

# Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests Guidelines

2021



Shalvey Aboriginal Dance Group,  
Chifley College Shalvey Campus

# Purpose

The Guidelines detail the legislative requirements, governance processes, aims and operations of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest initiative; and the responsibilities of key stakeholders involved with delivery of Aboriginal and Language and Culture Nest programs.

Key stakeholders, including service providers (NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group 2021-2023), Departmental staff and participating schools, must adhere to these Guidelines.

Nest service providers (currently NSW AECG 2021-2023), should read the Guidelines in conjunction with their Contract Management Plan and Services Agreement.

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# Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, our young people, and to our brothers and sisters of the Stolen Generations. We acknowledge the policies of previous governments and the injustices imposed upon our people such as the forced removal of our ancestors and their disconnection from their birth right as Aboriginal people.

While Aboriginal Languages were almost lost, they were spoken in secret and passed on through Aboriginal families and communities.

We recognise that the Languages of the first people of the land comprising New South Wales are an integral part of the world's oldest living culture and connect Aboriginal people to each other and to their land. It is acknowledged that Aboriginal people are the Custodians of Aboriginal Languages and Cultural practices and have the right to control their growth and nurturing. We recognise that the Languages are owned by the lands they belong to.

**Adapted from** Aboriginal Language Act 2017 NSW.



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## Acronyms

Department	New South Wales, Department of Education
AOPD	Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate
LCC	Languages, Culture and Communities Team
ALACO	Aboriginal Language and Culture Officer
OCHRE	Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment
NSW AECG	New South Wales, Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated
GYG	Gamilaraay/ Yuwaalaraay/ Yuwaalayaay
NESA	NSW Education Standards Authority
ICIP	Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property
EOI	Expression of Interest
NESA	NSW Education Standards Authority

## Definitions

**An Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest** (Nest) is a network of communities bound together by their connection to an Aboriginal Language. There are five Nests and two satellite Nests.

**Educators** are qualified or locally recognised Aboriginal Language speakers, who hold a TAFE Certificate I, II or III in Aboriginal Languages and Culture; or recognised prior learning; or are recognised as Elders and/or Language speakers within their community.

**Engagement Data** is a list of schools and roll classes that have moved from EOIs to actually beginning lessons each term. It includes: Nest name, date (dd:mm:yyyy), term, school names, roll class names, scholastic years and roll class size.

**Implementation Data** is the number of students who participated in each lesson. It is collected weekly by NSW AECG and reported to AOPD by week 10 and includes: Nest name, date (dd:mm:yyyy), term, Educators' first and last names, school names, roll class names, roll class size, scholastic years, total

teaching hours, and number of individual Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students taught.

**Probity Data** is a list of Educators first and last names, Educators WWCC numbers, list of schools each Educator attends, School Principals name and contact information. Probity data is submitted to AOPD by NSW AECG minimum of three weeks prior to the commencement of each term.

**Keeping Places** are locations, accessible to community members, where Language resources and materials are housed for use by communities and partnered organisations.

**Nest Footprints** are a geographical location or a designated area in which schools may access Nest funding to teach the relevant Aboriginal Language and culture under the Nest structure.

**Nest Reference Groups** are independent community bodies, separate from the Department and the NSW AECG, who meet quarterly to proactively support the Nest initiative. They have the right to self-determination and should encourage diverse community members to participate.

## Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

The Department has agreed to respect ICIP rights by following the Australia Council for the Arts' protocols for using "First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts" and protocols for "Working with Indigenous Artists". The resources developed are compliant with the Indigenous Knowledge parameters that are covered under the [IP Australia legislation](#).

All intellectual property developed or arising out of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest program and funded by the Department of Education (e.g. including lesson plans, resources, student level data, evaluation tools and relevant documentation, but excluding the underlying Language itself) is the property of the Department and will remain so after the completion of the contract.

These resources, once created, must remain available for Nest use in order to ensure that personnel changes do not impede the delivery of Language. All data collected and held by the service provider (NSW AECG 2021-2023) over the course of the program must be submitted to the Department and destroyed upon completion of the contract.

## Probity Requirements

The NSW Department of Education requires all staff and contractor personnel to undergo probity checks prior to commencing in child-related positions. Probity may include national criminal record check (NCRC), working with children check (WWCC) and Departmental checks. Contractor personnel must provide to the relevant school (or AOPD where required) all documents required for the Department's Probity Unit to complete a full probity check.

The required documents include:

- a) Working with Children Check clearance for paid employment
- b) Completed Working With Children Check Declaration for Child Related Work (WWCC)
- c) Completed Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC) Application form and Informed Consent form; and
- d) Four identity documents as specified on page 2 of the NCCHC Informed Consent form.

Staff and contractor personnel in child-related positions cannot commence duties until all checks conducted by the Department's Probity Unit are clear. Any personnel who are a prohibited person must not be engaged in providing services.

Personnel are considered to be engaged in a child-related position if their work would ordinarily involve:

- a) Direct contact with children (physical or face to face contact) or;
- b) Access to private or sensitive information relating to children.

## Probity steps

1. Staff to complete all required documents (documents can be requested from NSW AECG Project Officer or Probity Unit).
2. Send completed documents to [probityunit@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:probityunit@det.nsw.edu.au) (notify your Project Officer and AOPD contact that forms have been sent to Probity unit).
3. Wait until Probity approves your documents. This can take a minimum of two weeks. During this time, you cannot be on school grounds.
4. You will receive your clearance from the Probity Unit and can now begin work on school grounds. You will be given a DoE employee ID and DoE email address.

# Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests: A Summary

Nests provide NSW public school students with the opportunity to learn local Aboriginal Languages and Cultural practices.

A Nest is a network of communities bound together by their connection through an Aboriginal Language. A Nest Footprint is a geographical location or a designated area in which schools may access Nest funding (three hours funded under the initiative, with schools able to purchase further hours) to teach the relevant Aboriginal Language and culture under the Nest structure.

Participating schools coordinate delivery of Nest lessons with the Department and the NSW AECG. Recurrent Nest funding under OCHRE is not to be used for teaching of adult community members or for teaching outside of schools. However, the Department may make available separate funding for these purposes on an ad hoc basis. In these cases, guidance for the use of this funding will be provided separately from these Guidelines.

## Nests are located in seven regional Language areas

- Bundjalung (Ballina, Bonalbo, Casino, Coraki, Evans Head, Grafton, Kyogle, Lismore, Tabulam, Tweed Heads, Woodenbong)
- Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/ Yuwaalayaay (Collarenebri, Goodooga, Lightning Ridge, Walgett)
- Gumbaynggirr (Bellingen, Coffs Harbour, Dorrigo, Nambucca Valley, Northern Beaches, Orara, Sawtell, South Grafton, Toormina, Urunga,)
- North West Wiradjuri (Dubbo, Gilgandra, Mudgee, Narromine, Peak Hill, Trangie, Wellington)
- Paakantji (Bourke, Broken Hill, Coomealla, Menindee, Mildura, Wilcannia)
- Dunghutti Satellite Nest (Kempsey and surrounds)
- Gomeroi Satellite Nest (Tamworth and surrounds).

## Nests aim to:

- a) improve knowledge of, and competency in, local Aboriginal Languages
- b) strengthen Aboriginal identity, pride and community resilience

- c) increase the number of Language learners
- d) increase the number of Language teachers
- e) contribute to increased school attendance and retention.

## History of the Nests

The Nests are part of a broader set of government priorities to revoice and revitalise critically endangered Aboriginal Languages in NSW, governed by the NSW Aboriginal Languages Act 2017, the Department's Aboriginal Education Policy and its Partnership Agreement with the NSW AECG.

The Nests were established in 2013 under OCHRE, the NSW government plan for Aboriginal Affairs. The OCHRE plan aligns with the Department's commitment to teach Aboriginal Languages in NSW public schools and work in partnership with the NSW AECG to ensure "Aboriginal students are confident in their heritage, cultures and Languages"; and contributes to the NSW Premier's Priority for Aboriginal education: "Increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining Year 12 by 50 per cent by 2023, while maintaining their cultural identity".

In 2016, and again in 2021, the Department engaged the NSW AECG to support the Nests. The LCC unit, within the Department's AOPD, is responsible for the development, coordination and management of the policies, programs and frameworks governing the Nests.

In October 2019 and June 2018 respectively, the NSW Ombudsman and Aboriginal Affairs released their evaluation findings. These Guidelines respond to the recommendations of these evaluations in order to improve the implementation of the Nest initiative.





# Key Stakeholders

The following key stakeholders are critical to the implementation of the Nests:

- NSW Department of Education
- Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate
- NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated
- NSW public schools
- Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Reference Groups
- Local and regional Aboriginal Elders groups and community members
- Aboriginal Language and Culture holders/speakers
- Local Aboriginal community organisations such as Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Youth Groups
- Local Aboriginal Language programs, groups and/or centres
- Directors, Educational Leadership.

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate (AOPD)

- Report to the Ombudsman and Aboriginal Affairs about expenditure and implementation, through use of program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Manage state-wide development and strategic direction, ensuring Nests adhere to relevant legislation, policies and partnership agreements.
- Employ adequate staff to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of LCC and ALACOs.

## Languages, Culture and Communities Team (LCC)

- Work in partnership with the NSW AECG to ensure Nest lessons are delivered consistently across the Nests, sharing information where appropriate.
- Provide strategic direction and project management for Nests, in consultation with key stakeholders.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the Nest initiative, through use of program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Provide line management and support to ALACOs to deliver their roles and responsibilities.

## Aboriginal Language and Culture Officers (ALACO)

- Report to LCC, including program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Develop high quality Aboriginal Language and Culture resources, linked to NESA's K-10 Aboriginal Languages Syllabus and each Language and Culture communities, in collaboration with NSW AECG Project Officers, Reference Group members, NSW public schools and communities.
- Collaborate with and support NSW AECG Project Officers and Educators, where appropriate.
- Recruit and maintain relationships with NSW public schools in collaboration with NSW AECG Project Officers, sharing information where appropriate.
- Assist NSW public schools to develop and embed Aboriginal Language and Culture programs.
- Provide professional learning to NSW public school staff and, where appropriate, NSW AECG Educators with relation to Languages and education pedagogy.
- Abide by cultural protocols of each Language and Culture community.
- Attend quarterly Reference Group Meetings.

## NSW AECG

- Work in partnership with LCC to ensure Nest lessons are delivered consistently across the Nests, sharing information where appropriate.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the Nest initiative, including submission of program engagement data by Week 4 and program implementation data by Week 10 to LCC.
- Employ adequate staff to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of NSW AECG Project Officers and Educators.
- Provide professional learning and support to NSW AECG Project Officers and Educators.
- Meet probity requirements, including working with children check and mandatory training (page 5).
- Support the functions and operations of Keeping Places.
- Abide by cultural protocols of each Language and Culture community.

## NSW AECG Project Officers

- Report to NSW AECG, including program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Collaborate with NSW AECG Project Officers within other Nests to ensure lessons are delivered consistently across the Nests, sharing information where appropriate.
- Provide consult, when sought, to ALACOs while they develop Language and Culture resources to ensure lesson content is relevant to each Language and Culture community.
- Share information, when sought, with ALACOs about participating NSW public schools.
- Liaise with NSW public schools to schedule three funded hours of Nest lessons per week and assign educators to each school for the next term.
- Provide line management and support to ensure Educators to deliver three funded hours of Nest lessons to each NSW public school engaged within their Nest Footprint.
- Provide substitutes in the case of Educator illness/absence.

- Provide professional learning to Educators, in collaboration with ALACOs where appropriate.
- Collaborate, when sought, with ALACOs to provide professional learning to NSW public schools.
- Provide secretariat functions for Nest Reference Group meetings, including scheduling meeting scheduling, distributing agendas, and taking minutes.
- Maintain, support and improve the functions and operation of the Keeping Place.
- Meet probity requirements, including working with children check and mandatory training (page 5).
- Abide by cultural protocols of each Language and Culture community.

## NSW AECG Educators

- Deliver three funded hours of high-quality Aboriginal Language and Culture lessons to each NSW public school engaged within their Nest Footprint.
- Maintain relationships with participating NSW public schools.
- Report to NSW AECG Project Officers, including program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Share information, when sought, with ALACOs about participating NSW public schools.
- Work with the ALACOs, NSW AECG personnel and classroom teachers as necessary to ensure lesson content is relevant to students' learning needs and stage level.
- Meet probity requirements, including working with children check and mandatory training (page 5).
- Abide by cultural protocols of each Language and Culture community.

## NSW Public Schools

- Embed Aboriginal Languages and Culture and authentic Aboriginal cultural perspectives across all key learning areas, in collaboration with the ALACO where appropriate.
- Share information with AOPD and NSW AECG, when sought, in the process of collecting program engagement and program implementation datasets.
- Teachers remain in the classroom and actively participate in and manage behaviour during Nest lessons.
- Assist ALACOs, NSW AECG personnel and Language Educators, where appropriate, with the preparation and delivery of Nest lessons.

## Nest Reference Group members

- Reference groups should not be run as an arm of the Department or NSW AECG but must be independent groups with broad and diverse community membership. This principle must be reflected in the leadership of any Reference Group chair.
- Set direction and priorities for Nest Footprint area.
- Meet quarterly to proactively support the Nest initiative, and provide guidance when sought.
- Ensure diverse community members to participate in the reference group.

# Key Contacts

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate,  
 Department of Education

Role	Contact Details	
Executive Director	Karen Jones 02 4357 5345   email: <a href="mailto:karen.jones21@det.nsw.edu.au">karen.jones21@det.nsw.edu.au</a>	
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	Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuwaalayaay Belinda French 0432 574 340   email: <a href="mailto:belinda.french@det.nsw.edu.au">belinda.french@det.nsw.edu.au</a>	

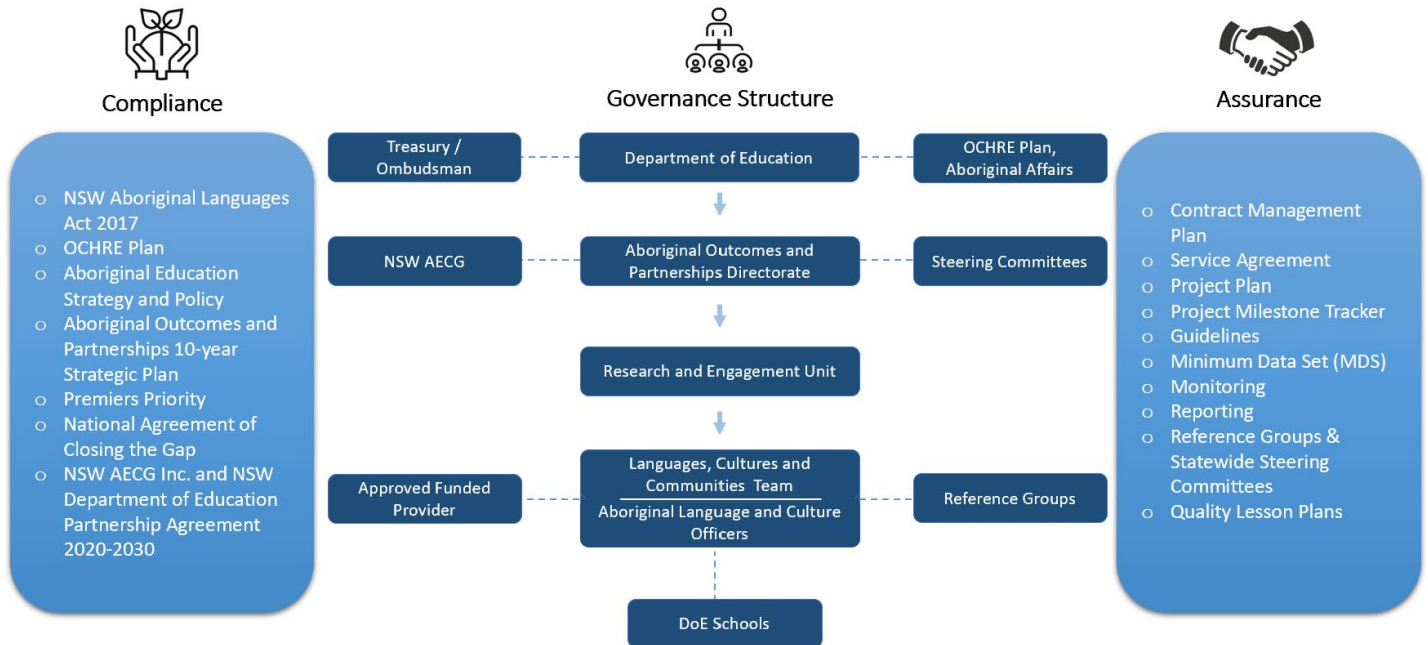
## NSW AECG Inc.

Role	Contact Details	
NSW AECG President	Cathy Trindall 0481 174 206   email: <a href="mailto:catherine.trindall@aecg.nsw.au">catherine.trindall@aecg.nsw.au</a>	
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NSW AECG Project Officers	Bundjalung Kristopher Cook 0458 957 446   email: <a href="mailto:kristopher.cook@aecg.nsw.edu.au">kristopher.cook@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>	Gumbaynggirr Kerrie Ann Jarrett 0478 844 009   email: <a href="mailto:kerrie.jarrett@aecg.nsw.edu.au">kerrie.jarrett@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>
	Paakantji Aaron Williams 0467 304 091   email: <a href="mailto:aaron.williams@aecg.nsw.edu.au">aaron.williams@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>	North West Wiradjuri Sandra Naden 0424 383 973   email: <a href="mailto:sandra.naden@aecg.nsw.edu.au">sandra.naden@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>
	Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuwaalayaay Priscilla Strasek 0477 204 733   email: <a href="mailto:priscilla.strasek@aecg.nsw.edu.au">priscilla.strasek@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>	
	Dunghutti Satellite Nest Fred Kelly 0429 655 388   email: <a href="mailto:Fred.kelly@aecg.nsw.edu.au">Fred.kelly@aecg.nsw.edu.au</a>	

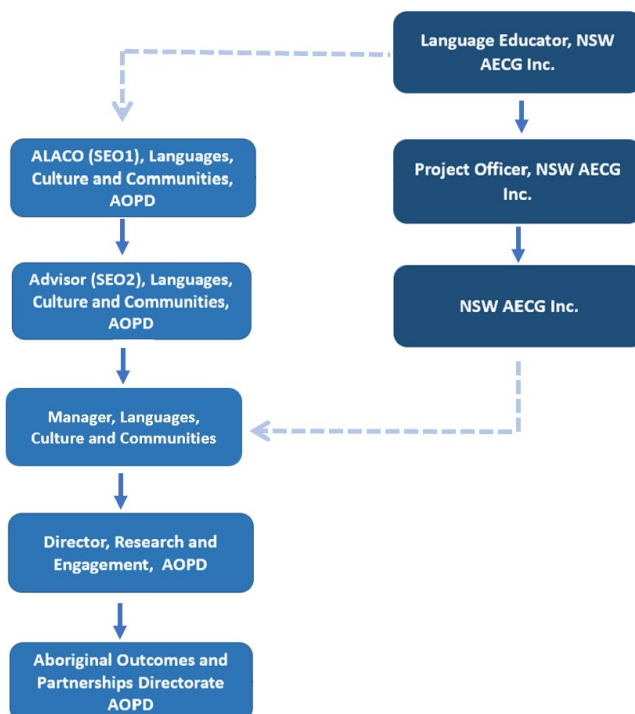
# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Governance Structure

NSW Department of Education Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022



## Appendix 2: Reporting Structure





## Appendix 3: Engagement Data Process

