



Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander  
**Employment Strategy**  
2019 – 2021

# Artwork Credit

Shane Pickett  
born 1957, Quairading, Western Australia, died 2010, Perth, Western Australia

*Six Seasons: Bunuroo, Wanyarang, Muguroo, Djilba, Kambarang, Biroc*

2005, suite of 6 colour etchings, edition 17 of 50. 34 x 49cm each

Donated to Murdoch University Art Collection through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program by Alan R. Dodge AM & Neil Archibald 2012

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In his lifetime, Shane Pickett was one of the foremost Nyoongar artists who combined his deep knowledge and concern for Nyoongar culture with a confident and individual style of gestural abstraction. Pickett created paintings that resonated with a profound but subtle immediacy. Balancing innovation with tradition, modernity with an ancient spirituality, Pickett created a complex visual metaphor for the persistence of Nyoongar culture against the colonizing tide of modernity. Pickett's celebrated suite of etching titled *Six Season*, represents each one of the six seasons, which is the annual cycle guiding Nyoongar people in their understanding of their country.



### **Bunuroo**

(January and February) is the season where many adolescents become adults and the songs of marriage and responsibilities are of importance.



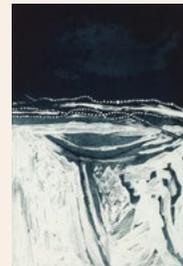
### **Wanyarang**

(March and April) is a time when those who have recently attained adulthood pair up and prepare their places or homes for courtship. Males put on their best costumes to impress the females. Nature prepares itself for the next cycle.



### **Muguroo**

(May and June) is the season of courtship and fertility. The magpie sings alone calling for rain and for all his clan to come and listen to the song of fertility. This is the beginning of nature's new cycle.



### **Djilba**

(July and August) is time for conception in nature's womb. The rainbow lorikeet sings with happiness, as the frogs sing their love songs and wisdom for life to continue.



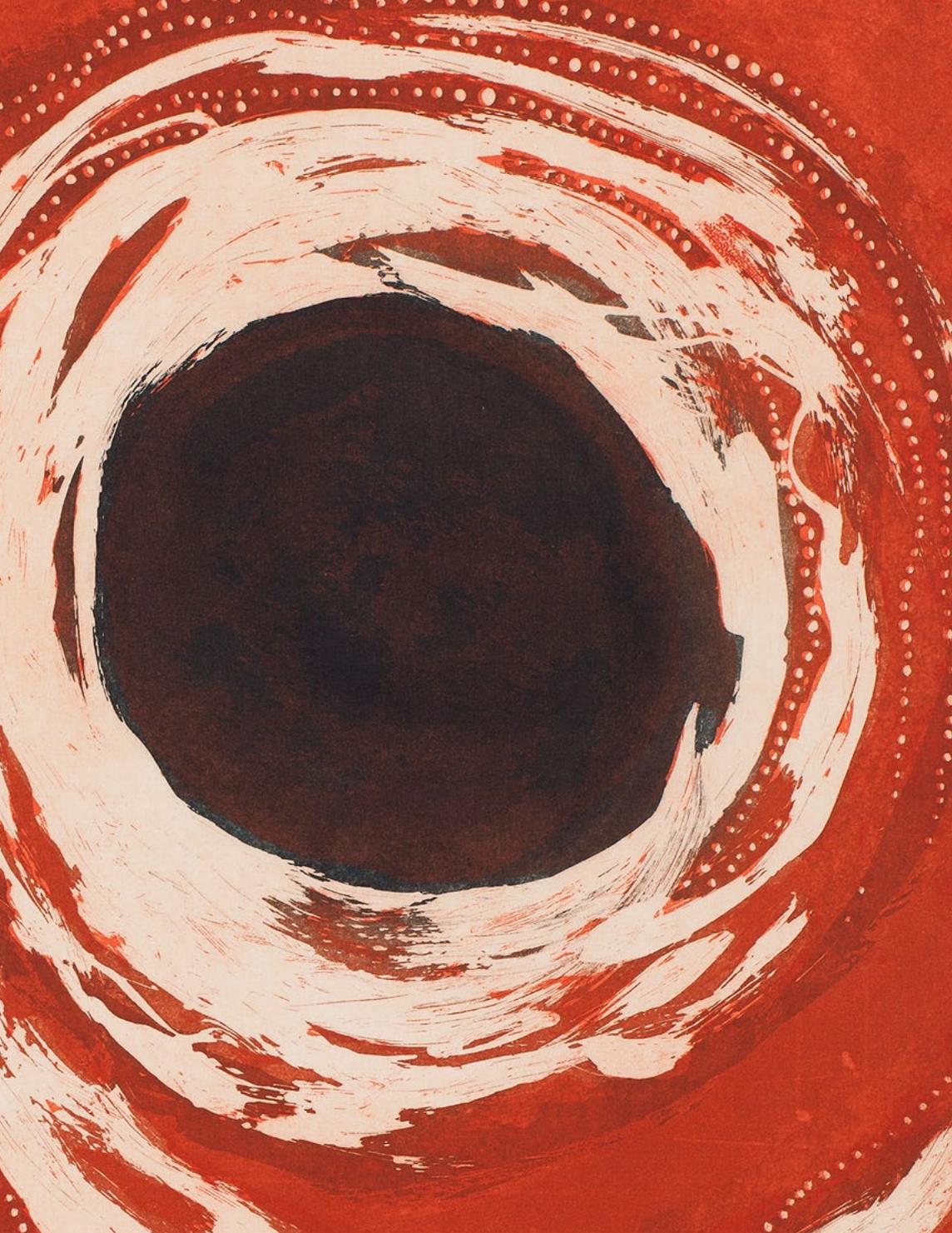
### **Kambarang**

(September and October) bursts out in natural blooms of many different plant types to symbolise the birth of nature's new life, and the boasting is part of the song and dance of the newborn.



### **Biroc**

(November and December) is the season where nature sings the songs of childhood and the beginning of a new summer and warmer weather.



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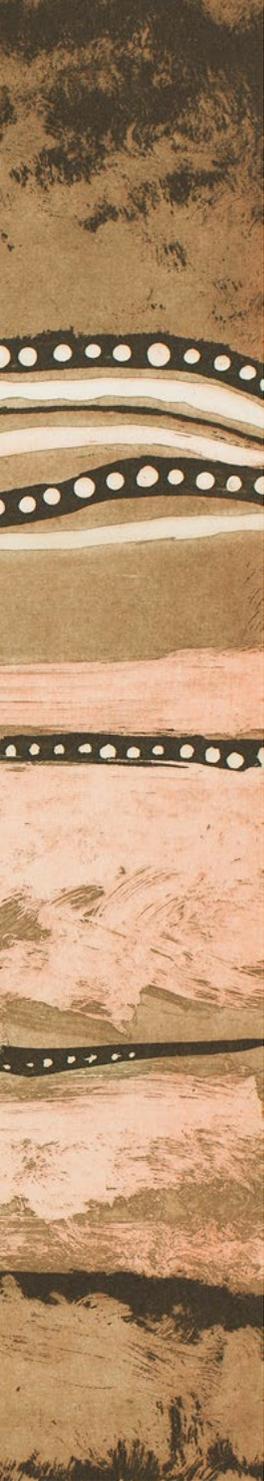


# Acknowledgement of Country

*Murdoch University acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which Murdoch University is located; the Whadjuck people of the Nyungar Nation. It is upon their ancestral lands that Murdoch University is built.*

*As we share our knowledge, teaching, learning and research practices within this University may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country from the past, the present and the future.*

*The spelling Nyungar (alternatively spelt Noongar, Nyungar, Nyoongar, Nyoongah, Nyungah, or Noonga), will be used in reference to the Indigenous Australian people who live in the south-west corner of Western Australia, from Geraldton on the West Coast to Esperance on the South Coast.*



# Message from the **Vice Chancellor**

Since the launch of our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2015, we have established many important initiatives to build a culture that values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inclusion and success. The development and implementation of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy along with the launch of our second RAP signals Murdoch University's commitment to increasing the employment, retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The objectives in this strategy provide the tools to enable us to make progress towards achieving the target of having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff constitute 3% of our employees. This is an ambitious and necessary target that requires significant investment and a whole of university commitment. This target also reflects the value we place on the contribution made to our University by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

A key focus of this strategy is the creation of an employment pathway for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the establishment of key performance indicators relating specifically to the appointment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in academic and professional roles. Through internship programs, mentoring and with the guidance of our Award winning Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre, we seek to enable the transition from student to new graduate, to Murdoch University employee. We are committed to becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I proudly support this strategy.



**Professor Eeva Leinonen**

Vice Chancellor  
Murdoch University

# Our Strategy

Murdoch University helps people discover how to make a difference, through education and research endeavour, and remains one of the most inclusive universities in the country. We are a university for all, irrespective of background and social standing with a focus on social equity, self-direction and freedom of thought and belief.

In order to achieve the core goals of the 2017 – 2027 Strategic Plan the University must build a dynamic workforce of high quality academic and professional staff, underpinned by the pursuit of diversity and social inclusion. Specifically, improving Indigenous equity across our workforce.

This Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy is a commitment by Murdoch University to invest in initiatives that will realise the employment-related aspects of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2019 - 2029 and the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy.

Through the development and implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy, Murdoch University aims to make progress toward achieving the parity target of having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff constitute 3% of our employees as well as becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia.

A specific focus of our strategy is to establish a specialised recruitment pathway to harness the existing and growing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population at Murdoch University.

We will be building on the progress made by our award-winning Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre to support our prospective and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

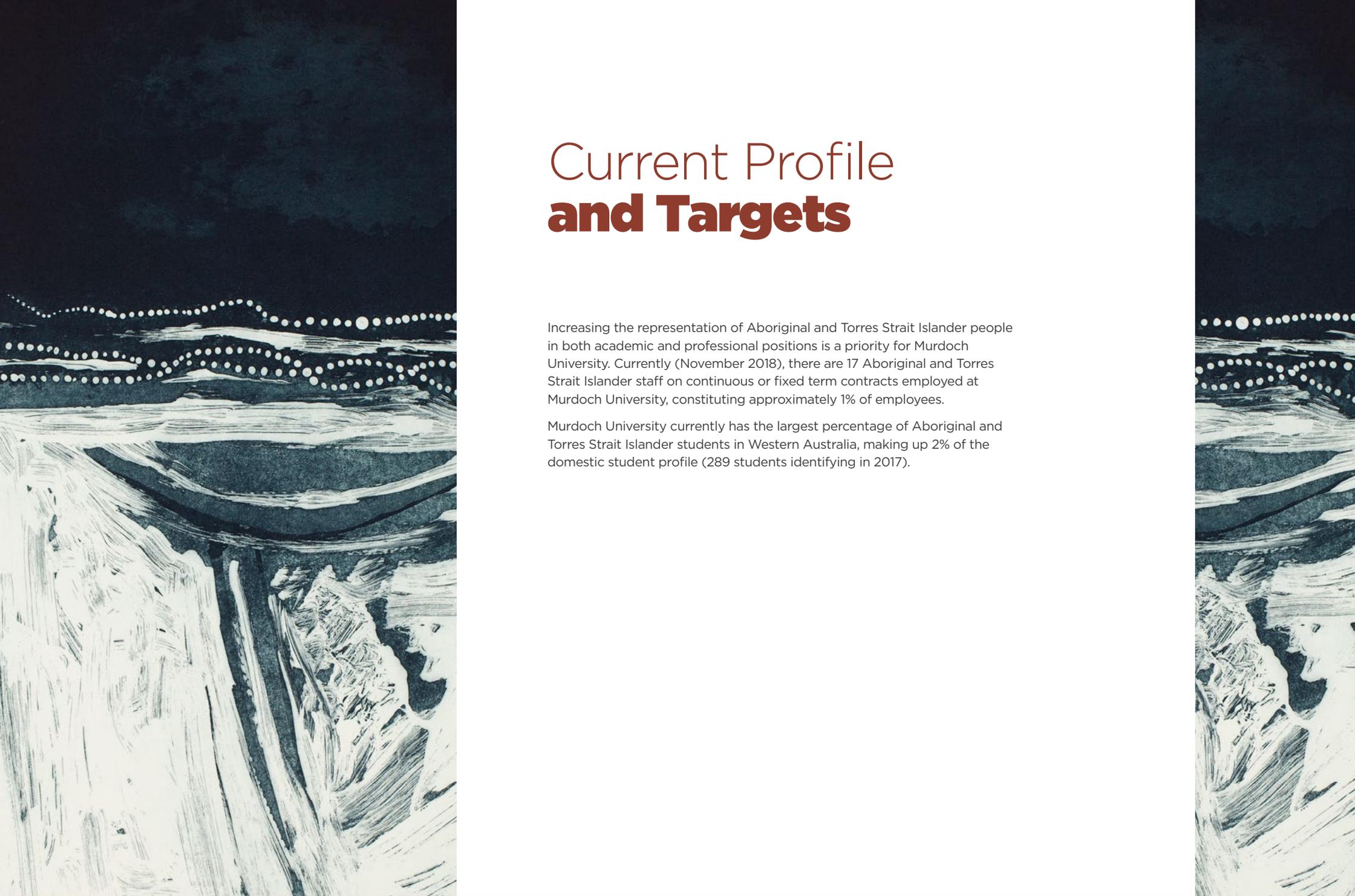




# Gnulla Kura, Gnulla Boodjar **(Our Past, Our Country)**

Situated on Whadjuk and Pindjarup Noongar land, the Bibbulman nation has, for thousands of years, been a place of learning and teaching. Murdoch University was founded on principles of equity, access and social inclusion. This has been central to our development over the past forty years into a university which prides itself on student diversity and equitable outcomes in education.

The Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre was established in 1988 and since that time has provided academic and pastoral support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait students, firmly linking the University with the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



# Current Profile **and Targets**

Increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in both academic and professional positions is a priority for Murdoch University. Currently (November 2018), there are 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on continuous or fixed term contracts employed at Murdoch University, constituting approximately 1% of employees.

Murdoch University currently has the largest percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Western Australia, making up 2% of the domestic student profile (289 students identifying in 2017).



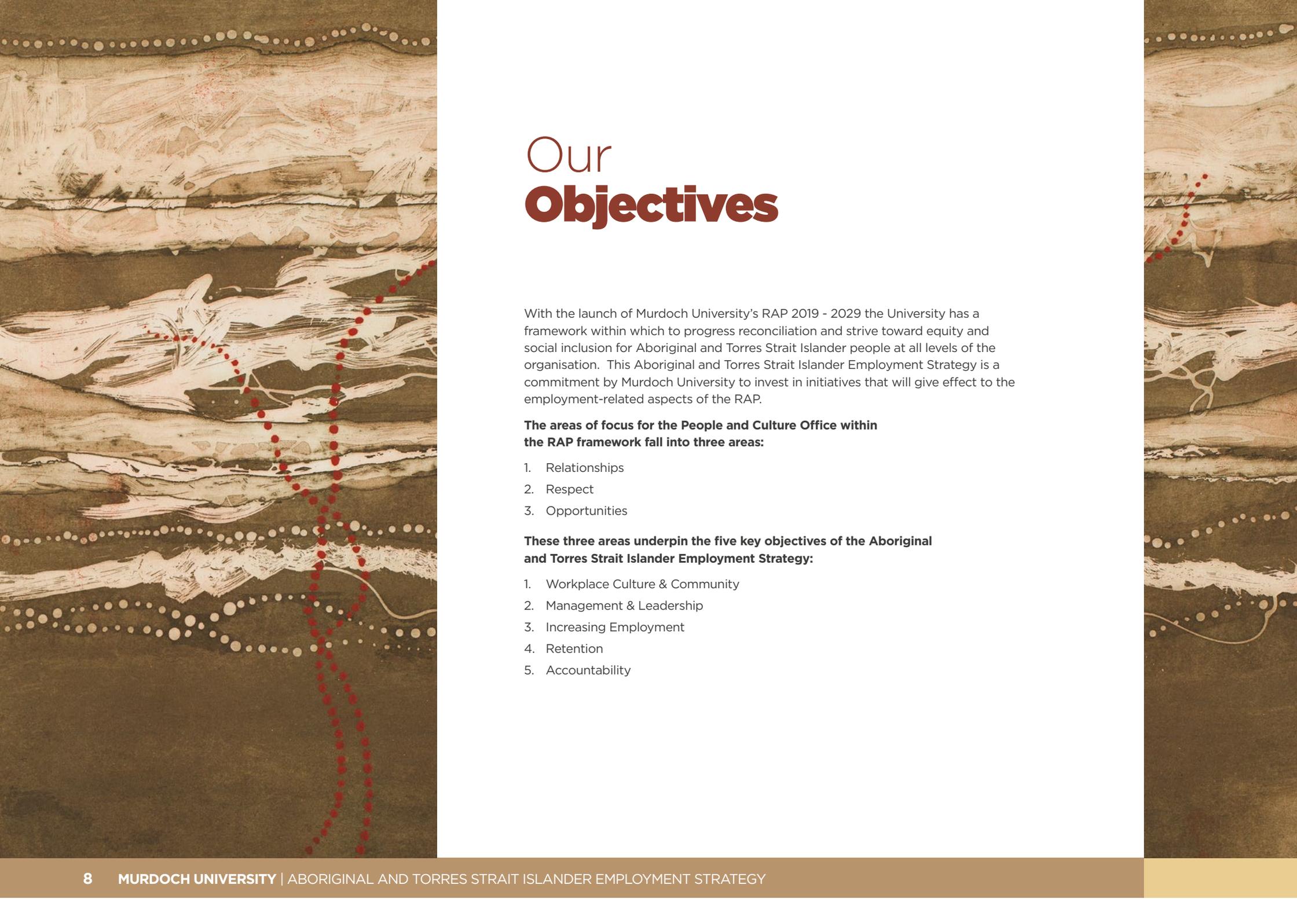
# Support, Implementation and Monitoring

The implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy requires University wide commitment and support. Driven by managers and supervisors, the success of the strategy is reliant on education and awareness to ensure a thorough understanding of the intent and objectives of the strategy.

Support for the strategy will be available through two key channels; primarily the Office of People and Culture and the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre.

The Equity and Diversity Committee, supported by the RAP Steering Group will oversee the implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy, monitor and report on the Strategy's progress and evaluate its success. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Strategy Committee will also be a key stakeholder in the Strategy's implementation - particularly as it relates to students, higher degree research and the development of the Indigenous academic workforce.

The Office of People and Culture will be responsible for enabling the ongoing application of the Strategy and related activities.



# Our Objectives

With the launch of Murdoch University's RAP 2019 - 2029 the University has a framework within which to progress reconciliation and strive toward equity and social inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at all levels of the organisation. This Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy is a commitment by Murdoch University to invest in initiatives that will give effect to the employment-related aspects of the RAP.

**The areas of focus for the People and Culture Office within the RAP framework fall into three areas:**

1. Relationships
2. Respect
3. Opportunities

**These three areas underpin the five key objectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy:**

1. Workplace Culture & Community
2. Management & Leadership
3. Increasing Employment
4. Retention
5. Accountability

## Workplace Culture & Community:

To foster a University community and culture which embraces social justice principles and recognises the University's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait People.

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>1a</b>	Improve participation rate in Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training (ACAT) and embed the principles of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.	Participation in ACAT to become a standard development objective recommended to all employees as part of the Contribution Development Review (CDR) process.	People & Culture University Leadership Group	Dec 2019
<b>b</b>		Participation in ACAT for all supervisory roles to be monitored by the People and Culture Office with the view to increase the participation.	People & Culture	Dec 2019
<b>c</b>		Participation in ACAT mandatory for University Leadership Group.	SEG	Dec 2019
<b>d</b>		Actively promote the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and ACAT to staff via web, induction process and other regular communications.	People & Culture	Ongoing
<b>2a</b>	Increase visibility of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and the understanding and acknowledgement of traditional owners of the land and welcome to country protocols, kinship and family systems, history, cultural issues.	Embed this Strategy in employee induction and on boarding frameworks to ensure all new Murdoch employees interact with this Strategy.	People & Culture	Jun 2019
<b>b</b>		Embed this Strategy into the ACAT.	Kulbardi	Jun 2019
<b>c</b>		Introduce an online mandatory compliance module to compliment and act as a precursor to the ACAT.	People & Culture Kulbardi	Dec 2019
<b>3a</b>	Ensure new Murdoch staff members are provided with information and tools to foster cultural competency.	Include Aboriginal cultural content and information on Murdoch University's RAP in the new employee induction process.	Kulbardi	Jun 2019
<b>b</b>		Online tools relating to cultural competency and the University's RAP are maintained and easily accessible.	Kulbardi People & Culture	Ongoing

## Workplace Culture & Community continued:

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>4a</b>	Understand the needs of the Murdoch University Aboriginal and Torres Islander staff.	The exit checklist will be updated to include a referral to the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	Kulbardi People & Culture	Jun 2019
<b>b</b>		The completion of the online exit interview survey by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is monitored and reported annually to the University's Equity and Diversity Committee.	People & Culture	Dec 2019
<b>c</b>		Commit to the inclusion of topics relevant to the University's relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees as part of any future staff surveys.	People & Culture Provost	Dec 2019
<b>5a</b>	Embrace the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through recognising significant dates.	Include Aboriginal content/recognition in campus design and features.	Kulbardi Marketing and Communications	Ongoing
<b>b</b>		Days of Aboriginal significance to be recognised and observed on campus.	Kulbardi Marketing and Communications	Ongoing
<b>c</b>		Increase opportunities for University staff to engage in campus-wide cultural activities and campus events held around days of significance.	Kulbardi Marketing and Communications	Ongoing
<b>d</b>		Scope the inclusion of Cultural Leave within Policy framework.	People & Culture	Jun 2020

## Management & Leadership:

To encourage Colleges and professional services across the University to increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through education and support.

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>6</b>	Educate and promote the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy to management.	Ensure the effective communication and implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.	People & Culture	May 2019
<b>7a</b>	Provide managers with training and resources to enable informed decision making regarding the employment and retention of Aboriginal staff.	Develop and deliver an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment managers guide.	People & Culture	Dec 2019
<b>b</b>		People and Culture will provide an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion role to deliver ongoing support and guidance for managing recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	People & Culture	Jun 2021
<b>8</b>	Provide incentives through recognition of achievement of Colleges and professional services in progressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment initiatives.	Introduce Equity and Social Justice Awards to be incorporated in broader staff awards.	People & Culture	Jun 2021

## Increasing Employment:

Become an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Specifically, by offering identified recruitment pathways to our existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and recent graduates in partnership with the Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre.

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
9	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on Senior Executive Group.	Establish the position of Pro Vice Chancellor (Indigenous) and appoint an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leader to the position.	Provost	Mar 2019
10	Introduce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander College Fellowship Program.	Employ a minimum of two suitably qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics in each of the Colleges in areas that align with successful candidates' disciplinary background.	Provost	Jun 2020
11	Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent register for internal and prospective staff to register their interest in working at Murdoch.	Talent register and associated processes established.	People & Culture	Jun 2019
12	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment Key Performance Indicators for Colleges.	SEG to set Key Performance Indicators relating specifically to the appointment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in academic and professional roles, for each College, with the target of 3% representation.	SEG	Jun 2019
13a	Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Murdoch University students and graduates transitioning to employment with Murdoch University.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadetship/traineeship program to enable the transition from student/new graduate to University employee, within the relevant areas.	People & Culture Kulbardi	Dec 2019
b		Establish and maintain a pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates to be referenced for future employment opportunities.	People & Culture Kulbardi	Jun 2019
14	Identify roles that may be considered within Section 50(d) and 51(d) of the Equal Opportunity Act as part of workforce planning initiatives.	People and Culture lead in partnership with Colleges and Offices to identify opportunities for employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in both vacating and new positions.	People & Culture	Dec 2020
15	Improve recruitment procedures to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates to apply for vacant positions at Murdoch and become a preferred employer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.	Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment organisations and other education and training organisations with a view to attracting and engaging more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.	People & Culture	Dec 2020

## Retention:

To retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the University.

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
16	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Development Program.	Identify and support career development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to provide a suite of programs that will enhance their professional growth, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross-university collaboration</li> <li>• Leadership programs</li> <li>• Coaching programs.</li> </ul>	People & Culture Kulbardi	Dec 2020
17	Facilitate a supportive network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Organise regular communications, gatherings and networking opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Kulbardi	Ongoing
18	Enable transition from cadetship/traineeship to continuous employment.	Cadetship/traineeship program to include an identification of a position for continuing employment.	People & Culture Kulbardi	Dec 2019

## Accountability:

Demonstrate Murdoch University's commitment to implementation of the RAP employment targets through ensuring governance structures, policies and processes support the achievement of outcomes outlined in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.

Item	Objectives	Initiatives	Responsibility	Timeline
19	Murdoch University will make an ongoing commitment to fund, comply with, and regularly review the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.	Murdoch will allocate strategic funding where required to support the initiatives outlined in this Strategy and consider the employment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment officer.	Provost Finance People & Culture	Dec 2021
20	Ensure that Colleges and professional services of the University are supported in achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Targets.	Increasing the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff employed in colleges and professional services to become a Key Performance Indicator and aligned with Senate KPIs.	SEG	Jun 2019

**For more information contact:**

The People and Culture Office  
08 9360 2430

**[murdoch.edu.au](http://murdoch.edu.au)**