Culture, 2023			
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Q. Thinking about the University more generally, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?			
WSU is committed to equity for its Indigenous community	79%	21%	0%
WSU is committed to increasing employment for Indigenous people	79%	21%	0%
Indigenous Knowledges and cultures are celebrated at WSU	73%	18%	9%

Outcome 4: Feelings of Involvement

Indigenous staff report that they feel informed, engaged and consulted on matters of importance, with capacity to contribute where desired and to offer feedback where concerns exist (Table 40).

Table 40. Outcome: Feelings of Involvement, 2023

Feelings of Involvement, 2023			
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Q. Reflecting on your engagement with initiatives aimed at advancing equity for Indigenous staff, students and community at Western Sydney University, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?			
I am informed about what is going on	85%	9%	6%
I am given the opportunity to contribute to areas of my interest	76%	0%	24%
I have input into decision-making about matters of importance to me	64%	12%	24%
I am encouraged to give feedback about matters of importance to me	76%	15%	9%

Outcome 5: Improved Workplace Equity Indicators

A comparative evaluation of benchmark *MyVoice* prompts tracked progress against equity indicators. Indigenous staff positivity increased substantially and met or exceeded target across every prompt (Table 41).

Table 41. Outcome: Improved Workplace Equity Indicators, 2023

Workplace Experience Responses, 2024				
Survey Prompt	Measures			
	Benchmark	Aim ↑	Target	Result
I have input into everyday decision-making at WSU	30%	14%	44%	46%
I am encouraged to give feedback about things that concern me	54%	8%	62%	71%
I am given the opportunity to contribute to the best of my ability	49%	14%	63%	79%
I maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of my life	46%	15%	61%	68%
WSU has enough flexible work arrangements to meet my needs	67%	12%	79%	82%
The rewards and recognition I receive for my job are fair	43%	12%	55%	64%
Overall, I am satisfied with my job	70%	-	70%	79%
I can see a future for me at WSU	70%	-	70%	75%

Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement with Indigenous Priorities

Despite feeling well supported at University-level, Indigenous staff expressed only moderate agreement about non-Indigenous colleagues' investments in matters of importance to Indigenous equity (Table 42).

Table 42. Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement with Indigenous Priorities, 2023

Experiences with Non-Indigenous Colleagues, 2023			
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Q. Reflecting on your experiences with staff at the University who are not Indigenous, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?			
Non-Indigenous colleagues are active in learning about Indigenous Knowledges and cultures	58%	27%	15%
Non-Indigenous colleagues <u>support</u> equity for Indigenous staff and students at the University	64%	21%	15%
Non-Indigenous colleagues <u>practice</u> equity for Indigenous staff and students at the University	58%	30%	12%
Non-Indigenous staff contribute to progressing Indigenous priorities at the University	42%	45%	12%

Area for Improvement: Localised Competence

In local School/Institute/Division contexts, Indigenous staff (especially academics) agreed that they are consulted and appropriately recognised (Table 43). However, open-text comments suggest more complex experiences, as evidenced by mixed response to Colonial Load⁶ and as elaborated in Impact.

Table 43. Area for Improvement: Local Experiences, 2023

Local Experiences, 2023			
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Q. Reflecting on your experiences in your School/Division/Institute, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?			
I am consulted about decisions that affect me as an Indigenous staff member	63%	22%	16%
I am properly recognised for my contributions as an Indigenous staff member	67%	15%	18%
I am called upon <u>too often</u> to represent or advise on Indigenous matters (*Colonial Load)	36%	30%	33%

⁶ Also referred to as 'Cultural load', Colonial load refers to here to the additional (formal and informal) workload placed upon Indigenous staff to provide Indigenous Knowledge, education and support in the workplace.

IMPACT

Impact data was collected across Yarns and open-text survey comments (Table 44). Analysis followed established Framework principles (see Activities, Table 31), with Collaborative Research Data Yarns first undertaken by Indigenous researchers, then whole-group analysis to confirm themes and sub-themes.

Table 44. Impact Discussions: Yarns and Analysis, 2023 – 2024

Indigenous Staff Participation in Cygnet Impact Yarns & Analysis, 2023 – 2024		
	<i>n</i>	RR
Collection		
<i>Gathering Insights</i> Survey	34	42%
Collaborator Yarns	14	22%
Analysis		
Collaborative Research Data Yarns (Indigenous researchers only)	4	n/a
Collaborative thematic discussions (whole team)	7	n/a

Impact Summary

Analysis demonstrates clear synergies between action, outcomes and impact, with progress detailed and areas for improvement identified (Table 45).

Table 45. Summary of Outcomes and Impacts Aligned to Actions

Summary of Outcomes and Impacts Aligned to Actions			
Theme	Actions Implemented	Outcomes Identified	Impacts Indicated
Indigenous Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSU Strategic Plans foreground Indigenous cultural values as fundamental to WSU functions and strategic directions; <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)</i> charts WSU action and commitments across strategic objectives (students, employment, research, learning and teaching, community engagement, leadership, and cultural viability and Knowledge); Supporting Indigenous strategies detail local implementation and embed future success. 	<p>Outstanding Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st Australian university to implement immediate and long-term Indigenous strategies. <p>Staff Experience Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% Indigenous staff are familiar with the <i>Indigenous Strategy</i>; 73% Indigenous staff feel the <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> reflects their priorities (23% unsure); 88% Indigenous staff see meaningful progress in advancing Indigenous priorities; 79% Indigenous staff believe WSU is committed to Indigenous equity; Combined Indigenous staff ratings of “Essential” or “Very important”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)</i>, 96%; <i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy</i>, 89%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous staff evidence transformational culture change at WSU, brought about by elevating senior Indigenous people in the governance of the University, underwritten by an ambitious and visionary strategy instrument; The <i>Strategy</i> is seen as a significant driver for change, a signal of increased cultural value at WSU, and as a living document with meaningful implementation; Staff see senior Indigenous staff as bringing cultural change via <i>Strategy</i> design and implementation, but also recognise that Indigenous priorities are aligned and supported by senior leaders across WSU;
Indigenous Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders Advisory Committee reconstituted; 	<p>Outstanding Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd Australian university to appoint DVC Indigenous; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened senior Indigenous leadership is seen as core to WSU's

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New senior Indigenous positions established and appointed; ▪ New School-based Indigenous governance roles established; ▪ Indigenous Professoriate Group established; ▪ Indigenous Leadership Forum inaugurated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2nd Australian University to appoint both DVC and PVC Indigenous positions; ▪ Increased academics at D and above from 2 to 9 staff. <p>Staff Experience Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 88% Indigenous staff believe “there is more honest commitment by WSU’s Indigenous leadership team”; ▪ Combined Indigenous staff ratings of “Essential” or “Very important”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Elders involvement, 93%; ○ DVCIL position, 86%; ○ PVCIE position, 85%; ○ Director Indigenous Research position, 85%. 	<p>successes, where the cohering of Indigenous priorities, enhancing of career opportunities for Indigenous staff, and a more culturally inclusive leadership approach is strengthening rapport with staff, students and community and breaking down institutional hierarchies.</p>
Cultural Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural recognition embedded in policy and procedure (new COI processes, new Research Ethics framework, language allowance and more inclusive Cultural Leave included in <i>EAs</i>, Brand Usage Guidelines established, Procurement Plan, Cultural Providers Database and Deadly Talent Register activated); ▪ Funding secured and planning underway for Indigenous Centre of Excellence; ▪ Indigenous languages embedded across campuses; ▪ Kingswood First Peoples Walk opened; ▪ First Peoples Garden announced; ▪ Indigenous artwork and branding collateralised. 	<p>Outstanding Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EA commitment for 77 Indigenous employees met; ▪ Substantial language allowance paid to Indigenous staff; ▪ \$78.5 million funding secured for Indigenous Centre of Excellence; <p>Staff Experience Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combined Indigenous staff ratings of “Essential” or “Very important”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ simplified COI process, 82%. ○ Indigenous artwork and branding, 82%; ○ <i>Procurement Plan</i>, 78%; ○ Indigenous Centre of Excellence, 89%; ○ First Peoples Walk, 82%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural recognition across place, policy and process is contributing to increased cultural safety; ▪ Staff describe the embedding of cultural recognition in place-making across campuses as significant personally and for community, and as an observable transformation in the University’s approach to and support of Indigenous priorities.
Indigenous Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nurturing Indigenous Excellence: Indigenous Researcher Development Award introduced; VC Professional Scholarships dedicated for Indigenous staff; Indigenous Professional Staff Leadership program initiated; annual Indigenous Writing Retreats established; Ignite Traineeship Program created; ▪ Rewarding Indigenous Excellence: formal academic recognition of Indigenous Elders; <i>Academic Promotions Policy</i> aligned with <i>Indigenous Strategy</i>; VC Excellence Awards dedicated for Indigenous 	<p>Outstanding Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% inaugural Ignite Traineeship graduates in continuing employment at WSU; ▪ First Indigenous Distinguished Professor appointed; ▪ Indigenous staff recognition via Excellence Awards substantially increased; ▪ 100% Indigenous staff agree that “Indigenous excellence is more visible at WSU”; <p>Staff Experience Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combined Indigenous staff ratings of “Essential” or “Very important”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indigenous Professional Staff Leadership program, 93%; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous staff experience active personal, professional and cultural mentorship, strong support from managers, and targeted development; ▪ Active supports and <i>Strategy</i> changes are providing safety and stability to grow, with progression beyond expectations for many; ▪ Many staff express excitement about future possibilities at WSU.

	<p>staff; NAIDOC Awards introduced;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting Indigenous Excellence: Yarramundi Lecture embedded and ongoing; Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series established; Indigenous Research Symposium established; other Indigenous-focused seminars, workshops and events undertaken across WSU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Indigenous Writing Retreats, 86%; ○ Ignite Traineeship, 100%; ○ Academic Promotions Policy changes, 100%; ○ NAIDOC activities, 96%; ○ Yarramundi Lecture, 93%; ○ Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series, 82%; ○ Indigenous Research Symposium, 85%; ○ Learning and Teaching Showcases, 85%. 	
Community, Culture and Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Building Community: <i>Yarning Circle</i> founded; Indigenous Staff Conference, Networks and Events established; Indigenous Staff Wellbeing Days initiated; Educational Videos released; ▪ Solidarity: Black Lives Matter campaign coordinated; Voice to Parliament Referendum activity comprehensive. 	<p>Staff Experience Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous staff feel informed (85%), able to contribute (76%), involved in decision-making (64%) and encourage to provide feedback (76%) across the ODVCIL portfolio; ▪ 88% Indigenous staff agree “there is greater transparency around Indigenous events and activities”; ▪ Combined Indigenous staff ratings of “Essential” or “Very important”:<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yarning Circle, 89%; ○ Indigenous Staff Conference, 89%; ○ Indigenous Staff Network, 97%; ○ Indigenous Research Network, 75%; ○ Indigenous Alumni Network, 79%; ○ Black Lives Matter Pledge, 79%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous staff are strengthened by ODVCIL’s all-embracing culture, which engenders an inclusive workplace culture, a feeling of belonging at WSU, and a feeling of ‘family’ among Indigenous staff; ▪ Indigenous staff describe WSU’s workplace culture as increasingly warm and inclusive, with BLM Pledge, leave choice at Jan 26 and Voice Referendum engagement cited as contributing to culture change.
Evaluating Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>SAGE Indigenous Staff Collaboration Framework</i> established; ▪ SAGE Cygnet Impact Assessment <i>Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements for Indigenous Staff at WSU</i> implemented and reported to all Indigenous staff, senior Executive, equity representatives, and internal and external colleagues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong engagement with project survey from ongoing and fixed-term, academic and professional Indigenous staff; ▪ High participant conversion rate (40%) from survey response to Yarn collaboration; ▪ Indigenous-led and co-designed evaluation benchmarks established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indigenous staff detail where recent policy and practice changes are having most impact; ▪ Areas for improvement identified; ▪ Recommendations drafted and socialised. <p>Areas for Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Colonial load; ▪ More Indigenous staff; ▪ Non-Indigenous staff engagement with Indigenous priorities; ▪ Non-Indigenous staff cultural competence.

Galvanised Indigenous Governance | Deadly Cultural Change

Indigenous staff evidence transformational culture change, brought about by elevating senior Indigenous people in the governance of the University, underwritten by an ambitious and visionary strategy instrument.

Frequently noted for its scale and significance, the *Strategy* was seen as a significant driver for change, marking an important shift in how Indigenous peoples are valued at WSU (Table 46). Despite the *Strategy*'s high ambition, collaborators witnessed meaningful implementation, with accountability in place.

Table 46. Impact: Indigenous Strategy (2020-2025), A Driver for Change

Indigenous Strategy: A Driver for Change	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Indigenous Strategy: A Signal of Cultural Value	"I feel this strategy represents Indigenous staff and students as valuable contributors to the university in our own right." (Survey respondent)
	"It gives me hope and confidence. It sends a clear message that the senior leadership are invested in Indigenous people and that we matter." (Survey respondent)
	"It shows the dedication and care the university has for First Nations people." (Survey respondent)
Indigenous Strategy: Ambitious, Informed, Structural, Practical and Achievable	"The Strategy, I remember when it first got put out, it was very ambitious. I was like, 'How did [VC] Barney ever sign off on this?'. And then, 'How did they ever get it across?'. And then, 'How are we ever going to achieve it?.'" (Possum)
	"The problem with [previous positive experiences of Indigenous leadership] is that it's personality dependent. So, it's not process dependent. And that's often what I find with Indigenous stuff [...] is that is that it depends on the grace, if you like, of whoever's in charge of anything. [...] It's important to have those University-backed Strategic Plans." (Rosebud)
	"I believe the main achievement has been that the Strategy *exists*. I acknowledge the Indigenous Strategy as an essential step." (Survey respondent)
	"The Strategy is practical with clear outcomes." (Survey respondent)
	"It is a comprehensive and informed strategy that has significant support and accountability." (Survey respondent)
Indigenous Strategy: A Living Document with Meaningful Implementation	"Lots of consultation went into [the Strategy]." (Survey respondent)
	"I don't want to sound scripted here or anything, but [...] I've got the Indigenous Strategy printed out in my office and, like, on the pin board. And I've got certain parts highlighted, right? [...] If you were to put in writing 'oh, we live the Indigenous Strategy in our everyday lives'... I feel like for me that would not be an exaggeration. Like, that's not just some aspirational writing. I literally have it printed out and I very much do use it to sort of guide decisions, and I sort of use it as an opportunity to think about how we could do [certain things]." (Eel)
	"It was very interesting to see how quickly the Strategy was created and implemented, and then how soon after it was reported on, and then how quickly the rest of the university then came to fruition. [...] Now I think every School has a reporting process in regards to the strategy." (Magpie)
Indigenous Strategy: A Driver for Change with Meaningful Impact	"To be able to sit at our staff conference this year and have our Deputy Vice Chancellor go through slides where green is what we have achieved, yellow is what we're working towards... it was amazing to see the Strategy kind of come to life." (Possum)
	"The Indigenous Strategy has been a driving force to not just bring Indigenous staff together, but to set a common mission for the entire University. The fact that other areas across the University have also established their own Indigenous Strategies is a testament to the success of the 2020-2025 Indigenous Strategy. It has changed the fabric of how Indigenous business is done at Western both now and into the future." (Survey respondent)
	"Situat[ing] Western Sydney University as an employer of choice for Indigenous people." (Survey respondent)
	"[WSU] has cemented itself as not only the Institution, but the professional entity to be working at and for if you are an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person committed to both serving, and enjoying, community. The achievements of the Strategy have given me faith and confidence that Western is serious about Indigenous matters and shows a genuine, realistic and sustainable commitment to the success of my people." (Survey respondent)

Strengthened Indigenous leadership is seen as fundamental to *Strategy* achievements (Table 47). Collaborators spoke directly to the transformational workplace culture change brought by ODVCIL’s team, with significant impacts within the Indigenous portfolio, in local contexts, and across WSU.

Table 47. Impact: Indigenous Leadership, Bringing Cultural Change

Indigenous Leadership: Bringing Cultural Change	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Senior Indigenous Leadership: Strategy Implementation	<i>"I believe that the commitment from Senior Indigenous Leaders has been instrumental in developing and driving policies and systems that have seen the seven strategic outcomes with, in some cases very ambitious goals (e.g. Indigenous Centre of Excellence) become a genuine reality." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"The changes made by the ODVCIL are impressive! [...] Among staff there is a strong sense that we belong and that we are valued and respected, this is testament to the leadership in the ODVCIL." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"There has been a significant amount of work done by the Office of the DVCIL which is very impressive." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"My experience has been a very positive one since the introduction of the Indigenous Strategy. [...] This would have never occurred without the leadership of [ODVCIL]." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"May I add additional context as to why I am so strongly of the opinion these changes are important: [...] The direction the ODVCIL & University has taken is not only the right one - it offers an avenue for young Indigenous people to see a path for success clearly set out before them." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"I really strongly hold and express this, that I think Western Sydney [University] is a leader in terms of Aboriginal leadership right from the top, and that feeds through right down to our students." (Milla)</i>
	<i>"I feel like there's a really nice groundswell. And I know that a lot of this is happening because of one really strategic, amazing Indigenous scholar [DVCIL] who came on board a few years ago and rattled the chains." (Olive)</i>
	<i>"There's nothing I can say that 'that force' of the DVCIL is not already doing. [They're] at that level for reason. I just I'm on the sidelines supporting." (Crow)</i>
Senior Indigenous Leadership: Bringing Cultural Change	<i>"[DVCIL] has just made such a significant difference here. And I know that they have because I've spoken to Indigenous staff who've worked here for a long time who've said this place is so different. And there's so much positive change. And of course, one person planting that seed and fighting that fight builds our strength and our confidence. And we've come together and other people want to be part of it, they see it." (Olive)</i>
	<i>"I'm really grateful as a [younger] Aboriginal [person] to watch Aboriginal leaders in the space be able to navigate through... whether it's institutional structural issues, whether it's black politics, whatever... I've learned a lot by being mentored through the leadership as well. And I'm really glad and grateful that the space has adapted to be what it is, and I look forward to seeing what it will continue to become." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"I feel like with significant leadership, with time taken to try and build rapport between students, staff numbers, there has been a significant change in staffing culture within the Indigenous cohort. And you can see that through [various examples of Indigenous-focused events] where everyone comes together and has an opportunity to Yarn and that together." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"When I first started at Western... it's always been a welcoming place for Indigenous people, but I think once the DVCIL came on board, it's made a massive difference. And not only to how I feel my culture is represented, but also to how all Indigenous staff are brought together. [...] I feel like it's gotten a lot more culturally inclusive over the last five years that the DVCIL has been here. [...] A very noticeable change. Absolutely. Like, almost day and night." (Lizard)</i>
	<i>"For me the biggest change has been in leadership. I remember when I started it was... not that things were ad hoc, just that they were kind of directed by Badanami and there wasn't really a direction... I didn't know of any other projects. [...] It was a small tight-knit community." (Magpie)</i>
	<i>"I think since DVCIL [came to the University], there's been a more positive change, because there's been a lot more room for growth and staff have been given different opportunities [due to specific staffing changes]. And I think that's a big thing, because [previous issues with staff culture had impacted on trust]. So, I think that has been really good." (Amber)</i>
	<i>"I've come in at a time when the Indigenous Strategy and the DVCIL's work has really been cemented. And so things have been really have been really good. And I think that's just gotten stronger." (Wattle)</i>
	<i>"[The Indigenous Strategy and/or Indigenous portfolio has] made me feel very proud." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"I feel safer with this leadership team" (Survey Respondent)</i>

Importantly, Indigenous staff also recognise an environment in which Indigenous priorities are aligned and supported by senior leaders across the institution (Table 48). Feelings of ‘trust’ in WSU’s commitment to Indigenous priorities were built by University-wide Executive-level allyship, an example set by WSU’s most senior leaders.

Table 48. Impact: Non-Indigenous Executive Allyship

University Culture: Non-Indigenous Executive Allyship	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Non-Indigenous Senior Executive Allyship: Valuing Indigenous Priorities	<i>“There’s a strong university culture under the Vice-Chancellor’s and Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor’s leadership. There is a strong culture of valuing Indigenous work, and there’s a strong culture of listening to the staff.” (Wattle)</i>
	<i>“The culture here is: we’re amazing and deadly, because we bring people with us. That’s the culture that I get from here. And that’s definitely coming from this [Indigenous] space. But I have seen it reflected in the Executive people that I’ve spoken to at different events, who aren’t Indigenous. I can see them embracing it and going, ‘This is really good’. Y’know, people want to be part of it. And they’re advocating across.” (Olive)</i>
	<i>“Going along to the Kingswood First Peoples Walk opening and hearing all the important people talk about the Indigenous Strategy and Indigenous futures, like... yeah... I feel like I’m instilled with a lot of trust and hope in the University there. Yeah, and going back again to like, sort of, workplace culture again... I feel like University-wide, it’s very much trustworthy. They say like, ‘We care about students’, that’s very trustworthy.” (Eel)</i>
	<i>“My previous Dean [...] was really focused, really good, really clever, really understanding with Indigenous issues and privileged our voice. [...] I think that makes a big difference, having that support at that Executive level.” (Rosebud)</i>
	<i>“That [First People’s Walk], the University and the Executive really supported it and funded that space and celebrated it and advertised it, and promoted it across the University, not just in the Indigenous space. [...] The Executive were really proactive in talking about it [...] and they do that with the different spaces that are happening – so, the Badanami spaces that are being built in the new building, when there’s things like the Yarramundi Lecture, which is linked to NAIDOC week. And the Executives, they turn up.” (Olive)</i>
	<i>“There’s something with that kind of idea of how we treat our most vulnerable people. When the worst happens, do we leave them to the wayside? Or do we step up and make sure that everybody’s... y’know, accounted for and looked out for? I believe, I felt that that happened at this university. And it happened for me in two spaces: it happened through the Indigenous space, but also the university more broadly, like from the Executive down.” (Olive)</i>

Cultural Recognition, Viability and Safety | Figurative and Physical Place-Making

Collaborators cited changes to Confirmation of Identity (COI) processes, strengthened Indigenous leadership, increased recognition and visibility of Indigenous excellence, the widespread inclusion of Indigenous languages, mainstreaming of Acknowledgements of Country, and cultural recognition embedded across place, policy and process as contributing to cultural viability and enhanced feelings of cultural safety (Table 49). Several staff described the embedding of cultural recognition in place-making across campuses as significant personally and for community, and as an observable transformation in the University’s approach to and support of Indigenous priorities.

Table 49. Impact: Cultural Recognition, Viability and Safety

Cultural Recognition, Cultural Viability, and Cultural Safety	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Cultural Safety & Confirmation of Identity	<i>“I appreciate that [DVCIL] has made ways to identify in that you can’t just say it, you do need some type of supporting evidence, but the diversity of that [evidence] has increased. [...] So that is a fantastic thing that Western does, recognise the hardship that students or any person can have in identifying.” (Milla)</i>
	<i>“A lot of people nowadays, especially the younger people, don’t have that Confirmation of Identity, and it’s very hard. Like, they just make it very hard to get your hands on it. So, I think it’s very good that Western has that pathway. [...] I think that is definitely another great thing that Western does that I’ve not seen a lot of university do that well.” (Penguin)</i>

	<i>"My most significant barrier was the Confirmation of Aboriginality, just because my family were sort of disconnected. So that was a major barrier. I know Western have changed the whole process now, so it wouldn't be a barrier right now."</i> (Lizard)
Cultural Safety & Senior Indigenous Leadership	<i>"I feel safer with this leadership team"</i> (Survey Respondent)
	<i>"My last position was definitely not culturally inclusive. It had a high cultural load and I was very tired and burnt out. So, it was definitely a very big change to come into a space that was so culturally welcoming and so culturally safe as well."</i> (Lyrebird)
	<i>"[The Indigenous Strategy and/or Indigenous portfolio has] made me feel very proud."</i> (Survey respondent)
Visible Indigenous Excellence & Recognition Changing Culture	<i>"The Vice-Chancellor's Scholarships and Indigenous Teaching and Learning Awards... we've actually, as a result of the Strategy, even had that added in at a School level. So that's definitely changing culture, seeing more opportunities for staff in terms of Indigenous recognition, scholarships and awards. [...] That fits in with the seventh strategy of Cultural Viability. Like in terms of just actually having names and Acknowledgement of Country and Indigenous awards, it's just meaning that our culture is being intertwined, and part of everyday life at Western Sydney University. There's definite improvement in that and it would be great to keep going with that. The First Peoples Walk at Kingswood and the plans for it to happen at Campbelltown are fantastic."</i> (Milla)
	<i>"It's really important that we weave our culture and our way of doing things and our visibility in everyday practice. And so, doing Acknowledgement of Country is something that is now more acceptable, it's more expected. And I think that doing little things like that are really important."</i> (Milla)
	<i>"Cultural viability and knowledge."</i> (Survey Respondent)
	<i>"Increased Indigenous voice at the university."</i> (Survey Respondent)
	<i>"The achievements of this strategy have enabled me to view my own roles and responsibilities more strategically. I feel more confident to be reasonably selective about the projects/activities I agree to participate in and less pressured to say yes to all requests for my time, knowledge and/or advice."</i> (Survey respondent)
Figurative and Physical Place-Making	<i>"I'm looking at that particular landscaped area that was specifically designed and made in recognition of the Country we're on, and the Elders that are part of the University were involved in the creation of it, and their voices are part of it. I just feel so fortunate that I am sitting in an office and I'm looking at that space. And when I got here this morning, there was a family of kangaroo, two adults and two bubs, on that space because it's been planted with natives. Oh my gosh, that's a blessing."</i> (Olive)
	<i>"Securing funding for the Indigenous Centre of Excellence is extraordinary which has captured the imagination of the wider university and is changing the way the university thinks and acts on matters such as building on Country, procurement and Indigenous governance."</i> (Survey respondent)
	<i>"Each [of these changes] is an important aspect that assists in bringing Indigenous staff, students and communities into [various] levels and arenas of the university."</i> (Survey Respondent)

Community, Connection and Cultural Safety | Fostering Inclusion and Belonging

For many, ODVCIL's active and regular efforts to bring staff together across all levels of seniority had an important community-fostering effect. Indigenous staff credit ODVCIL's senior leaders for increased feelings of support, encouragement, and connectedness (Table 50). Staff were strengthened by ODVCIL's all-embracing leadership approach, which produced an inclusive workplace culture within the portfolio, a feeling of belonging at WSU, and a feeling of 'family' among Indigenous staff.

Table 50. Impact: Senior Leadership, Fostering Community, Belonging and Inclusion

Senior Leadership: Fostering Community, Belonging and Inclusion	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Senior Leadership: Building Community	<i>"Bringing the staff together. Although I believe there has been buy in across the University from Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff as well as external stakeholders. I think the greatest achievement that has grounded all other elements of the Strategy has been in bringing Indigenous staff together, we are a more unified, united and collegial team (across the whole University) that work together for the betterment of our Indigenous University community, and broader Indigenous communities."</i> (Survey Respondent)
	<i>"It has been a welcomed impact/change to my time as an Indigenous employee at Western. Before [the appointment of DVCIL] Indigenous units across Western were very separate and did not collaborate, Indigenous staff did not come together. Now we have a great Indigenous staff network, different Indigenous units are encouraged to collaborate, I have a positive experience most of the time at work when we get together for Indigenous-focused days that is always a great time. I feel as though I have joined another family by working in an identified position at Western, I really enjoy it!"</i> (Survey Respondent)
	<i>"I love being part of such a dynamic environment where all our Indigenous staff are pulling together under terrific leadership."</i> (Survey Respondent)

	<p>"I feel more supported in my role. There are more avenues to pursue Indigenous matters within my role with the backing from senior management and university priorities." (Survey Respondent)</p> <p>"I think the Indigenous Leadership at WSU has brought our community together providing more ways to connect and learn from each other. It's made me want to be more involved and excited to be here." (Survey Respondent)</p> <p>"DVCIL runs an Indigenous Staff Conference, [they] run Christmas events [...] There's staff networking... and that means that everyone from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership to the new trainees can at least two or three times a year be in the same room together." (Wattle)</p>
Senior Leadership: Fostering Inclusion and Belonging	<p>"One of the things that DVCIL does, and that [the] team does, is they hold different sorts of networking events for the whole Indigenous staff to get together and to sort of share what they're doing in their teams and what they've been achieving [...], just sort of having a yarn with each other about what we've been doing in art areas. [...] I've gained a lot of connections through those networking events with the whole Indigenous staff team at Western." (Penguin)</p> <p>"[Previously] I felt really isolated. And I think [...] having the Indigenous Staff Network as well as the Indigenous Research Network created points of contact for me. And, y'know, even research days, like in Research Week, where just coming together has created, I guess, y'know, a little community for me at uni and [where] I got to know most of that Aboriginal staff at uni." (Milla)</p> <p>"We're a group with a common goal. [...] And we just do it together. Even the new ones [...] they just want to be part of, y'know, a community team." (Traveller)</p> <p>"I feel like I've landed on my feet in a lot of ways I'm home. I feel like I'm home. Because I can just be me. You know, I don't feel like I have to put any special airs and graces or particular things." (Olive)</p> <p>"Everyone wants to feel a sense of belonging, right? I feel like we're shining a light on how it's done. And not just 'this is how it's done because we're Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander', but 'this is how it's done' because we're people and we care." (Olive)</p> <p>"I think what's different here is the inclusiveness of the Indigenous portfolio is probably stronger than at [my previous university workplace]." (Wattle)</p> <p>"I feel like with these changes from the DVCIL, I feel it every day. I feel included, I feel a lot more supported, I feel a lot more encouraged. And also, it's very easy because I know all Indigenous staff now. I can easily reach out or email or call anyone say, 'Hey, can you help me with this?' Or 'Hey, do you know this?' And before the DVCIL was on board, it wasn't like that at all. I didn't even know half the Indigenous staff. But now, y'know, we're all family. Like we're all mob. It's so easy. I can easily reach out to an academic now. Y'know, it's like: 'Hey [...] I can't find this info...'; or, 'Can you send someone across?', or 'Who's the best person to chat to?'. And it's all just so supportive. And it's a network, a big network." (Lizard)</p> <p>"I haven't had really a negative experience since I've been here at University. Everybody has been very welcoming, especially the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in the Indigenous unit. It's like walking into a room and walking into a giant hug. [...] Since I started, y'know, there's always somebody there if you need help. People just come out of the woodwork and say, 'Oh, yeah, I know who you are'. [...] It's just been a really, really positive experience." (Dyarrowunang)</p> <p>"I think the biggest support is the management here. [...] Here, the managers care, y'know. The managers support, the managers encourage. [...] I know sound probably cliché or whatever, but it feels like Indigenous family here at work. [...] You feel the strength from it." (Lizard)</p>

Collaborators connected the building of an Indigenous community at WSU to the breaking down of institutional barriers (Table 51). In particular, collaborators felt a greater ability to connect through culture when traditional institutional hierarchical structures were reinvented with and by inclusive, culture-centred Indigenous leadership.

Table 51. Impact: Dismantling Hierarchy

Senior Leadership: Dismantling Hierarchy	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Senior Leadership: Dismantling Institutional Hierarchies	<p>"I feel like at university, everything's really hierarchy based. And that if you knew someone who was a Professor or you know someone who was in [a senior position], then you'd just be like, 'Wow, you know them!'. And of course, now I know them, y'know, and there just seems to be less of that kind of hierarchy and people are genuine no matter what their positions are and they're relational and I love that." (Milla)</p> <p>"Seeing [DVCIL at Indigenous networking events], seeing her team there, seeing the Executives there that make these bigger decisions, having them at these events where we're... y'know, maybe we're just sitting around, eating some food together, like having a yarn... I think it takes down those barriers that might be there if, y'know, they were sort of locked away in an office and we never saw them, never really spoke to them. But [...] they come in, y'know, we talk to each other about what they've been doing for us, what they've been doing for our students, and it's very good to see, y'know, that we can all share these accomplishments and, y'know, build upon our cultural experience." (Penguin)</p> <p>"I think it's very important to not have that sort of hierarchy, because it makes it so much easier to connect with everyone. And it makes it a lot better to actually want to work with each other and to want to share all of this knowledge." (Penguin)</p> <p>"I was on the Parra South campus [recently] in the Chancellery [...] and I could hear fellow Indigenous colleagues laughing. And I was like, wow, to hear that in... y'know... the ivory tower and in the white space is really cool, to know that our people are happy." (Possum)</p>

Indigenous Excellence | Employment Stability and Limitless Possibilities

Indigenous staff detail the positive personal and professional impacts of *Strategy* implementation for career development and progression: active personal, professional and cultural mentorship, proactive manager support, and targeted development has provided safety and stability to grow and has spurred progression beyond personal expectations (Table 52).

Table 52. Impact: Employment Stability and Career Progression

Employment Stability and Career Progression	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Active Support: Mentorship, Development and Expanded Possibilities	<i>"I think what they're very supportive in ensuring that whatever we want to do, we can kind of do like, if that's going and doing uni ourselves, like, they're very supportive in that aspect. They give a lot of leniency to making sure that staff are supported in all of the aspects that they need to be." (Amber)</i>
	<i>"They do so much. There's training, there's forums, there's networking things, there's Indigenous leadership summits, there's... everything! There's online training, I can pick whatever training I want to do, I can pick conferences I want to go to... [...] I don't think there's anything that Western can realistically do any more than what they're doing. [...] I can't even think of something extra I'd want them to do because they already do so much." (Lizard)</i>
	<i>"Senior staff are looking at the other academic and professional staff and talking to them about what's next. They're kind of looking at [academic] staff going, 'it's time you went for promotion' [or for] the professional staff, 'you probably should go to that conference'. 'What about that grant?', y'know, all of that kind of thing. So, there's a really strongly collaborative and collective, 'everyone working together' kind of ethos here that I think would probably be pretty rare across the sector." (Wattle)</i>
	<i>"I was at an event – it must have been a research event or something – just this year. And I remember sitting there having lunch and talking, and somebody said to me: 'You know, you should be applying for a promotion'. And the next thing I know someone at Professor level is like, 'You come to me, and I'll give you advice, and I'll walk you through that'. And that is just so important." (Milla)</i>
	<i>"Recently, I have experienced people, Mob, going 'I actually am going to invite you to be part of something that's going to help you along the way. And that's happened more than once to me. [...] And it's not tokenistic at all. It's actually things where my skills are valued and needed, but where they could very easily have been overlooked.'" (Milla)</i>
	<i>"I think support-wise, I think of just a lot of the people so far at Western have been great, just having good mentors within the business – people who are in positions that I'd want to be in one day and that was very willing to give advice and support and feeling comfortable to go to them if I have a question, or feeling comfortable to say 'maybe I'm a bit out of my depth here' or that sort of thing, that's been a really good support for me at Western. [...] And some of my questions are silly sometimes, but it's nice when you're not made to feel silly when you ask them. [...] I've never been made to feel silly here, compared to other places." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"Honestly, just the way [my Indigenous senior manager] approaches us as people, it's a huge thing. [They] don't consider us [their] employees necessarily, but [they] actually care. [They are] just a beautiful human being, and [they] have your interests first and foremost, most of the time. [They] have goals and plans for everybody. [They] just want to see you succeed, like [their] intentions are pure." (Amber)</i>
	<i>"And [that mentorship is] necessary. And its ongoing. And it's not just professional mentorship either, it's cultural mentorship, it's personal mentorship, checking in on ya, and sorry business... doing like the whole... it's good having people around you to be able to build your networks to get where you need to be to navigate the system." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"For me, one of the best supports has been the mentorship. [Where I come from] we didn't have any professionals as a family, I didn't have anyone that was educated around me. And then entering the workforce and having people that were Aboriginal, were highly educated, were serious about their work commitments and their pursuits and passions, was inspiring. Because growing up, it was only me. It was only me that was dedicated. And I was... not lost or confused... it was lonely. And now I'm in a position where I am bottom of the bottom, in the best way possible. I am surrounded by people who are doing amazing work, and the work that I want to do." (Magpie)</i>
Aspirations Met and Exceeded	<i>"Wow, with all the opportunities here and the development that I've been able to get and the growth and the progression and the experience. It's put me in a prime position to apply for these new sorts of positions and positions that I never thought I would [...] I'm already beyond where I wanted to get. [...] It's way beyond my expectations, to be honest." (Lizard)</i>
	<i>"I've had a career that I couldn't possibly have imagined. [...] I've worked really hard, I've had opportunities, and I've had people champion me, and I think that's been key. I can think of various people who have made sure that I had opportunities, who gave me advice, who were interested enough in my career development to put opportunities in my way, and people who still do." (Wattle)</i>
	<i>"I feel supported, nurtured and my career fostered at WSU." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"The Indigenous Strategy has majorly impacted my experience of working at WSU as I have been employed since starting at WSU as a student which gives me the great opportunity to gain knowledge and a strong education within my future career goals whilst becoming financially stable which contributes to supporting my family which I will always be grateful for." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"[The Strategy] is how I obtained my position within [my team]. Having engagement project officers is imperative to actively engage potential students." (Survey respondent)</i>

	<p><i>"I'm really fortunate now because I do have a permanent position. [...] What I really, really wanted, was to have a permanent position where I knew that I had a sound income, consistent income, and then I could just be here and grow, and be part of it. And not be: 'Okay, in three years time, I'll have to find something else, and then I've gotta do this...'. I wanted some stability. And I feel like I've got that. It took me a while to get there, but I've got that. And I feel that I've still got a long way to go, I've got a lot to give yet. [...] I don't feel like I'm done. There's more growing and learning and adventures to go. (Olive)</i></p>
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For many, WSU is encompassing of a breadth of aspirations, with exciting, almost-limitless possibilities (Table 53).

Table 53. Impact: Professional Staff Aspirations

Professional Staff: Future Directions	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Near Limitless Possibilities at WSU	<i>"I'd probably say my career progression has been pretty linear. [...] At Western, I would say my career progression has been and hopefully will continue to be very much mentored throughout the whole way. And there is lots of opportunities to go forth into... [...] through that mentorship and support... Who knows, in five years' time I might be looking back in a role that's not even existing yet, so it is exciting to see what the future looks like." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"I think definitely working with the uni and working in [my] role has showed me a lot more options that are available in the uni but also all the opportunities that are out there. [...] I think, growing up I didn't know that there were many options out there, I didn't know that there was like this wide span of things that I could do, and I thought I was very limited with what I could do. But now working with the uni and seeing all these... not just seeing all the different degrees that the uni has but also seeing all the different sectors that the uni has and all the different work that we're doing, whether that's in [my department] or in the Executive team or [elsewhere], there's so many different areas in the uni and we're all working to achieve all of these big goals and dreams that we have as a uni and goals and cultural things that we want to achieve in my team." (Penguin)</i>
	<i>"I do think Western has the career path that I would eventually like to take, and the opportunity there. Seeing all the different pathways, seeing other people move upwards or across-ways is always nice to see. And I think also the opportunities for... I think I've seen like the Vice-Chancellor's professional sponsorship, so you can learn whilst on the job and do that sort of thing. And I think also being surrounded by other people... one of my colleagues has completed their Masters while working here. Yeah, so I feel like there's a lot of opportunity and that I could have a very interesting career that could take me anywhere." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I agree. I don't even know what my career aspirations are, but I am sure there will be something at Western. There are plenty of opportunities at Western. What a problem to have, I guess... there's so many pathways that I don't know which one to take. But yeah... I'm sure I'll work it out." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"Since I have been at Western, I've been given so many opportunities to get more experience to grow to develop. And I feel like there's so many opportunities for hard working Indigenous staff here, like you can sort of keep climbing up and climbing up. And I feel like there's sort of no limit to the amount of the different opportunities and the different positions that we can sort of get into or come from." (Lizard)</i>
	<i>"I do feel positive and excited for the future. I feel for me personally at Western there is a lot of opportunity for growth, for learning. And, y'know, with everything that's in the plan for the future with the Indigenous Centre for Excellence, I feel like there is just so much more opportunity to expand in the future and hopefully have a good career progression." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I now have a greater understanding of the academic and career progressions that can be taken at Western. The achievements at Western are visible and as a young person, this opens my eyes and empowers me to aspire towards leadership positions in the portfolio." (Survey respondent)</i>

However, some professionals feel structurally limited by a lack of career pathways beyond their identified role (Table 54).

Table 54. Area for Improvement: Professional Staff Limitations

Professional Staff: Limitations	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Structural Career Limitations for Professional Staff	<i>"[My current unit] is not able to provide a sort of fulfilling workplace where I can feel good about what we've done at the end of the day. I need work ethic. [...] I've sort of reached my potential in this role. [...] Not at Western Sydney Uni, but I don't think that at least in my own team there are those opportunities to grow, and so I sort of feel like if I want more experience, if I want to make more of an impact, I have to go somewhere else. [...] If I wanted to go elsewhere in my career, like if I didn't explicitly want to be in [the area that I am in] then yes, at Western, I feel like there are lots of opportunities there. [...] But in terms of what I want to do... without sounding sad or dramatic, what I want I cannot get here." (Eel)</i>
	<i>"For me, I've been nothing but supported and encouraged, and my progression itself has been one that's natural and made sense for me to end up where I've ended up. I'm doing something I love. But it's the</i>

	<i>second time I've entered a professional position where there's nowhere to move up anymore, if I want an identified position. So, there's only ever a moving across from here. I understand it's going to be limited. It would be nice to know there are options for me to progress into a position that is an identified position." (Magpie)</i>
	<i>"We have started to build our senior professional staff, but I think we could use a lot more across the university. We could be thinking about how we build out to provide, y'know, career pathways for professional staff." (Wattle)</i>

University Culture | On the Precipice of Culture Change

Strategy and leadership embedment has engendered an increasingly warm, inclusive and culturally safe organisational culture that values Indigenous work and priorities and holds capacity for the difficult conversations that drive progress forward (Table 55). Collaborators are confident that WSU is committed to Indigenous equity (see Outcomes, Table 39) and describe significant improvements over the Cygnet Era.

Table 55. Impact: Culturally Inclusive Workplace Culture

University Culture: Culturally Inclusive	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Warm and Inclusive Workplace Culture	<i>"What I will say about the university and the university's culture is, um... good. It's really great, honestly. I was so welcomely, really surprised when I came to Western Sydney Uni. I've worked in unis before and the uni says 'We care, we care'. And y'know, you sort of, like... believe it a little bit. But I feel like when Western Sydney University says they care about students and staff, they genuinely mean it. I feel like there's a lot they do to back that up." (Eel)</i>
	<i>"I feel like my opinion is actively sought and appreciated. At Western, I feel like I matter. I am given opportunities to contribute and I feel valued and respected when I do." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"I think for me, [I would describe the University's culture as] yellow in terms of talking about culture. I just feel like it's the culture of potentially my team, but also the wider kind of cohort of staff at Western is pretty safe, and recently, kind of a bit more bubbly." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"I certainly feel like the culture is very strong, and in terms of Indigenous matters very strong. [...] Sometimes there are battles, but by and large, those battles can be had. Those conversations and discussions can be had." (Wattle)</i>
	<i>"When I first started [at WSU], I don't know that I was fully aware of the culture of the university. But having now been [...] in a position where I'm not just sitting in an Indigenous space, but in a department where I am a minority person - for me, the culture of the university is very positive." (Olive)</i>
	<i>"When I came here, there was clear communication from our higher up [Indigenous] leadership team that Indigenous staff and students weren't to be approached about their opinions on the Voice. Like, it was a very safe space to come to, where I didn't feel the anxiety of if I walked past another group of people to go to the kitchen to make a tea and get asked five more questions... yeah, so that was really nice to come to for me." (Lyrebird)</i>
Workplace Culture Change	<i>"With the rest of the University, over the last 12 months, the Indigenous culture I've seen and the way that has evolved... I mean we've got the Indigenous Strategy, we've got the Decadal Strategy, we've got other more niche things like the White Paper. [...] There's so much happening in the Indigenous space. And I feel like talking with other people at the University, they're so keen. Probably more keen than we are, y'know?!" (Eel)</i>
	<i>"Over the course of the last 8, 9 years, there's just been such a change in the direction that the University's going and the statements that they're trying to make and the work that we are doing. It's such a major cultural shift. It's the first time that I've felt like... that 'the suits' and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander... I feel like it's taken seriously. And because it's such a new space, y'know, we are the first that are doing this... that shift has just been so dramatic and I'm so excited to be a part of it as well." (Magpie)</i>
	<i>"I think our culture since I started has drastically improved." (Amber)</i>
	<i>"I would categorise our current state as orange. Using the traffic light analogy, where red indicates a critical condition and green signifies an optimal state, orange represents significant progress and resilience. While red suggests we are in a danger zone, orange indicates we have overcome numerous challenges but still have considerable room for improvement before reaching green, the desired state. Orange symbolizes a midpoint with a positive outlook and potential for growth. Although we haven't achieved the green status yet, the current cultural climate has a warm and encouraging feel." (Crow)</i>

Indigenous staff also described positive experiences of support and engagement with non-Indigenous colleagues (Table 56).

Table 56. Impact: Support and Engagement from Non-Indigenous Colleagues

Support and Engagement from Non-Indigenous Colleagues	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Support and Engagement from Non-Indigenous Colleagues	<i>"In a University where I feel very well supported, where I think we are very well supported, I was still surprised by the strength of the respect and the sort of detail of the ways that the Committee were considering matters... the ways in which non-Indigenous people were able to speak confidently, but not arrogantly, in support of Indigenous people." (Wattle)</i>
	<i>"My team show so much dedication towards our people and also myself. They are respectful, they ask questions and they give me the opportunity to have a voice." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I love working along[side] non-Indigenous colleagues for both Indigenous-specific and non-Indigenous-specific work." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"With the rest of the University, over the last 12 months, the Indigenous culture I've seen and the way that has evolved... I mean we've got the Indigenous Strategy, we've got the Decadal Strategy, we've got other more niche things like the White Paper. [...] There's so much happening in the Indigenous space. And I feel like talking with other people at the University, they're so keen. Probably more keen than we are, y'know?!" (Eel)</i>
	<i>"When I got the Strategic Plan, I said 'We don't need to do anything. Y'know? We're doing a lot already. [...] My previous Dean [...] was really focused, really good, really clever, really understanding with Indigenous issues and privileged our voice.'" (Rosebud)</i>
	<i>"I feel strongly supported by the Manager of my School and know that I can always go to them for advice/support. [...] I feel positive about my position in this School and know who to go to for constructive advice and support." (Survey response)</i>
	<i>"In my School, I feel I am supported and encouraged, however I can't honestly say that this is the direct result of an overarching interest or commitment to accelerating Indigenous representation, voices and knowledges across the university from a majority of non-Indigenous colleagues." (Survey respondent)</i>
<i>"I've got this young [student], [their] father is Aboriginal and [their] mother is Asian. And [they] said to me at the interview, 'I don't fit in anywhere. I don't fit in anywhere. I don't fit with Aboriginal people, I don't fit with white people.' And I said, 'You're going to fit in here. We have so much diversity in our School and we're going to love you and take care of you.'" (Rosebud)</i>	

However, some staff had mixed experiences in School-based positions. Moreover, while some collaborators working in identified positions within Indigenous-majority teams found valuable access to culture and community connections, others who experienced more individualistic identified-team cultures felt the active sharing of culture was lacking (Table 57).

Table 57. Area for Improvement: Mixed Experiences in Identified Roles

Areas for Improvement: Mixed Experiences in Identified Roles	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Identified Roles: Strong Connection to Culture and Support	<i>"I guess probably orange, I would say. I think just because it is a safe space within the team, but also, it's like a very strong, powerful group of people, which I associate with happiness but also strength, the colour orange." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I thought of black when I thought of my Division. I associate black with taking things seriously, and it's almost like a passion at it's very essence, y'know? And also, because it's working towards the unknown, because it's such a new space that I'm working with, and such an exciting space as well. And, honestly, I also think it's suit and tie... I have worn suit and tie out there in the office as well in the past... (laughs)" (Magpie)</i>
	<i>"I think coming into this position where it is an Indigenous-identified position and all the work that we do is centred around Indigenous people - whether that's, y'know, younger people, or whether that's mature age students wanting to come in - a lot of the work is centred around Indigenous communities. And it was definitely a change coming into this position, having that cultural focus, especially being someone who's not grown up with my culture... when I was younger, I was very disconnected from it, and so having the opportunities to come into this role and, y'know, learn more about my culture as well as being able to share that knowledge while learning... Yeah, I think it's definitely been very important to me." (Penguin)</i>
	<i>"I've been able to learn a lot about my culture and even about myself and my cultural identity through this position and through Western. So, I think that's been very useful and very nice for me, because then I can go back and can share with my family who has also felt that disconnect from culture. And maybe they don't have the opportunities to go and learn, where I've been given this opportunity. So, now I can go back and I can share it with my family and community. [...] It's great to have that sort of cultural connection and to be able to talk about it and gain more knowledge." (Penguin)</i>

Identified Roles: Lack of Connection to Culture and Support	<i>"Y'know, in terms of Indigenous culture, I feel like I see so much more Indigenous culture outside of my own regular day to day life. [...] I would honestly have thought that being in an identified team there would be more talk of culture and that. But, I don't know, maybe it's because it's just a regular thing that doesn't need to be explicitly stated, or maybe there's other reasons. But I feel like it's never talk about. Like, ever. I remember feeling like it's just a little bit, like, disappointing. But, y'know, I, sure there's more to it than that. Like, it's just like our... whatever, y'know, that's all of us, we don't need to keep talking about who we are every single day and that." (Eel)</i>
	<i>"Yeah, but I feel like [for] the rest of the team [...] it's just a bit of paperwork, like, we don't really have to think about that. [...] I feel like [the Strategy is] not really being appreciated for what it is. [...] Outside of my team [...] going to all the events, that's where things are being talked about. And it's not being talked about anywhere else. [...] Within my own space, it feels a bit like there are gaps that could be acknowledged and filled." (Eel)</i>
	<i>"The traffic light system is very much a bright and flashing red for our team. It's a strong indication of dysfunction. Within the first month, I questioned my decision to join, and considered resignation due to the intense team politics & lateral violence. There was a considerable amount of internal conflict, and I felt that our team lacked mutual respect, operating more as individuals rather than a cohesive unit. This individualistic approach is counterproductive. While I personally focus on the needs of my community and how best to serve them, not everyone on the team shares this collective mind-set. The prevailing attitude seems to be 'every man for himself,' which undermines the collaborative spirit necessary for our success." (Crow)</i>
	<i>"I am often not consulted about decisions that affect me as a *staff member* I am not recognised for my contributions as a *staff member*." (Survey respondent)</i>

Areas for Improvement | Achieving Sustainable Workplace Change

While Indigenous staff recognise an improving workplace culture at WSU, four areas for improvement were identified to further and/or sustain workplace change.

Area for Improvement: Colonial Load

Indigenous staff raised concerns about colonial load, where discussions echoed with refrains of “exhausting”, “tiring” and concerns of “burnout” (Table 58, see also Outcomes, Table 43). Collaborators connected increased colonial load to contexts of underrepresentation, the dominance of colonial or ‘white’ norms across institutional and academic structures, and lack of cultural competence.

Table 58. Area for Improvement: Colonial Load

Area for Improvement: Colonial Load	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Colonial Load	<i>"Western is an amazing place to work but I do feel that cultural load still exists here. I see Indigenous employees being called upon all the time to give advice, input and most frustratingly - to give Welcomes to Country. Just because I'm Indigenous it doesn't mean I can/should/will give a Welcome." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I personally have only been called on a few times but there is another staff member who is called on for everything just because she is Indigenous. It is not an Indigenous support role but she [is] constantly given an extra workload because she is Indigenous." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"It's not necessarily a Western [Sydney University] thing... I feel like there needs to be more recognition (not necessarily remuneration) for the additional black load that staff have. Whether it's community expectations or institutional expectations [...] I not only have a responsibility to my students and to the School but I have one to community and if I do a really shit job they're going to kick my butt. So... yeah... I feel like there needs to be more recognition [...] there needs to be more of an understanding of the black load that we all have." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"[Where] you actually have people within the university that are in particular roles, where they're actually being asked to carry cultural load, then let's recognise it in a work plan." (Milla)</i>
Colonial Overload: Underrepresentation, Colonial Norms, and Cultural Incompetence	<i>"In the same way of having a diversity of opinions is really good, having a diversity of people would be good. If I was one Indigenous person in a team of Indigenous people giving my input, yeah absolutely that makes sense. But I feel like having to speak on behalf of a whole group of people... it's exhausting. Like, there's obviously [an] elephant in the room, or a sort of cultural burden there. Just talking about people or on behalf of other people at all. Their experience... even about anything non-culture related... if you had that burden of trying to give the views of a whole bunch of people, as opposed to asking those whole bunch of people... yeah, it's just exhausting. It's a lot of effort, right? I feel like that's a bit of a trap. And you hear it a lot, right? You hear a lot about that cultural burden. You say what it is, it's that additional responsibility, it's that additional workload, the additional effort, pressure, often with no additional compensation. Just because of who you identify as, right?" (Eel)</i>

	<p>"You want to wade in and really... via the right arm-depth, so you can manage it, not just do a dive at the deep end. Because you're gonna get overwhelmed and engulfed by all of the expectations and, 'Oh my God, you're Aboriginal, you can help us do this, you can write that...' Y'know, as much as I'd love to dive in at the deep end, I have to get in and make my way and navigate to where's the right space. And [determine] where I can be most effective and how I can be most effective, because we all have a limited capacity. And I don't want to burn out and then be useless to everybody." (Olive)</p>
	<p>"A lot of us outside of work are trying to find that connection and culture, and we do then bring that into work. And it's not an easy journey, it's tiring, it's hard and it's emotional. So, it [takes] a lot to get there." (Lyrebird)</p>
	<p>"As an Aboriginal person I bring my whole self to the job. You can't cut out the Aboriginal side of being me. So, I want to share all of that, but I find it difficult because you often have to meet white parameters. And I also need to recognise that I'm also writing this to be published for a white institution. So, it's like, who am I to hand over my stories and my peoples' stories, my language... it's complex to find your voice and try and do it the write ways as a young black [...] academic in a white space, when you want to do it the right way. [...] I want to protect those knowledges, and it's complex. I feel very divided at this point. I'm writing for my community and that's my research purpose, so that my Aunties and Uncles can pick it up and read it, and be like, 'yeah, that's what we need for our young people', but then you've got to write to meet white parameters... it's a complex space. [...] I'm very much still trying to figure out how to strengthen my voice." (Possum)</p>

Area for Improvement: More Indigenous Staff

While Indigenous employment targets and recent staff increases were cited as significant *Strategy* achievements, Yarns illustrated an ongoing need to “strengthen the Indigenous staff network” via the appointing of more Indigenous staff (Table 59).

Table 59. Area for Improvement: More Indigenous Employment and Governance Roles

Areas for Improvement: More Indigenous Employment & Governance Roles	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: More Indigenous Staff across WSU	<p>"It's the broader university where, and in particularly the Schools [...] there are not enough Indigenous academics in the Schools, y'know, and so we really, yeah, we need to have more Indigenous academics working here. And people probably still do need to realise that they don't even have to be identified jobs, y'know? An Indigenous academic can often do the same job anyone else can do and they bring all that additional value." (Wattle)</p>
	<p>"The biggest challenge in my School, in my department that I'm in now, is the lack of Indigenous people – which I feel like is probably a universal issue [...] You know, there's a lot of work to be done and there's only so many of us at the moment." (Olive)</p>
	<p>"[One area for improvement] is for Indigenous staff who are the sole Indigenous employee on a non-Indigenous team. A few of those sorts of positions could be bolstered or, y'know, adding a few more Indigenous positions in there or, y'know, just grow that network... That's what I'd like to see, just extending the network, growing the network, adding more support for the staff." (Lizard)</p>
	<p>"I suppose the only [improvement] would be for the University to maybe create more identified positions. That would be a good thing. But that's something for the rest of the university [beyond ILD to do]." (Dyarrawunang)</p>
Area for Improvement: More School-based Indigenous Governance	<p>"Another gap is that the Strategy at a School level is dependent on the Dean. And if you've got a Dean who is extremely passionate and supportive, that's fantastic. But if you've got a Dean who is maybe not that way inclined, then they're going to do what they're mandated or required to do." (Milla)</p>
	<p>"I would love to see our School have an Associate Dean in Indigenous Leadership, where that person is able to focus their attention in terms of helping programs [...] that can oversee the ongoing professional development of all of the staff that sit within the School. [...] I'd love to see every School have an Associate Dean in Indigenous Learning and Teaching or Education, or whatever you want to call it. That that would be amazing to have that at every School level. Because otherwise it falls on the Indigenous academics in that School, who aren't given the workload, or the actual time or acknowledgement of doing that. They're just expected to carry that cultural load on whatever pay scale and whatever role they're actually doing." (Milla)</p>
	<p>"Deans still hold the power. Whereas if you create more positions and you have an Associate Dean who says [theoretically], 'No, I'm going to voice this. And I report to [PVC Education] as well as to you, my Dean'. It gives them that power. [...] It's one strategy that could potentially level the playing field even more." (Milla)</p>

Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement with Indigenous Priorities

While some Indigenous staff report strong feeling that they are respected, supported and encouraged by non-Indigenous colleagues, others attribute this support to “only a handful”, lamenting that Indigenous colleagues continue to carry the load for progressing Indigenous equity

(Table 60). Several comments articulate explicit ambivalence, especially where making distinctions between ‘support’ for Indigenous equity and its ‘practice’ (see also Outcomes, Table 42).

Table 60. Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement

Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Engagement with Indigenous Priorities	<i>"I feel there are 'pockets' in which interest, engagement and investment in Indigenous knowledges and cultures is genuinely expressed and demonstrated and I believe that these 'pockets' have been growing larger and attracting attention in areas that Indigenous staff and knowledges were previously (last five-six years) not engaged." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"For the most part, there appears to be support from non-Indigenous colleagues, but the action varies from inaction, to piecemeal, to some action, to very active. [It] does not seem that everyone practices the same within Schools/Centres or across the University. In my experience, I have worked with exceptional colleagues who are active contributors who want to advance the Indigenous priorities, and I have also experienced racism and discrimination from other colleagues. Then there are those that do not really do anything but at least do not cause harm." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I know that there can be a lot of push back from other sectors and Schools. They don't want to have to deal with that learning or the perceived issues of having an Indigenous trainee, or going that extra step to help them, to teach them. [...] Obviously, [ODVCIL] is trying really hard to have the trainees and to offer that, but then it's on [our] colleagues to push those Schools to say like, 'no it'll be worth it.' But they shouldn't have to do that." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I have had both positive and disappointing experiences with staff members. I have had staff who have demonstrated a committed to understanding and filling those gaps in their knowledge, going above and beyond to adhere and/or implement the Indigenous Strategy. I have had experiences where non-Indigenous colleagues demonstrated a lack of dedication to things like reporting on the successes, or implementing components of the Strategy. In good faith, I trust they were swamped with work and unable to provide their undivided attention to not just this matter, but other non-Indigenous matters too, but it is certainly disheartening and does leave one wondering whether they take the matters seriously." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I am not lumping all non-Indigenous staff together. We have extremely considerate and open-minded colleagues here at Western, however there are staff who do not align with these four statements." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"There are some colleagues who are highly active and great contributors, but this is only a handful. There are plenty of colleagues who are not and plead the 'I don't know how' case. [...]" (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I think that there is a feel-good sentiment among many staff. I also see that in some areas of the University there is distinct inaction. The commitment to the Indigenous portfolio largely rests on the labour of Indigenous employees, it is a shame that some areas of the University view the Indigenous portfolio and its strategies as an opt-in rather than action that they do need to undertake." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"I am aware of all these initiatives as an Indigenous academic, however, I feel that many of my non-Indigenous colleagues are not fully aware or invested." (Survey Respondent)</i>
	<i>"Culture events only celebrated by the Indigenous not the majority of university staff, especially lecturers. There is little to no cultural safety at WSU has been my experience." (Survey Respondent)</i>
<i>"They support equity in principle but not in practice, often because they have a complete lack of understanding of equity and are unwilling to change their ways of working." (Survey respondent)</i>	

Area for Improvement: Cultural Competence

Further discussion identified a lack of sophisticated understanding about when, where and how Indigenous staff should be called upon to contribute Indigenous Knowledge, advice and/or support (Table 61). Staff sought greater competence among non-Indigenous colleagues about Indigenous sociocultural contexts, the diversity of Indigenous cultures, Knowledges, and ways of being, the ‘additional value’ that Indigenous staff bring to their work, and more understanding of the cultural responsibility involved in performing Acknowledgements, Indigenous curriculum, and sharing cultural insights and information.

Table 61: Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Cultural Competence

Areas for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Cultural Competence	
Theme	Sample Feedback
Area for Improvement: Non-Indigenous Staff Lacking Cultural Competence	<i>"[Since I started at WSU] I have met a vast variety of staff (academic and professional) and am learning to better navigate the policies/practices as well as the varied expectations and level of understanding of myself as an Indigenous academic and of Indigenous knowledges and perspectives more broadly." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I'm over-consulted on tokenistic matters, yet under-consulted on the real issues. Perhaps because the answer with these matters is not easy and often a challenge to the status quo." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"Just because I'm Indigenous it doesn't mean I can/should/will give a Welcome. I also find in many meetings or situations that Indigenous people are expected to give an Acknowledgment of Country - I am beginning to find this rude and somewhat offensive that because I am Indigenous that I am expected to perform this Acknowledgement. Requests to acknowledge Country are often dropped on me very short notice or sometimes with no notice at all." (Survey respondent)</i>
	<i>"I think it showed their little understanding about different tribes and clans as well, when [non-Indigenous colleagues] would ask that of me a lot of the time. And I would be, like: 'this [perspective] could be different, I'm off Country, this isn't my land.' Hopefully something sunk in in the end, I don't know." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I can't tell you what Indigenous people in Western Australia do. I'm not an Elder. You know these things about communities and Countries and that, but the term Indigenous is sort of broad already. So, you can't really make that connection, y'know? Like, 'you're a woman so you must know every issue about every woman...' That's not necessarily how it works." (Eel)</i>
Specific Areas of Competence Required	<i>"I think widely if there was more understanding... a lot of Indigenous people don't know their background or their tribe or their family information or, y'know, it changes as time goes on because you find or learn more information. [...] Even sometimes when you think you know the information it can change, and we're not all experts about culture, and there's a lot of us who may have a lot of information or not at all. I think sometimes, especially non-Indigenous people can just expect you to know everything or to have all that information, or... they might ask me how to pronounce something in language, but I'm reading the same word on the page that they are." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"I think there are measures that are being put in place and support structures not just for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members, but education for non-Indigenous that we cannot be the cultural experts to everybody." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"[Another improvement would be] addressing expectations around... like, it's okay for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to not want to share. Even if they know a tonne about their cultural backgrounds, they don't have to feel the pressure to share additional knowledges and whatever." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"There's a paper on it that colleagues at Western Sydney University wrote in the higher education space, and it states that black academics and professionals in tertiary education spaces bring additional attributes, skillsets, knowledges to the table and often are required to do additional roles. And I would like for the university to not only just acknowledge that.. Start by acknowledging that.. For example, our Deputy Vice-Chancellor could go and step into a role across... if you know what I mean... whereas a white academic at the same level couldn't step into her role, because she brings so much more to the table as an Aboriginal person in that role. But it doesn't make her any more competitive, for example, for the Vice-Chancellor's role. But she has all that additional knowledge. [...] We need to be acknowledged. [...] There needs to be space created for celebrating that." (Possum)</i>
	<i>"I think some of that understanding in the wider organisation would be helpful. And I think also that understanding that a lot of Indigenous people do come from a lot of trauma. Not a lot of us come from privileged backgrounds or, like, generational wealth. [...] Not all of us have had good examples of someone who's gone into higher education or been business-focused. A lot of people are focused on healing more than having a career. So that wider understanding would be helpful as well. [...] And [if] we don't have to make them aware... it's tiring doing that too." (Lyrebird)</i>
	<i>"So just having those trainings, or even like you said, those networking events, where they can come and meet people, and we can talk to them about and tell them about what these programs are, and you know, the importance of it, and just giving them a bit more cultural knowledge so they don't make all those assumptions." (Penguin)</i>



FURTHER ACTION: INDIGENOUS STAFF

REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
1.	Western Sydney University's first <i>Indigenous Strategy (2020–2025)</i> aimed to embed Indigenous excellence across the organisation. The next <i>Indigenous Strategy (2026–2030)</i> will secure the University's efforts. Further engagement with Indigenous staff, students and communities will enhance cultural competency and foster strong community ties. Establishing this relationship with community, mainstreaming Indigenous leadership and governance, embedding cultural recognition in workplace practices, place and space, and increasing Indigenous employment with real opportunities to advance within the organisation will establish WSU as the employer of choice for Indigenous people in higher education and across the Greater Western Sydney region.	Develop WSU's second five-year Indigenous Strategy (2026 – 2030) and continue to progress extant Decadal and Research Strategies.	2025	ODVCIL	DVCIL	<i>Indigenous Strategy (2026 – 2030)</i> developed and implemented. Strong Indigenous staff positivity around newly-established workplace culture measures sustained ($\pm 5\%$).
2.	WSU has expressed its commitments to raise Indigenous employment and to ensure Indigenous people take up their rightful place at the centre of decision-making across the University (see <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> , p.7; <i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy</i> , p.9; <i>Indigenous Research Strategy</i> , p.10). While Indigenous employment is steadily increasing, WSU is yet to meet its 2025 target of 3% Indigenous staff representation. Indigenous academic staff employment remains especially	Increase Indigenous employment across WSU, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ developing a dedicated Indigenous Employment Strategy (2026–2030); ▪ expanding the Deadly Talent Register; ▪ targeting identified and non-identified Indigenous recruitment across WSU's Schools, Institutes and Divisions; 	2025 – 2032	ODVCIL & HR	DVCIL & Executive Director HR	WSU Indigenous employment target of 3% representation is met and sustained. <i>Decadal Strategy</i> targets met (min. 150 ongoing and fixed-term Indigenous staff by 2032).



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
	low. More Indigenous employment, leadership and governance is needed to continue progressing equity for Indigenous people across WSU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> establishing an Indigenous Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Scheme. 				At least 3 postdoctoral Indigenous Research Fellows appointed each year across various disciplines.
3.	Indigenous staff report substantial colonial load, with substantial impacts. Colonial load is exacerbated by underrepresentation, the limited engagement by non-Indigenous staff with Indigenous priorities and limited cultural competence among non-Indigenous staff. Local School/Institute/Division contexts should be conscious of colonial load and requests for contributing cultural knowledge or advice should be guided by the self-determination of Indigenous staff within their organisational unit.	Recognise Colonial Load , including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establishing University-wide colonial load provisions, formalised in Enterprise Agreements; including colonial load provisions in academic and professional staff work planning. 	2025	OPC	OPC	Colonial load is formalised in Enterprise Agreements and work planning processes. Indigenous staff report appropriate recognition of and accommodations for colonial load (≥75% agreement).
4.	Indigenous staff demonstrate low agreement that “non-Indigenous staff contribute to advancing Indigenous priorities at WSU” (42%). Yarns elaborated that non-Indigenous staff engagement occurs in “pockets” and ranges from high involvement to inaction.	Incentivise non-Indigenous staff engagement with Indigenous priorities , as per model for <i>Academic Promotions Policy</i> review.	2025 – 2027	Senior Executive Group	Senior Executive Group	Indigenous staff agreement that “non-Indigenous staff contribute to advancing Indigenous priorities at WSU” increases +20%
5.	While Indigenous staff agree that “Indigenous Knowledges and cultures are celebrated” at the University-level (77%), fewer believe that “non-Indigenous colleagues are active in learning about Indigenous Knowledges and cultures” (57%). Increasing cultural competence is connected to reducing colonial load, increasing cultural safety, and increasing	Increase non-Indigenous Staff Cultural Competence , including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementing an online compulsory Indigenous Cultural Competence training module; developing an expanded set of cultural competence training materials for non-Indigenous staff; 	2025 – 2027	SAGE, OED, & ODVCIL	DVCIL, Director OED, SAGE-AL	Indigenous staff report that “non-Indigenous colleagues are active in learning about Indigenous Knowledges and cultures” and that “non-Indigenous staff practice equity for Indigenous staff and students at WSU” (≥75% agreement).



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
	<p>wellbeing, belonging and inclusion for Indigenous staff.</p> <p>WSU's PVC Indigenous Education has drafted Indigenous Cultural Competence online training module and a 2024 SAGE Research Week event focused on engaging non-Indigenous staff in advancing Indigenous priorities at WSU, including by foregrounding good allyship practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ providing Indigenous Research Methodology, Ethics, and Protocol workshops; ▪ more widely promoting Black Lives Matter resources available as valuable materials for non-Indigenous staff to self-educate about Indigenous cultures, Knowledges and ways of being; ▪ including familiarity with WSU's Indigenous webpage in on-boarding processes; ▪ socialising a standard protocol for Acknowledgements of Country in local contexts; ▪ socialising the recording and materials for 2024 event, <i>Indigenous Cultural Safety is Everyone's Responsibility</i> to engage non-Indigenous staff in learning around good allyship practice. 				<p>Indigenous staff reporting that "I am called upon too often to represent or advise on Indigenous matters" decreases (-10%).</p>
6.	<p>Indigenous staff report mixed experiences of manager and collegial support and mixed views about the progressing of Indigenous priorities in local School/Institute/ Division contexts. To broaden the impact of the <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> and associated local Strategies, more accountability is required across local contexts.</p>	<p>Strengthen accountability for Indigenous Strategies in local contexts.</p> <p>Improving accountability should include actions by Executives across the University to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ annually report on local strategy implementation to the Senior Executive Group and Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Board; ▪ annually present at Divisional, School and Institute fora about the 	2025, annually thereafter	School Deans and Institute Directors	School Deans and Institute Directors	<p>Indigenous academic staff are employed across all 13 Schools and Institutes.</p> <p>Indigenous Professoriate Group grows from 8 to 15 senior academic staff.</p> <p>School-based Indigenous staff report that "I am consulted about decision s</p>



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
		<p>progress of Indigenous priorities at local levels;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> map local improvements and identify areas for continuing progress. 				that affect me” and “I am properly recognised for my contributions” (≥75% agreement).
7.	Indigenous professional staff report structural limitations to their advancement at WSU.	<p>Bolster opportunities for professional Indigenous staff career progression and enrichment, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> directing policy and people to support enhanced career progression prospects for Indigenous professional staff, including (culturally safe) secondment opportunities, role shadowing, and/or other pathways for identified staff seeking opportunities across the University in non-identified roles; providing upskilling, training and development aligned with individual professional staff aspirations (within and beyond their existing role, where possible). 	2026 – 2031	ODVCIL & OPC	DVCIL & CPO	Indigenous professional staff job satisfaction and career vision at WSU is monitored, with gaps (± 5%) relative to Indigenous academic and non-Indigenous professional staff identified, strategised and mitigated.
8.	WSU campuses are built on Aboriginal lands and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are at the centre of culture. The continued embedding of cultural recognition and active establishing of community is essential for fostering ‘being’ and belonging, and for promoting collaboration amongst Indigenous staff. The Indigenous Centre of Excellence is a landmark site of cultural	<p>Continue to foster place-making for Indigenous staff, students and community at the University (as per WSU’s <i>Indigenous Futures Decadal Strategy</i>), including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> making Indigenous languages an integral component of all campus planning activities; 	2026 – 2032	ODVCIL & Division Operations & Commercial	DVCIL & VP Operations & Commercial	<p>Indigenous Centre of Excellence is established as a landmark site of cultural recognition, celebration and enrichment at WSU.</p> <p>Indigenous cultural recognition is embedded through languages and</p>



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
	recognition at the University and of the contribution of Indigenous cultures to the Greater Western Sydney region. Given the geographic dispersal of WSU campuses, the University should continue to make active efforts to establish spaces of recognition to bring Indigenous staff together, to celebrate Indigenous cultures and to foster a sense of belonging across all WSU campuses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring all campuses have unique Indigenous spaces that incorporate, celebrate and connect through Indigenous stories, histories and contemporalities. 				spaces of gathering across all campuses at WSU.
9.	While the sample size for casual employees was small ($n=5$), preliminary findings suggest differential experiences for casual Indigenous staff compared with those who are ongoing and fixed-term. Across survey responses, casuals appeared less likely to be engaged with the Indigenous portfolio or to feel a sense of belonging at WSU, more likely to be skeptical of culture change, and less likely to feel protected in local contexts. These signals of low morale and disenfranchisement are consistent with research into casual staff experiences across the Australian higher education sector (see, for example, Barcan, 2019; Standing, 2018), including at WSU (Smith, 2021; Gray <i>et al.</i> , 2019). However, this survey's preliminary findings suggest that Indigenous identity may be intersecting with the conditions of casualised employment to compound marginalisation for this precarious cohort at WSU.	Conduct further research into the perspectives and experiences of casual Indigenous staff , with focus on potential compounding barriers to attraction, retention and progression at WSU.	2026 - 2027	SAGE (research) VC Leadership Group (implementation)	SAGE-AL (research) VC Leadership Group (implementation)	Casual Indigenous staff experiences are monitored, with intersectional barriers identified and addressed. Casual Indigenous staff report comparable feelings of involvement and cultural safety to those of ongoing/fixed-term Indigenous staff and comparable job satisfaction measures to non-Indigenous casual staff, with gaps ($\pm 5\%$) identified, strategised and mitigated.



REF.	RATIONALE	ACTIONS & OUTPUTS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	ACCOUNTABILITY	SUCCESS INDICATORS
10.	Preliminary research raises some concern about cultural competence in policy-making at WSU. Specifically, Indigenous staff observed an insufficient policy structure and some exclusionary practice around parent and carer supports, where policy definitions of “immediate family” and/or “carer” that rely on legislative definitions may be too confining to accommodate Indigenous family structures. Supervisor/manager workplace practices, values, and perspectives appear to be individual and often personalised. Integrating culturally competent and fluid policy and practice is vital for the holistic support of Indigenous staff at WSU.	Conduct an inclusive review of the University’s policy frameworks , with focus on Indigenous cultural considerations and Indigenous equity.	2026 – 2028	SAGE & OED	Director OED, SAGE-AL	WSU policy frameworks are inclusive of Indigenous cultural considerations. Indigenous staff report policy inclusiveness across sample prompts (+20%).
11.	The continued monitoring of workplace experiences and perspectives is essential to advancing equity for Indigenous staff at WSU. The <i>Gathering Insights and Embedding Workplace Improvements</i> research project has established a strong Indigenous-led research approach, affording comprehensive insights into Indigenous staff perspectives on <i>Indigenous Strategy</i> progress and experiences of WSU’s workplace culture.	Indigenous-led mid-point evaluation of <i>Indigenous Strategy (2026 – 2030)</i> , including focus on: colonial load, professional staff advancement, non-Indigenous staff cultural competence and engagement with Indigenous priorities.	2029	SAGE Indigenous Staff SWAG	SAGE Academic Lead	<i>Indigenous Strategy (2026 – 2030)</i> implementation is effectively assessed. Ongoing and arising barriers to Indigenous staff equity at WSU are identified and addressed.