



Aboriginal
Productions
Promotions

ECU CITY CAMPUS

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The Cultural Narrative

Within each area there is a unique story that has been etched into the land, even in areas that have since been developed. Below the cement and foundations lies the history of a people, a culture with deep connection and thousands of years of practice.

A cultural narrative describes what is unique about that place and its people. It recognises the histories of people who have cultural authority over the land, their sacred places, their interactions with the land and their ways of being as a people. It connects the past to the present and builds a platform to a sustainable future.

The cultural narrative forms the basis for the implementation of the Aboriginal Engagement Strategy and the infusing of Aboriginal culture into the planning and design process.

PLACE

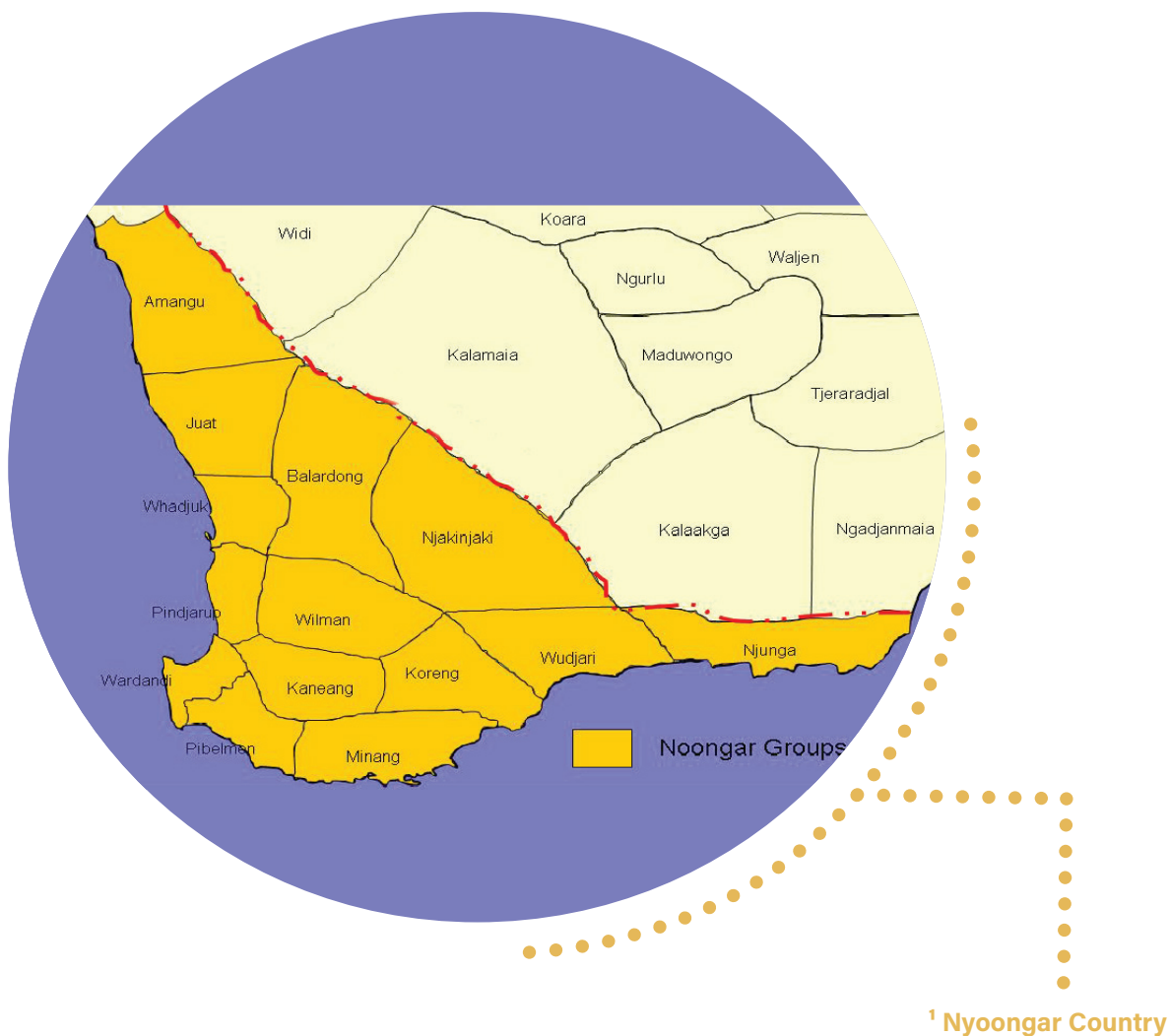


The concept of “place” can be widely interpreted. In this section of the document, we are looking at the Perth CBD as the focal “place” and researching the Aboriginal cultural links to the area. This place has a long history, and the cultural connect is both old and contemporary.

Throughout this section, the term ‘country’ is used to describe the Aboriginal land territories that are bound by natural borderlines. However, the concept of country for Aboriginal people is much more than the physical land, it is also a spiritual connection. Aboriginal people are highly spiritual and have interwoven physical landscapes and environmental sustainability practices, with traditional spiritual practices and beliefs. Therefore, when discussing country, it is very difficult to separate the physical landscape from the spiritual connection and beliefs of the custodial people.

1.1 Nyoongar Country

Nyoongar country is the name given to the part of Australia that the Nyoongar people have traversed, lived on, hunted and cultivated on for thousands of years. Nyoongar country encompasses the southwest region of Western Australia, covering nearly 200,000 square kilometres of land . Nyoongar country is divided into 14 areas, often referred to as 'clans', 'tribes', 'nations' and 'language groups'.



¹ Nyoongar Country Map (Wikipedia, 2007)

1.2 Whadjuk

The Perth CBD lies within the boundaries of the Whadjuk area of Nyoongar Country. This area extends south towards Rockingham Lakes, where there is a shared boundary between Whadjuk and Pindjarup. It extends east to the Perth hill line, the Darling Range, another shared boundary line between Whadjuk and Ballardong. Whadjuk country shared its northern boundary line with Yued country (listed Juat on the previous map). Whadjuk country is estimated to cover about 5000 square kilometres of land.

1.3 Perth CBD & Settlement

The Perth CBD area is referred to as Boorloo in the Nyoongar language.

Perth City is the capital of Western Australia and is currently populated by approximately 2 million people.

The first British fleet arrived in 1829 and established the Swan River Colony on the riverbanks of the Swan River, known in Nyoongar as the Derbal Yerrigan. At this time, Governor James Stirling established the region as Perth.

Since the time of the first arrival, the colony continued to develop into the major capital that we know today, as Perth City.

Nyoongar people watching James Stirling's exploration party, 1829³



Whadjuk Country²

² Whadjuk Country (Green, 1955, p. 50)

³ Nyoongar people watching James Stirling's exploration party, by WJ Huggins (1829)

1.4 Perth's Cultural Precinct

Perth's cultural precinct is an area within the CBD that encompasses Perth's most popularly visited public cultural venues. The cultural precinct is an integral part of Perth's unique identity, and is connected to the ECU development site.

The current locations of these contemporary cultural venues can still be linked to the traditional cultural heritage sites on which they were constructed on or in close proximity to.

See below, the 'Gnarla Boodja Mili Mili' map from the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries (DLGSC). The map indicates with the traditional Nyoongar names for various areas around Perth city. The numbers on the map to show the locations of Perth's cultural precinct venues today.

See also, the table below for each cultural precinct venue and the traditional Nyoongar names for these places (under Cultural Heritage)



Cultural Precinct

- 1 Art Gallery of WA | State Library WA
- 2 His Majesty's Theatre
- 3 Kings Street Arts Centre
- 4 Optus Stadium
- 5 Perth Concert Hall
- 6 Perth Cultural Centre
- 7 RAC Arena
- 8 State Theatre Centre of Western Australia
- 9 WA Museum Boola Bardip
- 10 Yagan Square

Cultural Heritage

- 1 Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)
- 2 Byererup (Hay St/William St)
- 3 Byererup (Hay St/William St)
Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)
- 4 Goongoorup (Claisebrook)
- 5 Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River)
Dyeedyallup (Langley Park location)
- 6 Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)
- 7 Near Gooloogoolup (Lake Irwin)
- 8 Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)
- 9 Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)
Unnamed Lake
- 10 Gooloogoolup (Lake Kingsford)

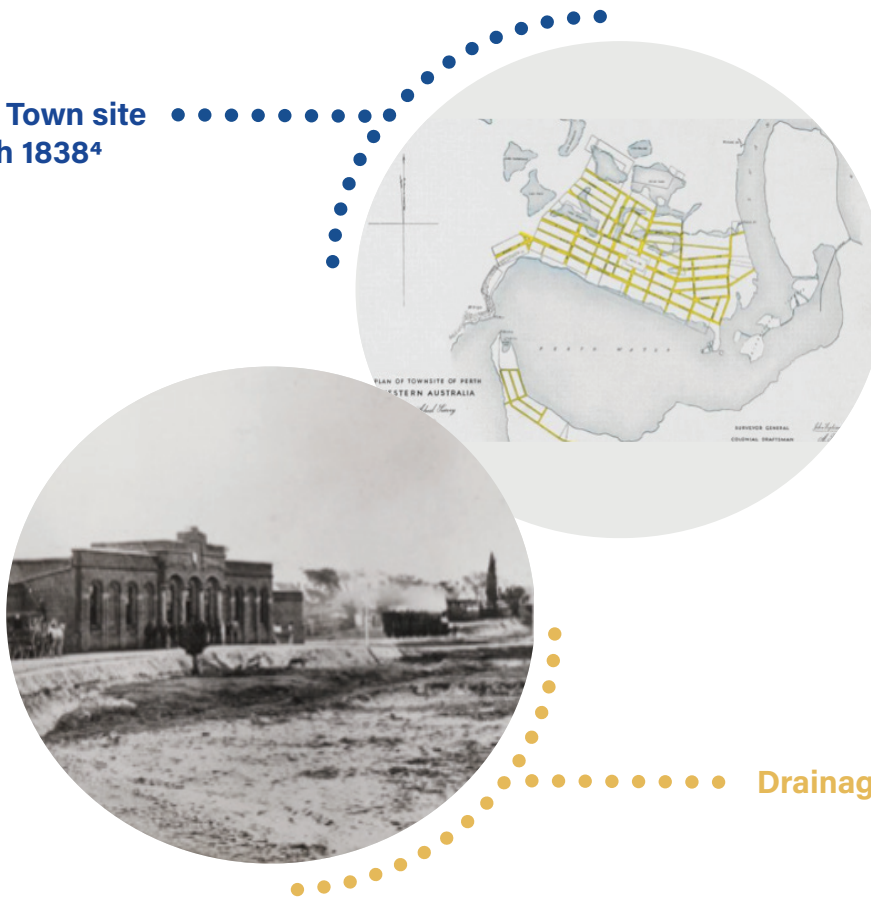
1.5 Pre-settlement landscape

The Perth landscape has undergone an extensive change since the arrival of the British fleet. The area was a series of lakes and wetlands that created a chain-link from the east of Claisebrook, Lake Monger and the Herdsman Lake, which are still in existence. This area was known as the 'Great Lakes District'.

Since the 1830's, most of the water systems in the Perth swamp chain were drained to make space for building developments. The area near Claisebrook was the mouth of the swamp system and acted as the main point of drainage, and to this day, water is still carried through this area as a part of the 'Claisebrook Catchment'.

The process of creating land reclamation also took place in the development of the Perth foreshore line where the river was reclaimed to create 'new land'. The Perth city foreshore we see today was once a part of the Swan River system. The reclamation occurred in the 1870's and was an ongoing process until the 1960's.

Plan of Town site of Perth 1838⁴



Drainage of Lake Kingsford⁵

1.6 Yagan Square

The area where Yagan Square and Perth Central train station stand today was once part of the large chain of freshwater lakes, swamps, and wetlands that existed through the Perth area. This area was known as Gooloogoolup in the Nyoongar language.

Lake Kingsford and Lake Irwin were the two lakes in the Gooloogoolup area that were popularly visited by the Nyoongar people, as the freshwater systems provided an abundance of food resources. These lakes, along with majority of the water bodies throughout Perth, were a part of drainage that took place to make way for the city's development.

⁴Plan of Town site of Perth 1838 (WA Museum, 2021)

⁵Drainage of Lake Kingsford, 1890 – 1900 (DLGSC 2020)

1.7 Traditional Place Names

The practice of 'dual-naming' is becoming more common in Australian culture. Dual naming is the process in which places are referred to as their English name alongside their traditional Aboriginal name. Nyoongar knowledge-holders and language speakers still retain many of these traditional place names.

Below is a list of some Nyoongar place names around the Boorloo (Perth) area:

Kaarta Moornda

Darling Range

Waylyalup

Fremantle

Nyiabarup

East Fremantle

Marndoon

Guildford

Derbal Yerrigan

Swan River

Matagarup

Heiresson Island

Djarlgaroo

Canning River

Kaarta Garrup/Mooro Kaarta/Kaarta Koomba

Kings Park



⁶Perth Nyoongar Place Names (DLGSC 2020)



PEOPLE

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The purpose of this section is to provide information on the people that have a distinct connect to Perth city, and specifically the ECU Campus site as well as the Yagan square area. The concept of people can be diverse and is cross-cultural. The Nyoongar people have had the longest connection to this place and will be the focal point of this section. However, since the time of settlement, the Perth CBD has had a broad connect to people from all cultures and backgrounds.

2.1 Nyoongar People

The Nyoongar people are the Aboriginal traditional custodians of the south-west region of Western Australia, known as Nyoongar country (see section 1.1). Nyoongar people have lived on this country for many thousands of years, but through their spiritual connections, they believe they have always been here. These ancestral and cultural connections for Nyoongar people are still maintained today. Nyoongar people belong to one nation that is separated into 14 language groups. They share spiritual practices, beliefs, lore and protocols, and the many practical processes that accompany these.

The early settlers estimated that around 10,000 Nyoongar people lived throughout the southwest region, in familial groups that would change in numbers depending on the seasons. Nyoongar people were amongst the first Aboriginal people on the west coast of Australia, to make contact with the first settlers upon their arrival. The first colonies were established in Nyoongar country, in Albany (Minang area) and Perth (Whadjuk area).

Prior to, and during the early period of settlement, Nyoongar people lived in familial tribes and the number of people in these groups would differ depending on the season. Nyoongar people moved around the country according to a cyclical calendar made up of six seasons. During the hotter seasons, tribes would be living in larger groups by the coastlines and waterways, but would move inland and disperse into smaller groups pre-emptive to the colder seasons.

Nyoongar people lived according to both spiritual and practical systems that were intricate and sustainable. Many of these principles are still held by Nyoongar people today.

Today, it is estimated that the Nyoongar population is around 30,000 people. The lifestyle for the Nyoongar people has changed drastically since the time of settlement. The traditional way of life was disrupted through the process of colonisation and many Nyoongar people were heavily affected by the government-sanctioned assimilation,



Nyoongar People at Government House Gardens

⁷ Reconciliation Week (Trevor Walley, 2017)

2.2 Nyoongar Language

Nyoongar is the one language spoken across Nyoongar country. However, there are differences in dialects and pronunciation throughout the 14 regions.

Prior to settlement, the Nyoongar language was completely oral and no written form of communication was ever used to record or document. Because of this, there are some discrepancies in the common spelling and pronunciation of many words within the language today. With a variety of dialects spoken in the Nyoongar language, many words were pronounced differently depending what region of the country the speakers were from. Early recordings of language were interpreted and documented by the early anthropologists, which may also have caused some discrepancy in the language pronunciation, due to the perception of the person recording.

Today the Nyoongar language has multiple written dictionaries and the language is still spoken by the custodial people. However the scale of language loss is significant, with approximately 2% of Nyoongar people speaking the language fluently (according to the 2016 census).

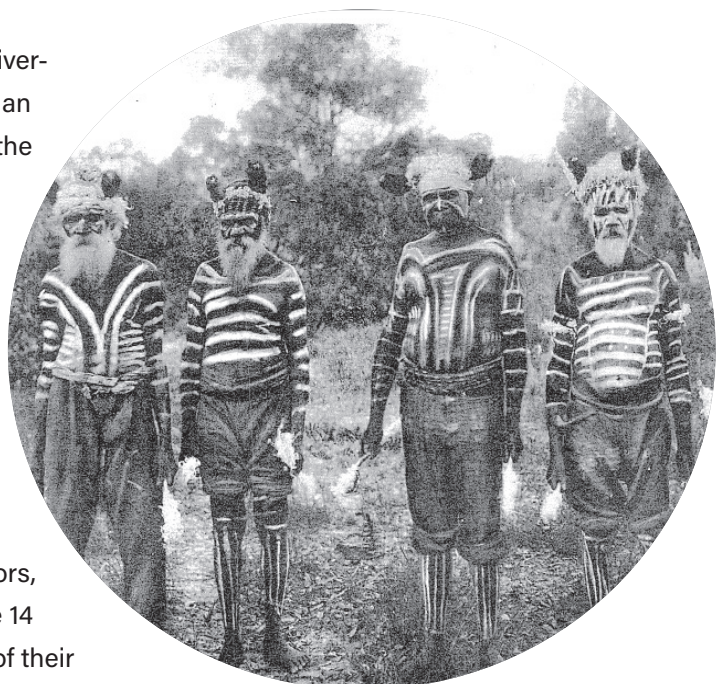
Much effort is being made within the community to improve the practice of language, and the resurgence of language being spoken has risen considerably.

2.3 Whadjuk People

Prior to, and during the early times of settlement, the Whadjuk area was home to many Nyoongar people that lived in familial tribes. These tribal groups were amicable and although each had distinct territories, the country was shared and traversed by all for gatherings such as meetings and ceremony. The tribal areas around the Perth region were recorded as Beeliar, Mooro and Beeloo.

The Whadjuk people lived by the coastline, riverways and wetlands, as these areas provided an abundant source of food and freshwater for the groups. Whadjuk people would also travel to the Perth hill line, the Darling Ranges, known in Nyoongar as "Kaarta Moornda". This hill line is a shared border between the Whadjuk and Ballardong Nyoongar people, and was a place that both groups would camp and traverse.

Today, Nyoongar people often identify with the specific language groups of their ancestors, and can identify with multiple areas from the 14 Nyoongar regions based on the knowledge of their familial tree and Nyoongar ancestors.



⁸ Kornden: 6 Nyoongar 'Kings' (Ruminating.org, 2016)

2.4 Whadjuk People During Settlement

Throughout the period of early settlement within the Perth region, there were many stories recorded of local Whadjuk people, some of which have become notable names within our history.

2.4.1 Fanny Balbuk

The cultural narrative that is woven through the ECU City Campus site cannot be told without the story of Fanny Balbuk.

Fanny Balbuk was a Whadjuk Nyoongar woman, who has become a well-known figure in Perth's history.

Balbuk was born in 1840 on Matagarup, the area known as Heirisson Island. Her mother was Joojeebal and her father was Coondebung. Her grandfather, Yellagonga, was a prominent leader for the Whadjuk Nyoongar people during the first British settlement

The City of Perth was a part of Fanny Balbuk's ancestral country, and her home. She lived throughout this area, and regularly accessed the waterways and bushlands that once existed throughout.




Balbuk would traverse throughout the country, following walking trails that were mapped out generations before her. These trails linked the Whadjuk Nyoongar people between freshwater sources, hunting and camping grounds, and meeting sites. The ECU City Campus will be built on an area where Lake Gooloogoolup once existed (commonly known as Lake Kingsford). This large freshwater lake was a regular stop along Balbuk's walking trails, as Gooloogoolup was once filled with freshwater crayfish and turtles. For a large part of Balbuk's life, her diet comprised of these traditional bush-foods.

Fanny Balbuk grew up living a traditional Nyoongar lifestyle, knowing her language, lore and cultural practices. She would walk throughout the Perth region and shared the traditional Nyoongar names for each significant site along her way. She played a significant role in language preservation and contributed many of the Nyoongar words and place names that are still recorded today.

In her adult life, Balbuk witnessed the devastating effects of the process of colonisation, involving the drastic change and destruction of the country, bushlands and waterways. She was a powerful woman, who committed acts of protest throughout her life, pushing back on the damage to her land and the segregation of her people.

⁹ Fanny Balbuk (State Library of Western Australia)



She was known for knocking down fences that were built on her traditional trails, fences that attempted to bar her from travelling through her country. As new houses were being built, she was warned that she could not enter into these areas in future and if she did so, she would be trespassing. Her defiant nature motivated her to walk through the front door of these houses and walk out the backdoor, continuing on her trails.

The area on which Government House was built was a place that was especially important for Fanny Balbuk. Her grandmother, Moojorngul, was buried where the Government House gardens are today. Balbuk would walk through the grounds and when forced outside of the property, she would stand at the walls and curse everyone within the grounds.

Journalist Daisy Bates wrote of Fanny Balbuk's resistance and said:

"To the end of her life she raged and stormed at the usurping of her beloved home ground. Through fences and over them, Balbuk took the straight track to the end. When a house was built in the way, she broke its fence-palings with her digging stick and charged up the steps and through the rooms."

Fanny Balbuk is an important female luminary in Western Australia's history and she provides a strong example of the beliefs, practices and moral values that are passed on, from one generation to another, through the strong matriarchal Nyoongar culture.

She epitomised the strength of the resistance of Aboriginal people to the removal of their culture and environment.

2.4.2 Yagan and Midgegooroo

The story of Yagan has become one of the most prominent stories of a Nyoongar person, during the early period of Perth's settlement. Yagan is the son of Midgegooroo and it is believed his mother was named Ganiup, however his mother may have also been an older wife of Midgegooroo.

It is estimated that Yagan may have been born during the 1770's and his death was recorded in 1833, 4 years after British arrival.

Yagan became a notorious figure within the colony, as he was an early resistance fighter alongside his father and a group of Nyoongar men from his tribe.

Early conflicts between Yagan's group and the settlers began in 1831, when a Nyoongar man from Yagan's tribe was shot and killed for taking livestock and harvesting potatoes, from a homestead in Perth. This

act was viewed as unjustified by the Nyoongar people, and in retaliation through tribal law, Yagan and Midgegooroo returned and speared one of the servants of the homestead.



Both Yagan and Midgegooroo were declared outlaws, and soon after Midgegooroo was captured and executed by firing squad. Yagan evaded capture until 1833, at which time he was shot and killed by two shepherd boys that he had befriended. The two had planned to invite Yagan hunting and successfully shot him, in order to collect the bounty on his head.


Yagan was then decapitated and his head was sent to England as a museum curiosity, where it remained until 1997. Yagan's skull has since been buried in an undisclosed location in North Perth, in close proximity to where his body is believed to be buried.

2.4.3 Yellagonga and Yangani

Yellagonga was a Whadjuk Nyoongar man, and Yangani was his wife who was also connected to the Whadjuk region. Yellagonga was viewed as being a leader amongst his familial tribal group and traversed throughout the Perth area from Fremantle, to areas of North Perth such as Joondalup. It is believed that his connection to the northern regions was through his wife's ancestral connections to those areas.

Yellagonga had multiple instances of contact with the first British settlers, and is believed to be the first Nyoongar person to make contact with Governor Stirling during their establishment of the Swan River Colony.

¹⁰ Statue of Yagan (Lost Perth, 2018)



Yellagonga's presence was notable within the colony community and his death was even reported in the local newspaper, the 'Perth Gazette', in 1843. The article's headline read 'Death of the King of Perth'.

Today, there is a regional park named after Yellagonga within the Joondalup area. This area was part of his traditional hunting and camping grounds.

2.4.4 Weeip

Weeip was a Whadjuk Nyoongar man, who was viewed as a leader for the tribal groups around the Upper Swan region. He was present during the first British arrival and held negotiations with Governor Stirling on multiple occasions, including after the Pinjarra Massacre. He was a strong advocate for his people and their rights to their ancestral country and wanted to limit the impacts of colonialism on his familial group.

2.4.5 Windan

Windan was a Whadjuk Nyoongar woman, and was also wife to Yellagonga. Windan lived throughout the Whadjuk region and was buried around the East Perth area, her ancestral grounds. Today, there is a bridge named after her, close to her approximated burial site.

PLANTS



Perth is home to many unique plant species and is part of the top 34 bio-diversity hotspots around the world. It is estimated that WA hosts 13,000 species and the southwest is home to many of these rich and unique plants.

The importance of plants is highly interwoven into the Nyoongar culture, both practically and spiritually. Traditionally, Nyoongar people practised country and plant management that promoted sustainability, generating a richly abundant place to live. These practices included controlled burnings, agricultural seed sowing, and preservation of native flora and fauna. Their methods considered longevity of the environment with every decision to take from or manipulate the natural landscape.

The plants are also a highly spiritual aspect of Noongar culture, as the country is not viewed as inanimate and stagnant. Rather, Nyoongar people perceive their country as a living and spiritual place. The meticulous care that was taken for the country was not just for practical purpose but was also spiritually driven.

Spirituality and practicality could often intermix within the Nyoongar culture, such as the system of Booranga.



3.1 Booranga System



Booranga is the traditional totemic system that Nyoongar people practised traditionally for thousands of years, and still maintain today.

The Booranga system is complex and was traditionally maintained by every individual within the family groups and wider Nyoongar society.

Through this system, each Nyoongar infant is allocated a specific plant or animal species at birth, that they will maintain a connection with for the remainder of their life. This connection is cultivated from the time of childhood, and was a part of the traditional learning system. Children would be taught both spiritual and scientific knowledge about their Booranga's characteristics, patterns and place within the environment.

This system allowed each individual in the group to have a role of responsibility towards their Booranga. The entire society therefore monitored and maintained different plant and animal species around the country. This was the system that promoted spiritual connections with the country, as well as practical sustainability methods.

3.2 Common Plants & Purpose

Banksia	Coastal Pigface
 <p>Nyoongar Name: Mangatj, Poolgarla, Biara Scientific Name: 100+ species with scientific names</p>	 <p>Nyoongar Name: Bain Scientific Name: <i>Carpobrotus glaucescens</i></p>
<p>Purpose: There are many species of the banksia that provided the Nyoongar people with different uses. Some species of banksia would flower with particularly sweet nectar that could be turned into a sweet cordial like drink. Other banksia species were used for fire-lighting purposes, such as fire-starters and torches.</p>	<p>Purpose: The Coastal Pigface is both an edible source of food and a medicinal plant, used to treat sore throats and small wounds.</p>

Grasstree



Nyoongar Name:

Balga

Scientific Name:

Xanthorrhoea preissii

Purpose: The Grasstree is a very important plant to the Nyoongar people, both practically and spiritually. The grasstree is estimated to have up to 100 different uses, including tool-making, medicinal uses, bush-tucker, fire-starting and shelter building. The grasstree is also linked to a traditional Nyoongar dreaming story about the Miyak (moon) and the Karla (fire).

Jarrah



Nyoongar Name:

Jarrah or Djarraly

Scientific Name:

Eucalyptus Marginata

Purpose: The Jarrah is a common eucalyptus species found in the southwest of Western Australia. The Jarrah is a strong wood and is used to make tools. Nyoongar people would often remove branches from the tree or carve from the trunk, to avoid cutting down the tree.

Marri



Nyoongar Name:

Marri

Scientific Name:

Corymbia Calophylla

Purpose: The Marri tree is a traditional medicine tree. The antiseptic sap, known as 'Mayat' in the Nyoongar language, is used to treat topical wounds, sore throats and internal stomach issues.

Milkmaid



Nyoongar Name:

Kara

Scientific Name:

Burchardia congesta

Purpose: Milkmaid flowers grow all throughout the Perth region and are a seasonal source of food. Throughout August to November, the small white flowers are in blossom. The root of the milkmaid is a type of tuber and is an edible source of food.

Paperbark



Nyoongar Name:

Bibool

Scientific Name:

Melaleuca quinquenervia

Purpose: The paperbark is known for its soft, papery bark. This tree has both practical uses for Nyoongar people, as well as being linked to dreaming and creation stories that are very significant to Perth area. The bark of this tree was traditionally used as a soft bandage for wounds and injuries, and the flowers used medically. Nyoongar people were also used large pieces of the bark to create waterproof coverings for their mia-mia (shelters).

Parrotbush



Nyoongar Name:

Pudjuk

Scientific Name:

Banksia Sessilis

Purpose: The Parrotbush is commonly found throughout the Perth region. It is a shrub or small tree. The parrotbush has spikey leaves that were traditionally used to build fishing traps. The flowers of the tree blossomed throughout the cooler seasons, and when full of nectar, could be used to brew a sweet cordial-like drink.

Zamia Palm



Nyoongar Name:
Djiridji
Scientific Name:
Macrozamia riedlei

Purpose: The Zamia is a very common plant throughout the Perth region. The zamia produces large, bright red seeds annually, around March to April. Once the seedpods open, they are only available for a few weeks for collection. The bright red seeds are highly toxic and need to be treated for a minimum of one week, before they become edible. This plant is also a seasonal indicator for the Nyoongar people.

Coastal
Sword Sedge



Nyoongar Name:
Kerbein
Scientific Name:
Lepidosperma gladiatum

Purpose: The Coastal Sword Sedge is commonly found near waterbodies and grows in abundance in thick patches. The long, flat reeds can be stripped into thin pieces of string that are sturdy enough to weave implements such as baskets and bags. The roots of this sedge is also a source of food.



ANIMALS

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Within Nyoongar cultural beliefs, animals are held in high regard and treated with respect, even when hunting and fishing. Nyoongar people acknowledge that they are not the only descendants of this country, but that the native plants and animals also have ancestral links.

Nyoongar people relied on many native animal species as sources of food, clothing, and medicines but maintained a system of sustainability when hunting, fishing and gathering these animals. There was also a system of respect and responsibility, that ensured no cruelty or unnecessary harm was inflicted upon animals, particularly those that were being hunted.

The Booranga system (see section 3.1) is also highly relevant in connecting Nyoongar people with the environment, and it was very common for infants to receive totems that were animals.

4.1 Common Animals

This section will outline some of the common native species of animals that are found throughout the Perth region, and some of the methods Nyoongar people traditionally used, for food, clothing or medicine.



Bardi

Bardi grubs, also commonly known as witchetty grubs, are a traditional source of food. These large, white grubs can be found burrowed in the roots, trunks and branches of certain species of trees. Bardi's are detectable by the large holes they leave when eating through the soft wood, as well as the sawdust that remains on the tree.

They can be eaten both raw and cooked, and are seen as a delicacy in some areas.



Crayfish

There are multiple species of native crayfish found in the Perth region, including Marron, Yabby and Gilgie, all of which are traditional Nyoongar names.

Nyoongar people would catch crayfish dependant on the season, and maintained a sustainable system that ensured only mature crayfish would be caught.

Local crayfish are still a common source of food today. Contemporary management through the Department of Fisheries ensures that the crayfish population is maintained through minimum catch sizes and a specific fishing season.



Emu

The emu is an iconic Australian bird and is found all throughout the southwest region. In Nyoongar, the emu is known as weitj. Emu was a common source of food and was usually hunted during the cooler seasons. The meat was eaten, the fats were used for medicinal purposes and the feathers were used to decorate ceremonial attire.

There are many dreaming stories linked to emu, including stories about astronomy and stories of creation.



Turtles

Throughout the southwest region, longneck turtles were a great source of food for Nyoongar people. There was an abundance of turtles to eat, particularly in the Perth city area, due to the wetlands and freshwater lakes that existed there.

In Nyoongar, longneck turtles are called 'booyi' or 'yaakin'.



Frogs

Certain species of frogs were an important source of food for the Nyoongar people. As the Perth City region mainly comprised of wetlands and swamplands, frogs were a common source of food when traversing through these areas.

Frogs are also important characters in many dreaming stories, and are especially linked to a Nyoongar story about the creation of Kaarta Koomba, known in English as Kings Park.

In Nyoongar the general name for frogs is 'kooyar.'



Goanna

Goanna is the common name for the species of monitors that live throughout the southwest region. In Nyoongar the smaller species are known as 'karda'. The larger species are known as 'bungarra', which is a word used in both the Nyoongar and Wajarri (Yamatji region) language, as the larger species are found in both Aboriginal territories.

Goanna's are a source of food and were also used to make medicines, from their body fat. The goanna also holds spiritual significance, as there are many Nyoongar stories about the goanna and stories of creation.



Waterbirds

There are many species of waterbirds found throughout the southwest region, including species of ducks, cormorants, fowls, the black swan and pelicans.

Waterbirds were a common source of food for Nyoongar people, particularly in the warmer seasons. Nyoongar people would also collect the eggs laid by some of these waterbirds but practised sustainability methods by ensuring that some eggs were left in the nests.



Snakes

There are many species of snakes found throughout the Perth region, many of which are venomous. Nyoongar people would use clubs to hunt certain species of snakes and they were a good source of food throughout the warmer seasons.

Snakes are also spiritually significant to Nyoongar people, with many stories of creation being attributed to a giant spirit snake, known as the Rainbow Serpent or the Waugal.

In the Nyoongar language, the general name for snakes is 'norn', however, individual species have specific Nyoongar names.



Fish (freshwater)

There are many species of fish that Nyoongar people would eat throughout the Perth region. Fish was commonly eaten during the hotter seasons of the year, as this was the time that Nyoongar people commonly camped near waterways, such as the rivers and ocean.

Common fishing practices for Nyoongar people included the use of fish traps and spear fishing. These traps were complex structures, and were made from stones, branches, reeds and other natural materials. The fish traps were designed to trap large species of fish and allowed the smaller, underdeveloped fish to swim free. The traps were constructed to rely on either tidal changes, or the directional flow of the water.

The general name for 'fish' in Nyoongar is 'djildjit', with specific species having their own unique Nyoongar names.



Kangaroo

The Kangaroo is one of the most iconic native Australian species, and are found all throughout the country.

The Western Grey Kangaroo is the species found throughout the southwest and Perth region. The kangaroo is a very important resource for Nyoongar people, and they are still hunted today for their meat. Traditionally their warm fur was turned into clothing to be worn in the cooler seasons, and the bones and sinews were used to make tools.

There are many dreaming stories of the kangaroos, and many of them link Nyoongar people to other Aboriginal countries, due to the widespread locality of the animal.

In the Nyoongar language, the Western Grey is called 'yonga'.

PURPOSE

The background features a large yellow circle on the right side, containing the text. To the left and bottom, there are intricate black and white line-art patterns. On the left, there are stylized circular shapes resembling faces or masks. At the bottom, there are wavy, horizontal lines that look like stylized water or grass. The overall style is graphic and modern.

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The ECU campus development is a transitional space between Northbridge and the Perth city centre. The location's purpose is practical as both an area of transit but also an area of connection and meeting. The area connects people through food, drinks and social gatherings. This contemporary purpose mirrors the traditional uses of the area by local Nyoongar people.

The freshwater lakes and natural clearings were suitable for constructing campsites and provided an abundance of food and other resources. Despite the physicality of the site changing drastically since the time of colonisation, it's purpose has been maintained through the interpersonal connectivity, gathering and sharing of food.

5.1 Practical

Nyoongar people traversed cyclically throughout the country, and utilised different areas of the landscape according to a sustainability-based seasonal calendar. By following this seasonal system, Nyoongar people set up campsites throughout the most resourceful areas of the country during each season. The consistent movement every 2-4 months also ensured sustainability principles were maintained, including the avoidance of natural resource depletion.

During the warmer seasons, Nyoongar people would often gather in areas in close proximity to water resources, such as by the coast or the river-ways. The freshwater chain of lakes that existed throughout the Boorloo (Perth) area were once commonly traversed as an area for camping and food collection. The area surrounding the ECU development site was known traditionally as Gooloogoolup and the large lakes that once existed there (Kingsford and Irwin) were plentifully stocked with food resources such as freshwater crayfish and turtles, and different species of fruits and vegetables.

Nyoongar people would camp nearby these lake systems but would not often camp within close proximity to the water. This was an act of consideration by the Nyoongar people, as these lakes were a source of fresh drinking water for many native animal species. By camping further away from the water banks, the area became safer to access for these animals.

The area was popularly traversed during these warmer seasons, and has been a place of gathering, meeting and sharing for thousands of years.

5.2 Education System

The Nyoongar seasonal calendar shaped the people's travel and resource system and also acted as the basis for the traditional education system.

Nyoongar Elder's would spend much of their time nurturing and teaching the children within their familial groups. The structure and topic of each lesson was dependant on the particular season and surrounding landscape. In the warmer seasons when Nyoongar people were living by the rivers and the ocean, Elders would focus on teachings that involved fishing techniques, freshwater plants, and any important knowledge aligned with the wetlands area.

Around Gooloogoolup, some of the lessons involved learning to make fish traps and using the reeds as both a food resources and a weaving implement. Lessons could also be spiritual, such as learning about creation stories. These were also a very important aspect of the learning system.


The Nyoongar education system was very interactive, nature-based and consistently taught the importance of respect for the country, plants, and animals. This system promoted sustainability in every aspect, ensuring that future generations would live happily and healthily throughout Nyoongar country, by maintaining the quality and quantity of the abundantly available resources.

It is appropriate that a new place of learning, one that will represent the future of University education will be established on a site that has played such a significant role in the education of young Aboriginal people in another time.

6.0 Whadjuk Elders Cultural Engagement

Details of the involvement of Nyoongar stakeholders engagement in the design process for the building.

- Aboriginal Productions and Promotions (APP) was contracted to design and implement a cultural engagement strategy to the DA stage of the project.
- Part of the APP engagement strategy is a consultation process with the Whadjuk Elders who have a recognized connect to Whadjuk Nyoongar country and community along with appropriate and relevant interests relating to Education.
- The introductory meeting was to initially gauge the Elders interest in the Project and thereby followed an internal election process by the Elders as to who would fit the criteria.
- The process of consultation involved APP engaging a cultural coordinator to bring together a group of recognised Whadjuk Elders to a 'greater meeting' and through their own selection process based on a criteria, consisting of their cultural connect, contacts, knowledge and stories. From that process of selection, a smaller group of six (6) Elders were chosen to form the Whadjuk ECU 2025 Advisory Group consisting of three (3) males and three (3) females, who would represent their peers throughout this phase one (1) of the project.
- The six (6) member Elders Advisory Group followed on with three (3) consecutive meetings over a three-month period where the project concept was provided and discussed, the logistics of the project and how that relates to the Whadjuk Nyoongar project site, the purpose of the project and the invaluable contribution of Nyoongar people's involvement in the project.
- The meetings introduced the following concepts:
 1. A Cultural framework conversation as well as the values of Education particularly associated with the project location and its history both traditional and contemporary.
 2. The Project.
 3. Artwork Themes were introduced.
 4. ECU project visitors attended meeting 2, including:
 - University of the Future personnel
 - ECU communications teams
 - Architects
 5. Discussion on strong women series.
 6. Discussions from Elders on site signage -interpretive Segway into connection designs – statues of strong women.
 7. Discussion on pre settlement history and stories.
 8. Landscaping designs discussed, e.g. plants and gardens as bush supermarkets.
 9. Integration of Nyoongar people's stories into the space.
 10. Students' engagement process was discussed.
 11. Meeting 3 - Architects joined meeting with design concepts to engage with Elders.
 12. Final meeting was held with the VC, the ECU Leadership Group and the Elders Advisory for a Stage 1 project de-briefing and a formal hand over of the Cultural Narrative.

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- The impact of that involvement, and how the design was finalised/evolved because of that involvement:
 1. The interpreted narrative through the design was compiled by Richard Walley with the input from the Elders Advisory Group.
 2. The inspiration of the ECU site and its purpose in relation to past and present cultural activities helped form the designs. The outcome being that the 'creatives' will have the opportunity to select from a creative template to inspire the final designs.
 3. The Elders made a significant contribution through their cultural knowledge and connection to 'place'.

 - What further involvement will occur during detailed design:
 1. As this process of cultural engagement is contracted to the DA stage. Going forward there will be further research discussion and design elements to be presented, if and when required.
 2. The Elders have officially completed their contracted engagement process, however, are very keen and willing to follow the project all the way through to the 'cutting of the ribbon' in 2025.

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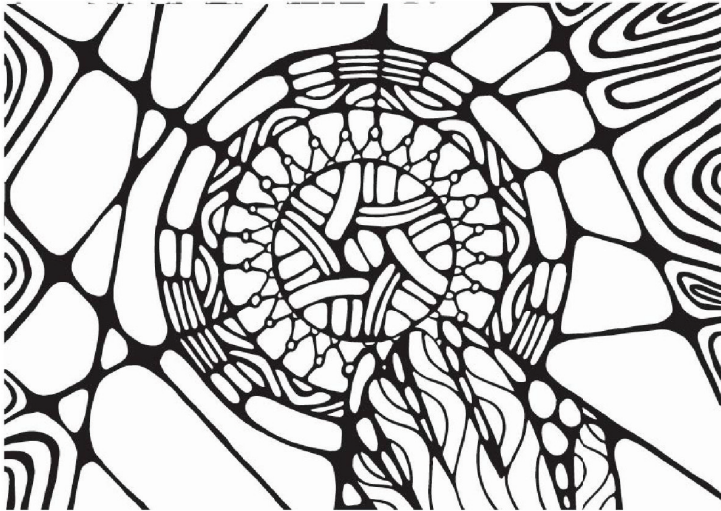
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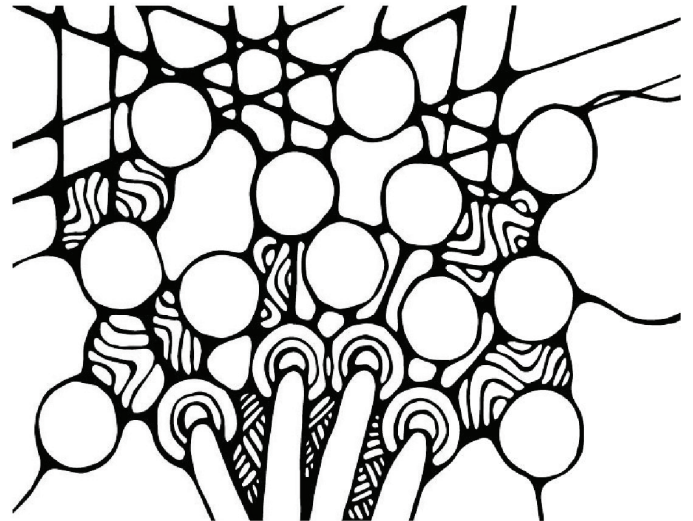
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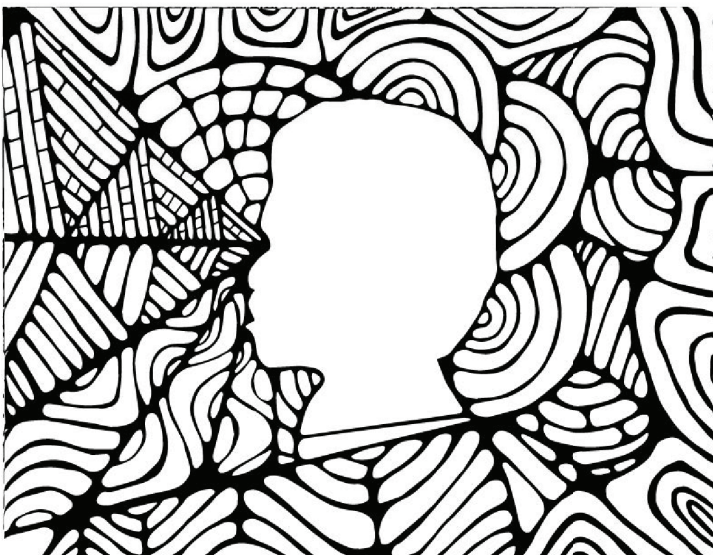
Appendix: Artwork for Architects



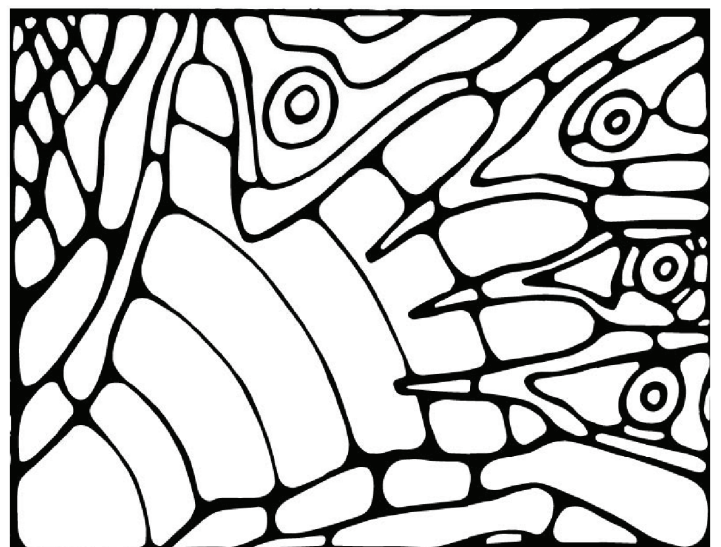
Education at Your Fingertips



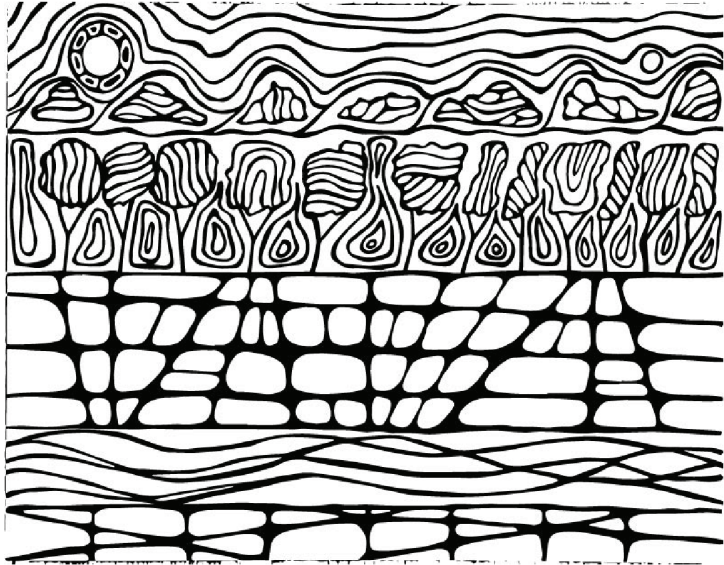
Connecting Education



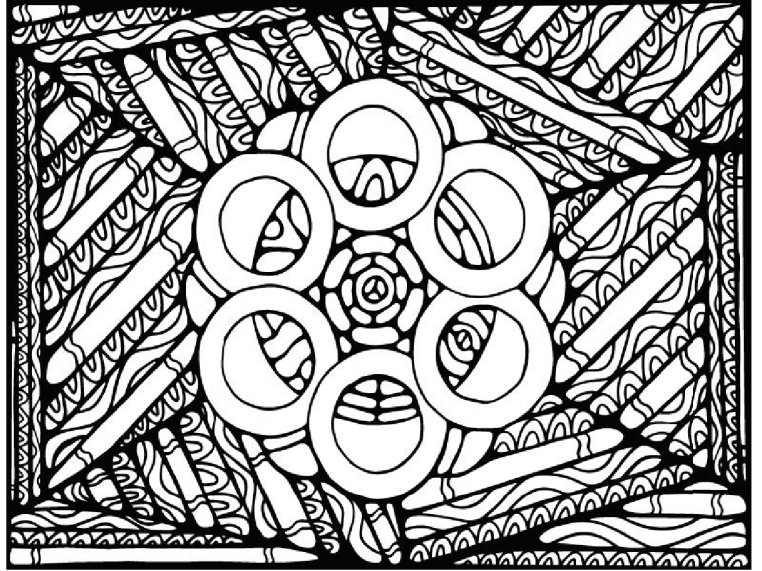
Seeing Change



Giving a Helping Hand



Life's Layers



ECU Experience Pillars



Knowledge Transference