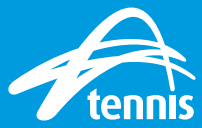




hotshots.tennis.com.au

# FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT GUIDE



# TENNIS SCORES AN ACE ON DIVERSITY!

Tennis is committed to embracing diversity by making our sport and events welcoming, safe and inclusive for everyone. We believe that inclusion is reflecting the diversity of our local communities.

Everyone should have the opportunity to be included and engaged through tennis in a way that is positive and meaningful for them.

Inclusion is about providing choice for people to participate in sport in a way that they feel comfortable. As well as mainstream tennis opportunities, there are a variety of initiatives that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can choose to participate in.

The purpose of this resource is also to equip you with foundational knowledge and confidence to help your club and coaches connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In this guide you will find:

- Information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and community
- Tips on how you can be more inclusive
- Case studies
- Contact information to build ongoing relationships with organisations that can support your club
- Additional learning opportunities and resources

We have talked with clubs and consulted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure that the information in these guides are culturally appropriate, informative and what clubs need to embark on this exciting journey.

We hope that the information in this guide creates conversations, encourages ideas and action for you and your club.

**“TENNIS AUSTRALIA PROUDLY LIVE THE VALUES OF EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY”**

**– Craig Tiley, CEO Tennis Australia**

# WHAT'S YOUR CLUB'S CULTURE?

We often don't get the chance to explore what makes up our culture. We all have one made up of key pillars that include:

- People
- Places
- Special events
- Communication
- Values

A great model to help you think about your club and your own culture is to reflect on the Uluru of Culture (adopted from the Cultural Iceberg Model) below:



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples often have a sophisticated and complex system of family ties, roles and responsibilities which are the core of their cultures. These systems define one's place in the community and bind people together. Elders bridge the past and the present by passing on their understanding, skills, knowledge and stories to the generations who follow them.

# GETTING STARTED

To ensure a smooth process in engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is important that this is done appropriately and in a respectful manner. This means including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the earlier stages where decision making is involved so that they have the opportunity to take part in this process right from the start.

Since there are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups across the country, it is key that you identify the correct representatives in your local area as part of building on the engagement process.

## IDENTITY

It is important that you allow people to self-identify and to be able to define their own identity, as well be aware of any stereotype or prejudice you may hold.

# CONNECTING WITH ELDERS

Elders and community leaders not only hold key community and cultural knowledge but they also have a great deal of influence over when, how and if a community will work with those from outside.

- An Elder or leader may not necessarily be an older person, they may be a younger person who is well respected within their community and holds significant community and cultural knowledge.
- Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples acknowledge Elders and leaders as **Aunty** or **Uncle**, even if that person is not blood-related or kin as this is a sign of respect in Aboriginal culture.
- Using respectful and appropriate terminology can be complex, however it is important to respect appropriate cultural protocols and terminology preference with guidance from your local Elders and local Traditional Owners.

## ACTIVITY

Watch the three minute video of Nadine McDonald-Dowd sharing her insights about her identity.

[vimeo.com/109555902](https://vimeo.com/109555902)

## ACTIVITY

As a group do a local mapping exercise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups, organisations and local businesses in your area. Also check into your local council 'demographics' page to get a good snapshot on the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in your local community. A good place to start is to utilise the [www.id.com.au](http://www.id.com.au) website.

## ACTIVITY

In order for you and your club to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures it is recommended you spend time watching these two very comprehensive documentaries:

- **FIRST AUSTRALIANS**  
The series explores the history of Australia from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspective.
- **FIRST FOOTPRINTS**  
This series tells the story of ancient life on the driest continent on earth through the greatest environmental changes experienced in human history.

# WELCOME TO COUNTRY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Tennis is committed to creating an environment that respects, recognises and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultural identities. We encourage all Clubs to incorporate a Welcome to Country at large events where possible, and/or Acknowledgement of Country into their Club Activities and other events to demonstrate respect of the Traditional land owners.

## WHAT IS A WELCOME TO COUNTRY?

A Welcome to Country can be also be known as a Traditional Welcome. A ceremonial welcome to country given by an Aboriginal person who is a traditional land custodian of that country, if possible an Elder. It is to welcome visitors onto their land and to create an opportunity for the Traditional Custodian to give their blessing to an event thereby ensuring safe passage of those who are on the land/in attendance of the occasion.



[A Welcome to Country](#) may take the form of a speech that could be delivered in English or traditional language, and/or a performance that may include a smoking ceremony, dancing, singing and/or Didgeridoo playing.<sup>1</sup>

A Welcome to Country is usually delivered at major events, special occasions and formal meetings.

1. Woolyungah Indigenous Centre and the Director, EED. Guidelines AND Protocols for Welcome to Country, Acknowledgement of People and Country and Aboriginal Cultural Performances. University of Wollongong Australia.

## WHAT IS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY?

An Acknowledgment of Country can be made by someone (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) who is not a Traditional Custodian of the land upon which the statement is made.

This is a gesture of **respect and reconciliation** and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians and to their Country on which the statement is made. It is important that the Acknowledgment of Country occurs by the first person speaking at an event, such as an MC or Chairperson.

An example of an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country is provided below:

*“I’d like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present.”*

Below is an example of a more specific acknowledgement:

*“I’d like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the (people) of the (nation, if they are of a nation) and pay my respects to Elders past and present.”*

## WHAT DOES “TRADITIONAL CUSTODIAN/OWNER” MEAN?

The terms “Traditional Owners” and “Traditional Custodians” describe the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples who populated an area. Today, Traditional Custodians are usually descendants of the original inhabitants and have ongoing cultural, political, spiritual and physical connection with the particular land on which their ancestors lived.<sup>2</sup>

2. Liverpool City Council’s Aboriginal Consultative. Aboriginal Cultural Protocols. Liverpool City Council. [http://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/111732/Aboriginal-Cultural-Protocols-Adopted-by-Council-27-July-2016.pdf](http://www.liverpool.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/111732/Aboriginal-Cultural-Protocols-Adopted-by-Council-27-July-2016.pdf).

## ACTIVITY

To find out your traditional custodian/owner of the land which your club is located on, check out the [AIATSIS Map: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Map](#)

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURE CELEBRATED!

Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not feel safe participating in a sport simply because of discrimination and exclusion. This is where Clubs can be part of the solution so that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can participate in tennis without discrimination.



Tennis NT and Tennis Australia host an annual National Indigenous Tennis Carnival in collaboration with the Evonne Goolagong Foundation. The Carnival has seen nearly 200 Indigenous youth from across Australia participate in a competitive tennis event whilst learning and sharing culture.



Tennis is proud to have role models like Evonne Goolagong Cawley and Ashleigh Barty who have inspired many people with their stories of courage, bravery and pride through tennis.

Top players from the 2018 NITC event were selected to represent Australia as a National Indigenous team at the 2019 Fiji Open. This event saw the Australian Team take out wins in the Men's and Mixed Doubles respectively.



# RECRUITING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES TO YOUR CLUB

Diversity of committees, volunteers and teams has been shown to:

- Increase the connection to new markets
- Increase profitability
- Improve innovation and strategy
- Improve risk management

Your club could develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteer strategy to assist you with creating a truly representative and inclusive environment. There are many tools available to assist your

club with this strategy such as:

- Expand the range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteer opportunities,
- Invest in developing the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers and supporters,
- Increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to become coaches or be involved on committees,
- Improve the awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in your club.

## ACTIVITY

Consider how your club may celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders

- Working with your partners to set up an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural day at your club.
- Including welcome to country/acknowledgment into your club events and meetings
- Displaying flags
- Celebrating First Nation days of significance
- Create a welcome plaque at your club which could include artwork or totems. An example is:

[www.kinyalerrk.com.au](http://www.kinyalerrk.com.au)

# HOW WILL MY CLUB BENEFIT?

- *Opening up your club and members will create a greater sense of belonging and inclusion for all*
- *More members means more funds to reinvest back into your club*
- *Other clubs, councils, sporting associations will take notice and start exploring other ways they can support your club and tell your clubs story*
- *The more you keep your members engaged and connected to the club, the more likely they will stay*
- *Your club will have the potential to be a community hub*
- *This will build your club's capacity to consider other communities or groups to engage with*
- *It will be a fun, fulfilling and wonderful learning journey if you really get into it.*

# TOP 10 TIPS ON HOW TO BE INCLUSIVE

- 1** Understand your local demographics. Your Council can help with this information. A good place to start with is your local Aboriginal Health Co-operative which can be found through [www.naccho.org.au](http://www.naccho.org.au)
- 2** Seek local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or Traditional Custodians to partner with you on your journey. If possible, source funding opportunities if necessary to assist with creating a sustainable program.
- 3** When new people arrive engage with the family, build rapport so they feel comfortable with being at the club and this will assist with them supporting their child into tennis.
- 4** Don't be afraid to ask questions, if done with genuine curiosity, sensitivity and respect this is always a great way to engage.
- 5** Look at ways how your whole club can get behind this initiative.
- 6** Share the history of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures in your area amongst club members.
- 7** Host an activation during days of significance such as NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week.
- 8** Consider having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags around your club.
- 9** Share positive stories about your Club's successes and achievements as an inclusive community.
- 10** Consider incorporating Yulunga card activities in your programs. Ideas can be found here: [www.sportaus.gov.au/yulunga/how\\_to\\_use\\_the\\_cards](http://www.sportaus.gov.au/yulunga/how_to_use_the_cards)

# DID YOU KNOW?

- More than 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are spoken across Australia. Many of these languages are endangered and communities are proactive in revitalisation.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is among the oldest form of art in the world. Like the different languages unique to different cultures, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art has a different meaning for different groups. Colours and styles differ from one nation to another, as do the messages in the stories.
- When coaching some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander athletes, a 'lack of eye contact' with the coach doesn't mean that the player isn't listening or paying attention. In some traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, it is respectful not to look at an authoritative figure in the eye.



# SUCCESS STORIES

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS – TENNIS QUEENSLAND

Tennis Queensland hosted Indigenous Big Serve events in Cairns, Yarrabah and Townsville, as well as hosted Western Rivers Cup that included teams from Charleville, Dalby, Toowoomba, Cunnamulla and St George.

### STEP 1

Partnerships created with:

- Cairns Council
- South West Indigenous Network
- Deadly Tennis
- PCYC Indigenous Programs

### STEP 2

Appointed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ambassador to lead engagement sessions with stakeholders such as Clontarf, Cairns West State School, Yarrabah State School and existing tennis players.

### STEP 3

Provided tennis clinics and activities:

- Coaching sessions
- Multi-week tennis training clinics
- Three Day NAIDOC Week Camp

As a result, Tennis Queensland sent a team of 45 participants along with 11 team leaders to the 2018 National Indigenous Tennis Carnival.

## ACTIVITY

To ensure your participants are feeling included, find out what did they enjoy the most:

- Was it being together?
- Were the formats easy to play?
- What do they want out of tennis?
- What did they like best?

Use this feedback to further evolve your programs and social activities

## EVONNE GOOLAGONG FOUNDATION

The Evonne Goolagong Foundation uses tennis as a vehicle to recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls & boys in order to promote and help provide high quality education and better health through diet and exercise. Since 2005, the Evonne Goolagong Foundation has awarded and assisted 74 educational scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth engaged in the program.

# SUCCESS STORIES

## NAIDOC WEEK YARN PIT

Tennis Australia received a Yarn Pit as a gift from one of our partners (Anglicare) who have been supporting us with developing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As yarn pits have been used for thousands of years as a meeting space by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, we decided to setup the Yarn Pit in Garden Square at Melbourne Park for teams to meet around during NAIDOC week.

Uncle Ian Goolagong, a First Nation Australian ambassador for Anglicare was invited to facilitate Yarn Pit sessions with staff and stakeholders where they could ask questions and learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history.

### STEP 1

A Yarn Pit was donated by Anglicare and set up in Garden Square during the week.

### STEP 2

Uncle Ian Goolagong was appointed to host Yarn Pit gatherings for staff and stakeholders which included smoking ceremonies and talk about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history.

### STEP 3

An online booking facility was set up for staff and stakeholders to book in a Yarn Pit with Ian during NAIDOC week.

As a result, over 200 staff increased their understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and history around the Yarn Pit during NAIDOC week



# RESOURCES

Below is a list of useful resources that could assist you with developing strategies to engage with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Be mindful that:

- This is not a definitive list however a good starting point
- Ensure you look locally – use google, contact your council, community service and health care providers
- Don't be afraid to use the phone and have a chat. A good conversation is always better than an email
- If an organisation that you contact cannot help, isn't interested or is not the best fit, ask for a referral or recommendation.

**National Indigenous Australians Agency**  
[www.indigenous.gov.au/?ck\\_subscriber\\_id=435560141](http://www.indigenous.gov.au/?ck_subscriber_id=435560141)

### Aboriginal Land Councils

[info.australia.gov.au/about-government/government-and-parliament/indigenous-policy-and-programs/land-councils](http://info.australia.gov.au/about-government/government-and-parliament/indigenous-policy-and-programs/land-councils)

### NACCHO

(National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (NACCHO) across the country on Aboriginal health and wellbeing issues)

[www.naccho.org.au/member-services/naccho-member-services/?ck\\_subscriber\\_id=435560141](http://www.naccho.org.au/member-services/naccho-member-services/?ck_subscriber_id=435560141)

### Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation

ANTaR is a national advocacy organisation dedicated specifically to the rights – and overcoming the disadvantage – of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

[www.antar.org.au/](http://www.antar.org.au/)

### Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation. Our vision is for a just, equitable and reconciled Australia. Our purpose is to inspire and enable all Australians to contribute to the reconciliation of the nation.

[www.reconciliation.org.au/](http://www.reconciliation.org.au/)

### Evonne Goolagong Foundation

To give as many Indigenous children the opportunity to be the best they can be. "DREAM – BELIEVE– LEARN – ACHIEVE!" has been Evonne's life motto and has now been adopted by her foundation.

Find out more – [evonnegoolagongfoundation.org.au](http://evonnegoolagongfoundation.org.au)





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