

INDIGENOUS ARTS

A guide to *Indigenous Arts Protocols* (March 1998) has been published by the NSW Ministry for the Arts. This will be of use to teachers engaged in any form of interaction with Aboriginal cultural expression. The guide sets out principles, guidelines for arts workers and organisations and a checklist to assist in negotiations and consultations with Aboriginal communities. There is also a list of key contacts and organisations and a section on stereotyping.

This initiative is intended to help nurture indigenous cultural expression in New South Wales and is timely, given the current focus on such issues as native title and reconciliation.

Principles

1. All Aboriginal people are entitled to respect for their culture.
2. Aboriginal cultural heritage, including cultural expression, is the intellectual property of Aboriginal people.
3. Aboriginal people have a right to protect and manage the use of their cultural heritage and expression.
4. Aboriginal people have a right to benefits accruing from any activities that use their cultural heritage and expression.
5. Aboriginal people have a right to Government support in the protection and maintenance of their cultural heritage and expression.

Guidelines

for arts workers and organisations developing project proposals

1. Projects involving Aboriginal cultural expression must be negotiated with the owner/s, using appropriate protocols.
2. An agreement outlining the conditions of consent must be obtained from the owner/s for projects to commence and continue.
3. Proposals must acknowledge the owner/s of the cultural heritage or expression.

4. Proposals for projects must describe clearly in plain and appropriate language:
 - the aims and objectives
 - the methodology
 - how the results are to be interpreted
 - what the results are to be used for; and
 - what the anticipated benefits to the community will be.
5. Proposals must demonstrate that the project will not result in damage to Aboriginal cultural integrity.
6. An Aboriginal perspective should be sought on all issues surrounding the proposal.

Checklist

The following questions are intended as a guide to assist negotiations and consultations with Aboriginal communities.

1. Does your nominated Aboriginal community representative have the authority to speak for or on behalf of the proposed project?
2. Have you received written consent from the owner/s for the project?
3. Does the community understand the aims, objectives and methodology of the project?
4. Does the community understand how the outcomes of the project will be used?
5. Have you made arrangements with the community to provide feedback on the project at all stages?
6. Have you acted in good faith and respected the privacy of Aboriginal peoples and communities?
7. Have you ensured that the community understands the copyright issues of the project?
8. Does your proposal safeguard Aboriginal sensitivities?

The Arts Ministry is also able to provide a list of key contact people and organisations, a map of indigenous language groups in New South Wales and a list of regional branches of NSW Aboriginal Land Councils.

These resources are available free of charge from the Ministry for the Arts on (02) 9228 5533 or fax (02) 9228 4722.