

First Nations Guide



First Nations Respectful Engagement
Internal Protocols



First Nations Respectful Engagement

Internal Protocol for the Endeavour Foundation Group

The Endeavour Foundation Group acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise the continuing connections to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

About our Guides

This guide has been developed to provide an overview of introductory respectful language and protocols in creating cultural safety at the Endeavour Foundation Group. This guide is not to replace consultation with Traditional Owners, local Elders and community. Consultation is essential and actions will depend on the preferences and respect of the peoples involved.

Terminology

When engaging with First Nations peoples, it's crucial to use terminology that reflects respect for cultures, identities, and experiences. This includes using preferred terminologies such as "First Nations peoples," "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," or specific First Nations community names where appropriate. Avoiding outdated and offensive terms is essential, as language shapes perceptions and can either reinforce stereotypes or promote understanding and respect.

First Nations Language

Before colonisation, there were over 600 varying dialects of First Nations languages across Australia. Many of these no longer exist or are currently being revived. Using First Nations language through consultation in our day-to-day work at the Endeavour Foundation Group can help to preserve and promote the significance of First Nations culture.

Respectful language is vital when engaging with First Nations peoples. These principles form the foundation for building meaningful relationships, fostering inclusivity, and promoting mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. In a country with a rich diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures, histories, and languages, it's essential to approach workplace interactions with sensitivity, awareness, and a commitment to cultural competence.

Respectful uses of First Nations Language

When considering giving an Indigenous name to a location / equipment or utilising Indigenous language, the first step is to engage with local Indigenous communities. Elders and Traditional Owners within the immediate local area should be consulted and given the autonomy to govern the process – in both information and timelines. If the consultation with Indigenous stakeholders proves to be unsuccessful, this should be respected. The utilisation of Indigenous naming language should at all times be at the discretion of the local Indigenous community and at no point should their knowledge be taken, used and compromised. For example – Google searched.

A name bestowed by the Indigenous community is borrowed and a decision to reclaim the name by the community must be respected. Historically, Indigenous peoples were banned by colonisers from speaking their languages and therefore, this process needs to be undertaken in a respectful and culturally sensitive manner. Indigenous governance over their language must be maintained.



Respectful Engagement

Respectful engagement goes beyond language to encompass attitudes, behaviours, and actions that demonstrate genuine respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives, knowledges, and rights. This involves listening actively, acknowledging the diverse experiences and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and approaching interactions with humility and cultural sensitivity. Non-Indigenous people should be open to learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, recognising their expertise, and valuing their contributions to the workplace.

Fostering respectful engagement requires ongoing commitment and accountability. This involves challenging stereotypes, confronting biases, and actively working to create an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel valued, respected, and supported. It also requires non-Indigenous people to hold themselves accountable for addressing instances of discrimination, harassment, or exclusion based on cultural identity.

Respectful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia is essential for building inclusive, equitable, and just societies. It requires a commitment to acknowledging First Nations sovereignty, addressing historical injustices, promoting cultural understanding, and supporting Indigenous self-determination. By working together with humility, empathy, and respect, non-Indigenous peoples can contribute to reconciliation, healing, and the realisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights and aspirations.

By embracing the principles of respect, recognition, and reconciliation at the Endeavour Foundation Group, we can contribute to creating an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees feel valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.

