

Cultural principles and guidelines for research and engagement on Ngarrindjeri Country

Are you planning a research project on the lands, waters or living things in Ngarrindjeri Country (Ruwe/Ruwar)? These guidelines provide information and advice about how to engage and encourage involvement by Ngarrindjeri people and contribute towards Ngarrindjeri goals.

Below you will find out how to consult respectfully and meaningfully with Ngarrindjeri when conducting research and monitoring on our Ruwe/Ruwar.

Cultural principles

Ngarrindjeri encourage agencies and their sub-contractors to use the following principles as foundations for research and monitoring work.

- Our lands, our waters, our people, all living things are connected.
- We implore people to respect our Ruwe/Ruwar as it was created in the Creation (Kaldowinyeri).
- The land and waters are a living body. We the Ngarrindjeri people are a part of its existence.
- Because of our knowledge, our inherent rights to our lands and waters, and our cultural spiritual responsibility, we must be recognised as equal partners in Caring for Ruwe/Ruwar.
- For the lands and waters to be healthy Ngarrindjeri must be heard and Ngarrindjeri must speak as Country (Yannarumi).
- We invite all who respect us to join with us in our responsibility and duty to Care for our Ruwe/Ruwar.
- Ngarrindjeri are committed to respecting, maintaining and restoring our Ruwe/Ruwar and ask that all researchers take account of Ngarrindjeri cultural values.
- The terrestrial, marine and freshwater environments are inseparable and should be considered as a whole in all research and monitoring activities.

Guidelines for conducting research and monitoring

The Ngarrindjeri commitment to the future wellbeing of Ruwe/Ruwar requires that all research and monitoring activities adhere to the appropriate cultural protocols and intellectual and cultural property rights.

To gain support and approval from Ngarrindjeri, research and monitoring agencies (and their sub-contractors) must respect our cultural principles and work in partnership with the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA).

We require compliance with the following additional principles:

- Respectful processes, time and support for Ngarrindjeri to Care for Ruwe/Ruwar, which includes caring for people past, present and future.
- Ngarrindjeri actively involved in research and monitoring activities on Ngarrindjeri Ruwe/Ruwar.
- Cultural knowledge and intellectual property protected across Ngarrindjeri engagements with governments and research organisations.
- Ngarrindjeri cultural values integral to all planning and future management arrangements.
- Active Ngarrindjeri participation in planning and future management arrangements through employment, education and training opportunities.

Research partnerships with Ngarrindjeri

Ngarrindjeri have a range of research interests and priorities. The NRA has established a Sea Country (Yarluwar-Ruwe) Program to coordinate all Caring for Ruwe/Ruwar activities. We seek to establish collaborative research partnerships through the NRA Research, Policy and Planning Unit hosted by Flinders University. Central to these partnerships is the goal of delivering outcomes relevant to the Ngarrindjeri community, including building skills, capacity, employment opportunities and pathways to tertiary education.

Cultural principles and guidelines for research and engagement on Ngarrindjeri Country

This goal reflects the Ngarrindjeri understanding of the interconnectedness of the lands, waters and all living things.

NRA contact details and key Ngarrindjeri positions

Please contact us if you would like advice on how to engage and work with us.

Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority, 50 Princes Hwy Murray Bridge East SA, Tel: (08) 8531 3868

- Chair, Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority
- Chair, Ngarrindjeri Heritage Committee
- Chair, Ngarrindjeri Native Title Management Committee
- NRA Heritage Manager
- Chair, NRA Yarluwar-Ruwe Program
- Chair, NRA RPPU

THE NRA RESEARCH CHECKLIST

- Understand and respect Ngarrindjeri governance structures. The peak Ngarrindjeri representative body is the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority (NRA).
- Understand and respect the key Ngarrindjeri cultural principles that apply to Ngarrindjeri Caring for Country (Ruwe/Ruwar).
- Undertake appropriate cultural awareness training offered by the NRA.
- Understand and respect the protocols and processes for engagement between the Government of South Australia and the Ngarrindjeri Nation. For example, the KNY Agreement 2009, the KNY Agreement Taskforce, and associated statements of commitment, working groups and legislative requirements.
- Understand that research conducted on Ngarrindjeri Ruwe/Ruwar is of interest to Ngarrindjeri - research is critical to the ongoing health of our region.
- Incorporate Ngarrindjeri engagement into all aspects of research and monitoring programs - including policy development, planning and implementation.
- Recognise that Ngarrindjeri possess knowledge of Ngarrindjeri Ruwe/Ruwar that has been developed over thousands of years.
- Understand and respect that, for Ngarrindjeri, the lands, waters and all living things are part of a living body - Ngarrindjeri are part of this body.
- Negotiate the resources required for Ngarrindjeri engagement in research and monitoring programs - include these in project planning (costs may be covered by major projects such as Murray Futures).
- Recognise and respect that Ngarrindjeri are researchers and have research goals and objectives.
- Ensure that opportunities for building Ngarrindjeri research and monitoring capacity are recognised and where possible included.
- Prioritise formal research partnerships with the NRA and seek to create opportunities for collaboration.
- Recognise that Ngarrindjeri cultural knowledge belongs to Ngarrindjeri - the NRA has developed a process for cultural knowledge protection.
- Understand that the NRA has the following responsibilities and goals: 'Caring for our people, lands, waters and all living things'; Strong Culture; Sovereign First Nation; Secure Future; Healthy Country; Confident People; Creative Economy; Respected History; Regional Leader.

Key documents

- CLLMM Monitoring and Research Program – Statement of Commitment
- Ngarrindjeri Nation Yarluwar-Ruwe Plan (Sea Country Plan)
- NRA Guidelines for Researching on Ngarrindjeri Ruwe/Ruwar