

First Nations

Sharing First Nations Australians' Perspectives and Cultures at Business Events in Sydney



Aboriginal Tour at Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, image courtesy of Destination NSW

Australia is home to the world's oldest continuing, living cultures.

We often refer to two distinct cultural groups: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples – they are Australia's First Nations peoples. But there is great diversity between these groups, with more than 250 different language groups spread across Australia's mainland and islands.

The first peoples of geo-cultural areas are called Traditional Owners or Traditional Custodians. They call the lands, skies and waters they are connected to 'Country' and have cared for Country in Australia for more than 65,000 years.

In the area known as Sydney, the Traditional Custodians are peoples of the Eora Nation. They have cared for Country for more than 14,000 years, well before the arrival of the British in 1788.

The Traditional Custodians in areas around the harbour are:

- Gadigal people in the south (in the Sydney city region)
- Cammeraygal people in the north of the harbour.

Warrane/ Sydney Cove

Warrane is the original Gadigal name for Sydney Cove, on the southern shore of Sydney Harbour.

After talking with local Elders and Traditional Custodians, the government announced Warrane as a dual name to represent the whole area.

Governments have announced dual names for places and landmarks across Australia. This is a way to recognise continuous First Nations custodianship, language, and knowledge.

You are invited to use Warrane when talking about 'Sydney' in your event/s.

When we talk about and share First Nations cultures, histories, customs and knowledges, we help to raise their awareness and increase

understanding. We contribute to safeguarding the continuation of these precious cultures for future generations.

Sharing First Nations perspectives can be a deeply moving experience for delegates visiting Sydney. It can be a way to transport the ancient to the modern, showing how millennia-old cultures are alive today.

Below are some ways to immerse your delegates into local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives at a conference, incentive or corporate meeting in Sydney.

Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country

At the beginning of a meeting or event, it is a show of respect to Traditional Custodians and First Nations peoples' continuing connection to Country to have either a:

- Welcome to Country
- Acknowledgement of Country

A **Welcome to Country** is a formal welcome from a Traditional Custodian or First Nations person who has been given permission from Traditional Custodians. The speaker welcomes people to meet on their lands.

Traditional Custodians will often talk about their connection and history with the area, so a Welcome to Country can be a way to connect delegates to the peoples and lands of Sydney.

If you would like to organise a Welcome to Country it is important to give two weeks' minimum notice.

Book a Welcome through the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.

metrolalc.org.au



- An **Acknowledgement of Country** is done by a speaker at an event – usually the first person to speak. As they open the meeting, the speaker acknowledges the lands on which they stand and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians of Country and Elders, past and present.

The speaker would acknowledge the continuation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures and deep, spiritual connection with Country.

Unlike a Welcome to Country, anyone can perform an Acknowledgement of Country.

When the speaker is sincere, it immerses delegates into the recognition of First Nations histories, cultures and communities.

In central Sydney, it is the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation who are acknowledged. There is no specific wording but Reconciliation Australia has



some suggested scripts.

reconciliation.org.au

Start your event with a smoking ceremony

A smoking ceremony is a ritual of purification and unity. In Sydney it is always performed by an Aboriginal person with specialised cultural knowledge.

The ceremonial burning of specially prepared leaves cleanses an area and participants of bad spirits protects and promotes the wellbeing of visitors while they are on Country.

For delegates, it can be a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual experience. Smoking ceremonies use native plants from the area where the ceremony is performed. This makes smoking ceremonies in Sydney unique compared to others you might experience elsewhere in Australia.

A smoking ceremony is a way for delegates to immerse in culture through a custom that has been practised for millennia. It stretches deep into the past of Sydney's landscape and generations, carrying with it history and meaning for thousands of generations.

Contact Dreamtime SouthernX or the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to request these customs to share with delegates at your Sydney event.

dreamtimesouthernx.com.au | metrolalc.org.au

Climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge with an Aboriginal guide

Take your delegates to the summit of the Sydney Harbour Bridge to discover fresh perspectives on the city below, guided by an Aboriginal storyteller.

BridgeClimb Sydney introduced an Aboriginal-focused climb experience in 2021 called Burrawa – a local Aboriginal word meaning 'above' or 'upwards'. This is a unique and unmissable 3-hour



International Convention Centre (ICC)

experience for delegates to immerse in Aboriginal stories and landmarks across Sydney Harbour.

As they climb, delegates step through history with stories that span thousands of years to the present day. They learn the origins of the familiar place names that circle the water's edge such as Bennelong Point and Barangaroo.

The view from Sydney Harbour Bridge is celebrated around the world. Burrawa offers delegates a rare opportunity to broaden their appreciation of the harbour city. Plus, a percentage of your group price is donated to Tribal Warrior.

bridgeclimb.com.au



Cruise the Sydney Harbour with Tribal Warrior

Hop aboard a private charter of the Mari Nawi (Big Canoe) with Tribal Warrior to learn about one of the world's most famous – and largest and deepest – harbours from its Traditional Custodians.

The cultural cruise will raise delegates' understanding and appreciation of Sydney's rich Aboriginal heritage. Your guide outlines the multiple Aboriginal groups that call the lands and waters on and around the harbour home – the Gadigal, Guringai, Wangal, Gammaraigal and Wallumedegal peoples.

Delegates learn:

- the Aboriginal names for Sydney's landmarks and their meanings
- about life around Sydney Harbour before

colonisation, exploring the history, stories and practices including traditional fishing and food gathering techniques.

The cruise also visits one of Sydney Harbour's islands, Be-lang-le-wool, also known as Clark Island.

Taking a cruise with Tribal Warrior supports their core work as an Aboriginal mentoring organisation, helping to guide and empower young Aboriginal people and their families in the Sydney community.

tribalwarrior.org

Watch a private performance from Bangarra Dance Theatre

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Bangarra Dance Theatre is Australia's premier Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance company. Performances draw on 65,000+ years of cultural heritage to tell the stories of Elders and raise awareness and understanding of First Nations cultures.

Bangarra consistently develops new work featuring Australia's best professionally trained First Nations dancers and choreographers.

You will find Bangarra's headquarters in the theatre precinct of Walsh Bay on Sydney Harbour, close to the city centre. Various spaces can be hired for exclusive events. The largest is the waterside Dangarra O Badu – Dancing on Water – for 120 people cocktail style or 80 in banquet.

Book a private performance, Welcome to Country or Smoking Ceremony for your event and adorn it with set and costume displays. The venue houses a commercial kitchen and offers four catering services.

Bangarra's dancers can also come to your event. Get in touch with them to request exclusive performances at other venues and locations around Sydney.

bangarra.com.au



See one of Sydney's first-built neighbourhoods from an even older perspective

Take a walking tour of Tallawoladah (The Rocks) with an Aboriginal guide from Dreamtime SouthernX. Tallawoladah is the Gadigal language name for the area, given thousands of years before colonisation.

This experience develops understanding for Aboriginal culture while exploring an iconic harbourside neighbourhood in the heart of the city. Delegates learn:

- how Aboriginal people originally used the water and the land
- how Dreamtime narratives and philosophies still exist in Sydney's landscape today and shape Aboriginal thinking.

Delegates get a unique insight into the spiritual connection between the area's Traditional Custodians and the natural environment that still endures today.

dreamtimesouthernx.com.au

Taste native bush tucker in the Botanic Gardens Bangarra Dance Theatre

Take a guided Aboriginal Bush Tucker tour or Aboriginal Harbour Heritage tour in the Botanic Gardens of Sydney.

During the bush tucker tour an Aboriginal guide demonstrates how native plants were traditionally used in food and are being adapted and adopted in some of Sydney's best restaurants today. Groups sample bush tucker as part of the experience.

On the Aboriginal heritage tour, hear stories of how the gardens and the harbour foreshore

are intertwined with the lifestyle, traditions and histories of local Aboriginal peoples. Explore their deep connection with Country and community.

Tours in the Botanic Gardens can be tailored exclusively for groups.

rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

Journey back to the beginning of Sydney's newest waterfront precinct

Barangaroo is a bustling cultural, culinary and business hub on the western edge of Sydney's city centre and Sydney Harbour. Its transformation from a disused container wharf has allowed greater visibility of the culture and significance of the waterside landscape to its Traditional Custodians, the Gadigal people.



Credit Destination NSW

Its modern name pays respect to a key figure in the days of early settlement, Aboriginal woman Barangaroo, and to its traditional significance when it was known as 'Women's Land'.

The precinct includes vast public green space, which hosts 75,000 native plant species, the most in central Sydney. Groups can take an interactive tour with an Aboriginal guide to understand connection to Country and the significance of the land long before its current development.

The tour explores Aboriginal spirituality and sustainability and unites the ancient with the modern to provide a new way of seeing a 21st century environment.

barangaroo.com

Have an Indigenous degustation in one of Sydney's most unique venues

Sydney-based Laissez-Faire Catering has partnered with Sharon Winsor, founder of award-winning Indigiearth, to create a degustation menu for The Calyx in the Botanic Gardens of Sydney.

The new dining experience incorporates Australian native ingredients including Indigenous meats, vegetables, herbs and spices, served in a beautiful, natural space. The Calyx is home to one of the largest living botanic exhibitions in the southern hemisphere, with an everchanging green wall comprising more than 20,000 plants.

The architecturally striking venue with both indoor and outdoor space can seat 180 delegates for a banquet.

rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

Engage the First Nations stream of ICC Sydney's Legacy Program

International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney has a Legacy Program which connects events held at the centre with Sydney's community to get the most out of the occasion for both your stakeholders and the city.

The First Nations stream of the program has many ways you can bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and suppliers into your event to:

- widen understanding of the long-surviving culture and its link to the land
- support Sydney's and Australia's First Nations people thrive through business, cultural celebration and community.

ICC Sydney can connect you with Aboriginal groups for cultural ceremonies and performances, tour operators, speakers and MCs. It can also link you with Supply Nation, which has a database of genuine First Nations businesses to supply services and products to your business events.

The venue is also growing its food and beverage collection, including by partnering with



International Convention Centre (ICC)

businesses like Sobah, Aboriginal makers of non-alcoholic craft beer.

iccsydney.com.au

Learn from Aboriginal art and artefact

Explore First Nations artworks with a private after-hours tour of a selection of works at:

- the Art Gallery of New South Wales, set in the greenery of The Domain, including the Yiribana Gallery in its new North Building
- the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Australia at Circular Quay.

With many languages, cultures and communities from many Nations across Australia, First Nations art reflects the uniqueness of the experience of each artist. Through guided tours of gallery collections, delegates can gain another perspective on the variety and specificity of Australia's first peoples and their cultures.

At the Australian Museum, groups can also explore the richness and resourcefulness of first peoples, visiting artefacts held within the museum's sizeable collection – one of the largest in Australia. From 32,000-year-old bread making tools to shell ornaments and jewellery and woven fish traps, each object tells a story.

artgallery.nsw.com.au

mca.com.au

Australian.museum

Hire a speaker to educate and inspire your delegates

Australia's largest speaker bureau, Saxton Speakers, can connect you to a range of First Nations changemakers and experts keen to share their stories, wisdom and knowledge with event audiences. Speakers include:

- Sydney Olympic gold medallist Cathy



Freeman OAM

- technology, science and pop culture commentator, Rae Johnston
- science education charity founder, Corey Tutt OAM
- writer, filmmaker musician and Aboriginal fire management expert Victor Steffensen
- Aboriginal land rights activist and community leader Noel Pearson
- ...and more

saxton.com.au



BESydney promotes Sydney as the pre-eminent Asia-Pacific business visitor destination and acquires strategic business events that deliver economic and social impact for Sydney, NSW and global communities. We are independent and not for profit, supported by the NSW Government, City of Sydney and industry.

For more information

Images can be found here: dropbox.com/sh/ieomuj8l6w6a341/AACuCXhJEPrywBDC1_Ce7drPa?dl=0

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besydney.com.au

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