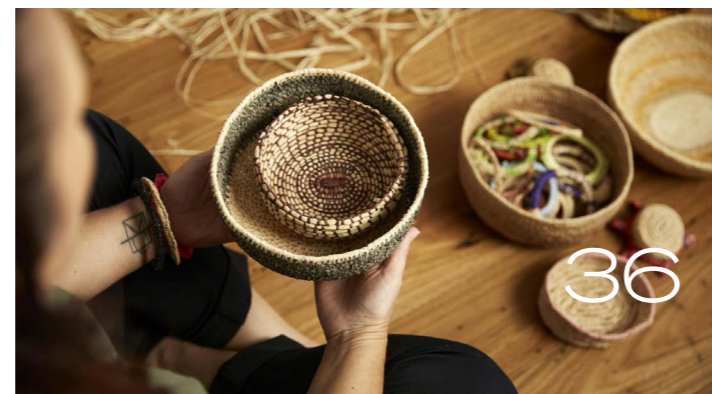
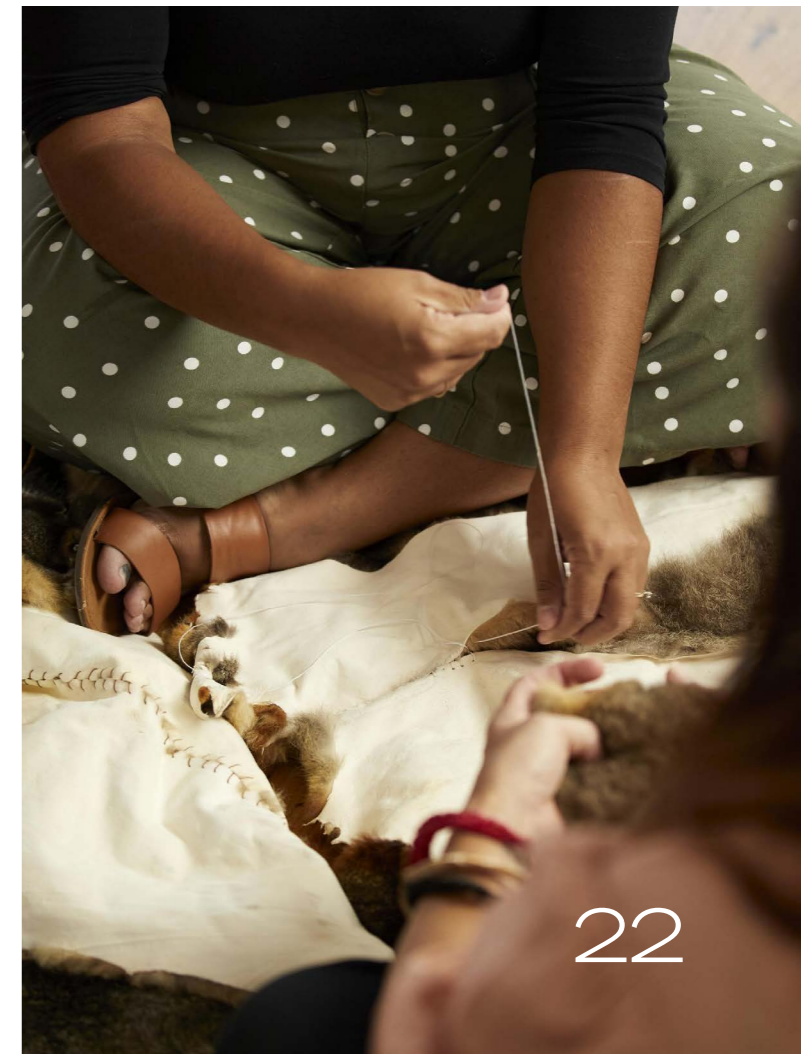


We educate, equip and encourage businesses and educators to understand and embrace Aboriginal culture.



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Connecting people to our
rich Aboriginal culture.

speaking
in
colour

Yaama,

In this thirteenth year of operation, we've experienced a dynamic journey in the business world. The adage of business having its ups and downs holds true, and this year has exemplified that. Amid the post-COVID landscape, our programs and training are back in full force. With a new team at the helm, we've faced unprecedented challenges that stretched our limits.

Consequently, we opted to expand our executive leadership team, emphasize governance, and pivot towards lateral integration, rather than the conventional horizontal approach. While opportunities abound, we've recognized the need to focus rather than spread ourselves thin. We've streamlined processes, rebranded, and are in the process of automation, transitioning the business from individual-centric operations to a functional approach.

Notably, this year has witnessed a shift from being recipients of contracts and funding to actively participating on three boards: **The Ian and Shirley Norman Foundation (ISFN)**, **Allambi Care** and the **Yahda Muru Foundation (YMF)**. As catalysts for potential partnerships between high-performing urban schools and community campuses, we traverse the nation with a vision. In my capacity, I'm dedicated to operational roles at YMF, working as a director to establish these partnerships. The privilege of evaluating the Boosting Female Founders federal funding and contributing to the NSW Treasury First Nations Women's Economic Participation Review adds to the excitement. This review holds promise for female-founded and operated Aboriginal businesses.

Our unwavering vision remains: to foster self-sustaining Aboriginal and First Nations enterprises, allowing individuals and communities to lead life on their terms. We build thriving networks and focus on sector reform and enablers for universal success.

This year, our monthly Aboriginal women's gathering transformed into cultural workshops, while our inaugural annual retreat met resounding success. Keep an eye on our progress. Our social impact indicators continue to astonish even us, with weekly stories that inspire.

National accolades adorn our programs, yet the true honour lies in the regular nominations from our own community, recognizing our efforts and impact. Serving my community, empowering women and girls within it, and leading a devoted team committed to driving change is a privilege I hold dear.

Much love,

Cherie



Cherie Johnson | Founder and Managing Director | Proud Gamilaroi descendant

"The vision has always been to empower community in self-sustainable enterprise, having gainful employment practicing and teaching culture"



Simone Budden | Operations Manager

"I am proud to work for a legacy organisation."

Natalie Stanfield | Aboriginal Education Coordinator | Proud Birpai & Dunghutti woman

"Culture and education are my two passions, working at Speaking in Colour allows me to explore both while helping to empower the next generations."



Ngaire Pakai | Project Officer - Educator | Proud Wiradjuri & Maori woman

"Every day that I work, I can be creative with culture."

Kristin Sheldon | Project Officer - Educator | Learning about her families heritage

"Through educating & truth telling in the wider community, I am part of positive change."



Lynelle Elliott | Project Officer | Proud Wiradjuri woman

"Sharing my passion for Traditional practice ensures Cultural continuity."





Kiah Larrigo | Project Officer | Proud Biripi & Yaegl woman

"Working at Speaking in Colour has helped me to reconnect to my culture. It's important to me to be able to educate people in all stages of life, and now I have the opportunity to do this."



Dr John Lester | Cultural Capacity Educator
Emeritus Professor, Doctor John Lester, a respected Wonnarua Elder

"Aboriginal education is everybody's business."

Tamara Jackson | Project Officer - Wellbeing | Proud Wonnarua woman

"My role enables me to empower & engage our young people, as my teachers have done for me."



Dawn Conlan | Cultural Capacity Educator | Proud Gamilaroi woman

"I believe in community empowerment, using our ways of knowing, being and doing."



Korina Dare | Office Administration

"I am proud to be a part of Speaking in Colour, and knowing the impact we have in schools and workplaces."



Gabriella Johnson | Student | Proud Gamilaroi descendant

"I am proud to teach what I have been taught, it's special."



Sharleen Masters | Project Officer - Educator | Proud Kamilaroi woman

"Speaking in Colour gives me the opportunity to learn, create, share and connect with community, knowledge and cultural practice."



Maurice Perry | Aboriginal Dance and Culture Workshop Facilitator | Proud Worimi man

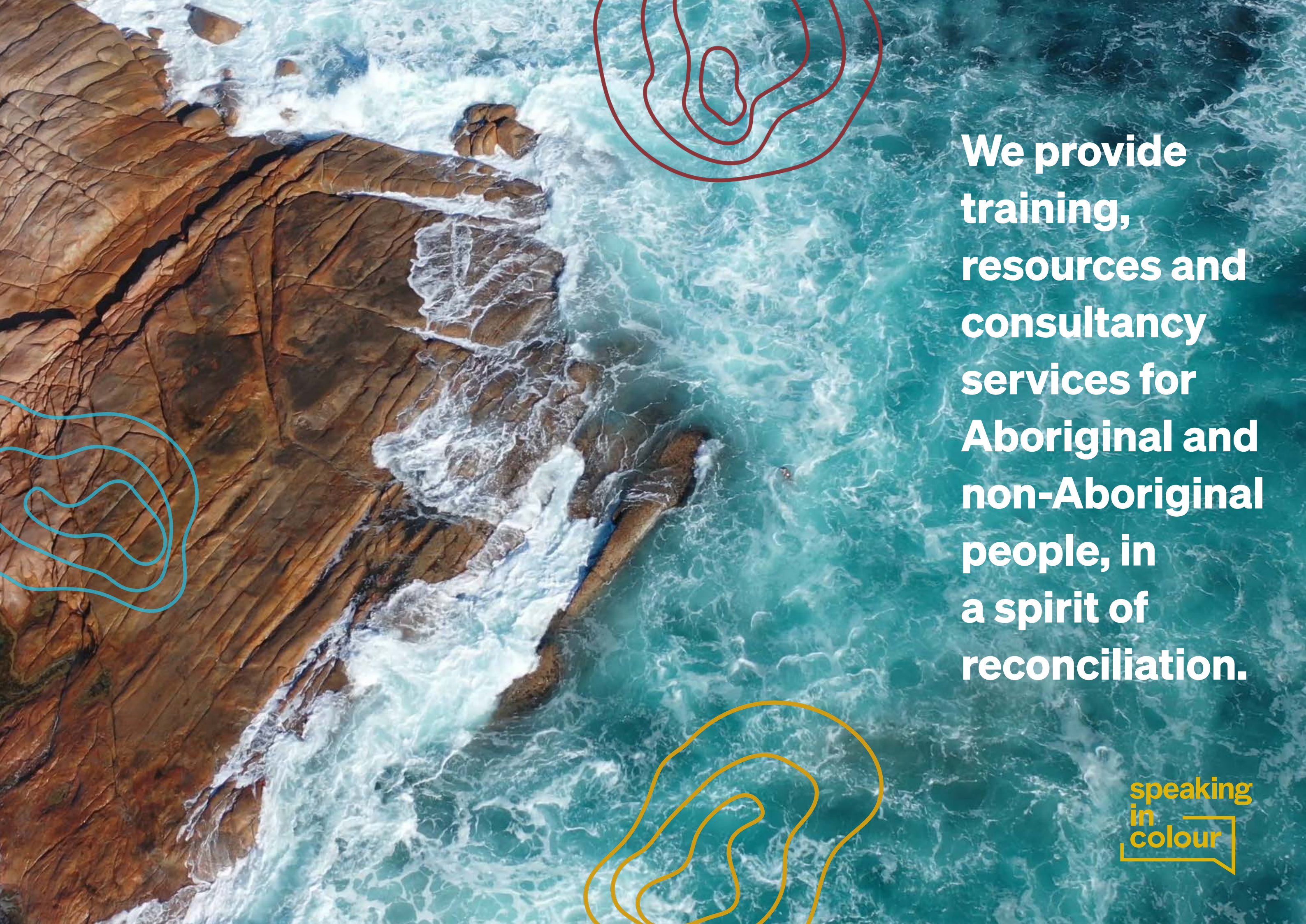
"I love to teach culture & dance."



Berthalia Selina Reuben | Torres Strait Islander Dance and Culture Workshop Facilitator

"Speaking in Colour provides a safe space to share and nurture cultural practice and knowledge."





**We provide
training,
resources and
consultancy
services for
Aboriginal and
non-Aboriginal
people, in
a spirit of
reconciliation.**

**speaking
in
colour**

Speaking in Colour has an Advisory Board to help guide the strategic direction of the business.

our advisors include:

Melanie Hamilton	<p>Melanie is the Managing Director at Hamilton Taggart business advisors and specialises in taxation and accounting for small business. Founder and vice president of the genXwomen business network.</p> <p><i>"I love sharing my knowledge to help the sector grow and for business to be rewarding for owners, their family/s and the wider community."</i></p>
Julie Baird	<p>Julie Baird, Director Museum Archive Libraries & Learning for City of Newcastle including Newcastle Museum and Newcastle Libraries. Julie is the current Vice President of the Australian Museums & Art Galleries Association.</p> <p><i>"Empowering Aboriginal Businesses empowers and enhances all businesses, including our museum and the city that I love."</i></p>
Kate Baartz	<p>Kate is the owner of Baartz & Co, a boutique communications and engagement consultancy. She is strategic communications and engagement professional with almost 20 years industry experience.</p> <p><i>"Learning together helps us all thrive."</i></p>
Geraldine Baker	<p>Geraldine is an Executive Pastor at C3 Church Victory. She loves people, public speaking, and is passionate about seeing people fulfilled in their purpose for life. She and her husband are partners of Urban Joinery, and she has a background in Accounting and business.</p> <p><i>"I believe in the power of cultural education"</i></p>
Teagan Golmeer	<p>Teagan is a proud Arabanna descendant and grew up in Newcastle (Awabakal country). She has worked in the community engagement and environmental sector for over 10 years including in NSW, QLD and WA as well as at an international level as an ambassador to the World Indigenous Network.</p> <p><i>"To promote and protect Indigenous Knowledge systems."</i></p>
Sam Sampson	<p>Sam is co-owner of Aaron Framed It, with over 20 years of managing business planning and strategy, in addition to sales and marketing and overall business management.</p> <p><i>"I strongly feel that the understanding of rich Indigenous cultural knowledge greatly enhances our society."</i></p>

Founder and Managing Director, Cherie Johnson, is involved in a range of boards from corporate to philanthropic.

Since 2021, Cherie has been a cultural advisor to nib health funds and NGM Group.



awards

WINNER	First Nations Education Award SPERA 2022 National Conference for Regional, Rural and Remote Education
FINALIST	2022 Indigenous in Business - 33rd Annual Ethnic Business Awards
WINNER	2022 NSWICC Outstanding Individual Contribution to Indigenous Advocacy
FINALIST	Indigenous Curator of the Year – 2022 IMAGinE Awards
WINNER	AmaGA National Awards – Indigenous Project Maitland Cultural Resurgence Maitland Regional Art Gallery



Our cultural knowledge holders

Our facilitators hold and share our cultural knowledge. We share this knowledge with you in good faith.

As cultural knowledge holders we share our experiences, understandings and ways of being to assist in the development your own understanding of Aboriginal people.

It is not appropriate for you to take this education and replicate it or attempt to teach it yourself.

It is important for Aboriginal peoples self-determination that we are recognised for the knowledges we hold and respected as the cultural teachers of this knowledge.

For too long our knowledge has been discounted, devalued or appropriated.

Please respect this request.

We have designed a series of products and offerings specific for organisations that are looking to begin or extend their Aboriginal cultural education journey.

We provide cultural awareness and capacity training based on your organisation's objectives, delivered by PhD and teacher-qualified community. We also offer cultural immersion and team building; keynotes and advisory.

Our specialist corporate team can help facilitate, guide and support:

- Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP)
- Terminology and Stakeholder handbooks
- Acknowledgement to Country

Our creative team love to collaborate and create bespoke designs and artwork for many different projects:

- Stage design | PwC 'The Outside' Experience, May 2023
- All graphics & artworks | 2023 Speaking in Colour Womens Pro (Surfest), March 2023
- RAP artwork commission | headspace, August 2023

PwC 'The Outside' Experience, May 2023

Speaking in Colour facilitated three artist commissions:

- **Gynea Lily:** created by all attendees of the experience and once completed, was returned to PwC
- **'The Portal':** eight custom, recycled-plastics pieces were completed by our Women's Weavers Group, featured at the entry point to the experience
- Design of the **stage backdrop** for the Welcome Dinner, held every Sunday night over the 4-week instalment
- A keynote was delivered at each of the four Welcome Dinner's
 - 72 hours of immersion drop-in's
 - 2,300 bracelets made by our women in our weavers group, and
 - 4 cosmology 'Stars Talks' were held.



Coles, Interwoven, September 2022

Beginning in Broome, WA, many Coles leadership experienced cultural immersion involving weaving. This was then incorporated in a two-day national tradeshow in Melbourne, where Speaking in Colour provided the Indigenous Teams place activation. As part of these two events, the collected woven items were collaborated to create Bunjil, a Creator being and protector of this land. This was then presented back to National Coles Retail round-up.

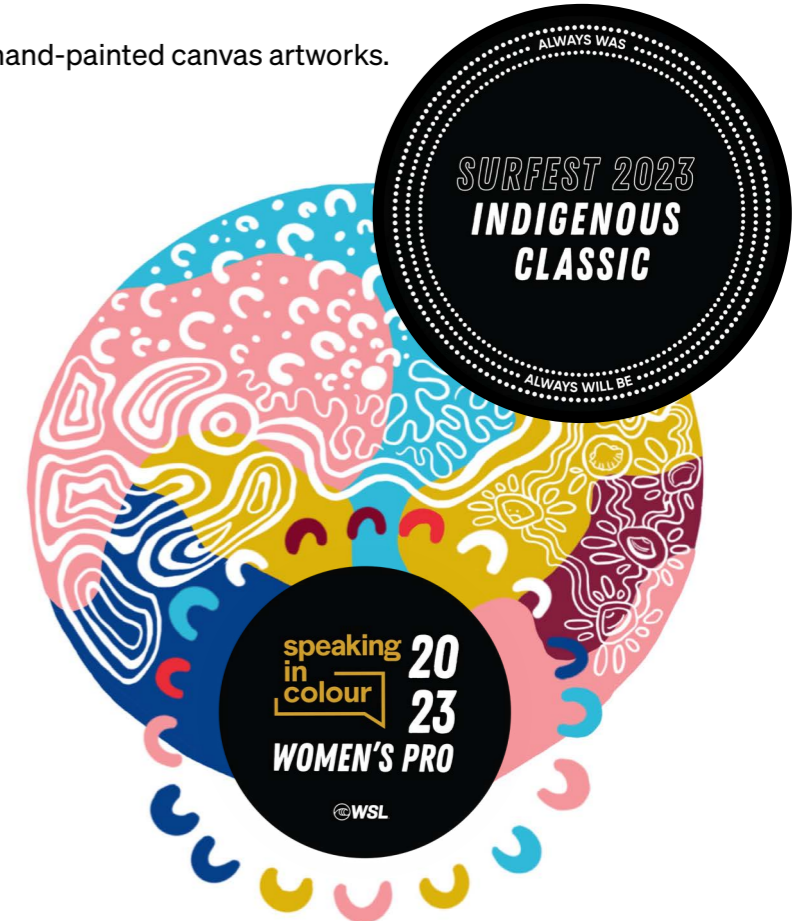
Surfest 2023 - Indigenous Classic

Speaking in Colour was one of four Newcastle Aboriginal businesses to join forces and fund the Indigenous Classic as it would not have gone ahead for 2023. Two days of activations were provided by the Speaking in Colour team, which included Torres Strait Islander Dance and Didgeridoo.

Speaking in Colour Women's Pro 2023

Speaking in Colour held immersive art appreciation and weaving experiences for the public.

- 3 days of activations
- 4 woven gift packs given away including four hand-painted canvas artworks.



Cherie Johnson is also contributes to the following committees:

NSW Treasury - First Nations Women's Economic Participation Review

NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG) member

Boosting Female Founders - Selection Committee



programs

Our training and workshops aim to increase cultural education across our region, and Australia - which will actively help close the existing knowledge gap.

Cultural Workshops: Art Appreciation (Aboriginal Art), Interwoven (Aboriginal Weaving), Possum (Possum Skin Cloak) & Dance (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance)

Students learn about how to be inspired by Traditional Aboriginal practice to create something contemporary in a culturally appropriate way. Each student creates a little keepsake from the day.



NAIDOC Week (full day workshops at schools/community)

National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia in the first week of July each year, to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about Aboriginal cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living cultures on earth. During this week we provide schools and businesses 6 workshops in one day, such as Weaving, Art Appreciation, Aboriginal Dance, Artefacts, Storytelling, Possum Skin Cloaks, Bush Tucker and Bush Critters.



NAIDOC Week Art Workshops (Retail spaces)

Speaking in Colour partner with different retail spaces and offer engaging kids Aboriginal Art workshops, to respect and honour NAIDOC Week. During these workshops, children immerse themselves in the vibrant world of Aboriginal art, learning about the significance of Aboriginal art and its connection to cultural storytelling.

These are available throughout the year, as we have a team of qualified educators who support place activations.



Jarjums Do... Art, Artefacts, Bush Critters, Ceramics, Dance, Possum & Weaving

Children learn how to be inspired by traditional Aboriginal practices to create something contemporary in a culturally appropriate way. Presenters provide face to face guidance to children and educators in creating a keepsake from the day. Educators are given the opportunity to ask and see how to embed Aboriginal inspired practices into their service.

Weaving Workshops (face-to-face or online options)

Hands-on workshops where participants will learn about Traditional Aboriginal weaving, with the opportunity to create a contemporary weaving keepsake (bracelet).



publications

Façon Magazine

Writing Mentor for 'The Indigenous Storyteller Scholarship'

Swell Magazine, Issue 17

'Weaving the Cultural Thread' article

NSW Department of Education - Early Childhood Sector: Quality and Compliance in Practice Newsletter

'Building strong and culturally safe relationships' article



resurgence

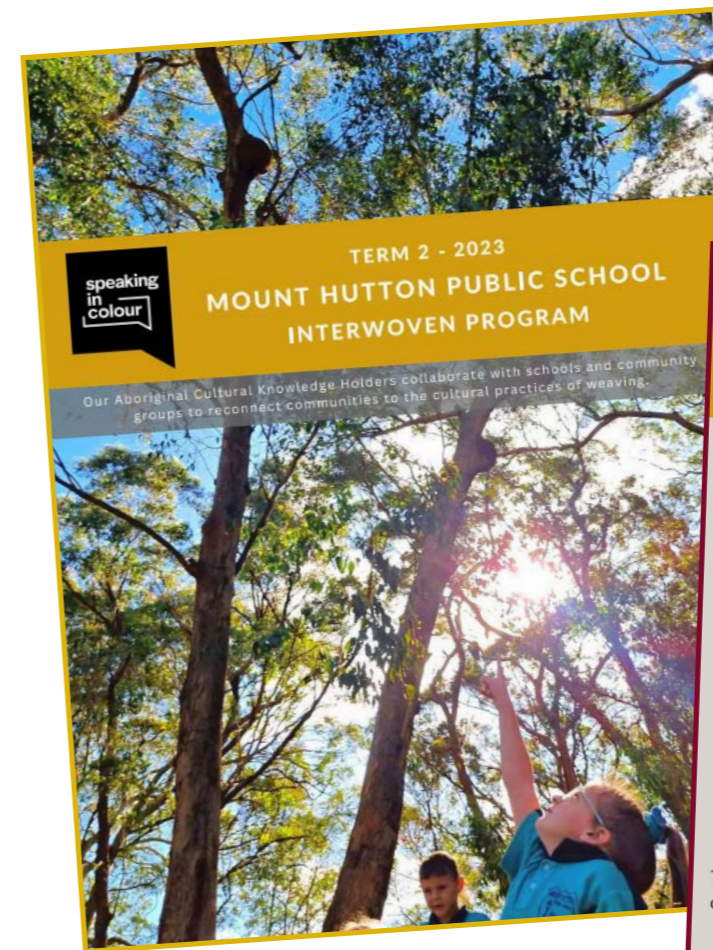
Our training and workshops aim to increase cultural education across our region and Australia, which will actively help close the existing knowledge gap.

interwoven

A wellbeing program for schools and community, where students and staff create contemporary artworks using Aboriginal methodology of weaving.



SCAN TO VIEW THE
2023 CULTURAL
RESURGENCE EXHIBITION
CATALOGUE



PROGRAM PURPOSE

Through whole-school collaboration and the use of Aboriginal weaving techniques, create a sculpture that highlights the cultural knowledge gained through the program.



This hands-on experience will also produce increased staff cultural capacity and strengthen students in multiple areas including:

- Cultural knowledge and skills.
- Development of mentoring skills.
- Increased fine motor and emotional regulation skills.
- Collaborative and independent design and construction.
- Mental and social well-being through mindfulness practices.
- Elevated cultural identities and empowered First Nations students.

possum

A wellbeing program for schools and community where students and staff experience the process of making a Possum Skin Cloak, while teaching the cultural significance and knowledge surrounding these practices.



social impact

We believe in the importance of social responsibility and that's why we devote part of our revenue to directly fund our social impact program.

Annual Cultural Resurgence Exhibition

Participants involved in Cultural Resurgence programs are invited to be part of our annual exhibition at a regional gallery or museum. To be able to share knowledge, create culturally appropriate artworks and have them on display in such a popular venue is a real privilege for all involved.

WINNER | 2023 AmaGA National Awards – Indigenous Project
Maitland Regional Art Gallery, Maitland Cultural Resurgence

2023 Cultural Resurgence Exhibition at the Newcastle Museum

This year's exhibition was held at Newcastle Museum with sponsorship from Newcastle Permanent.

NEWCASTLE PERMANENT
speaking in colour

SOCIAL IMPACT

2023 CULTURAL RESURGENCE EXHIBITION

@NEWCASTLE MUSEUM
11TH MAY - 31ST JULY 2023

Our Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge holders work with schools and community groups teaching either how to make a possum skin cloak or weave making a large scale woven sculpture. These cultural items are owned by the school or community group and loaned for the exhibition period.

OUTCOMES

- 12** featured programs, Resurgence & Possum Skin Cloak
- 150** Elders and community
- 549** Students participated

All schools, community groups and individual participants are featured in the exhibition catalogue.



what is coming up next?

2024 Cultural Resurgence Exhibition
Gosford Regional Art Gallery
December 2024 - January 2025

Annual Cultural Youth Camp & Women's Retreat

With the support of our corporate and government partners, we have been able to offer cultural youth camps and women's retreats, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and women.

We love to see how the process of being involved acts as a catalyst for connectivity and cultural strengthening.

2023 Cultural Youth Camp

We held our second annual Cultural Youth Camp in April 2023.

2	mentors attended (mentees from previous year's camp)
11	schools involved
9	cultural programs held
25	resumes created and reviewed
4	job-readiness panel discussions held
72%	increase in confidence in applying for jobs
40%	increase in being prepared for job interviews

SCAN TO VIEW THE 2023 CULTURAL YOUTH CAMP VIDEO



2023 Aboriginal Women's Retreat

We facilitated our first Aboriginal Women's Retreat in April 2023, which had a focus on unemployed women under the age of 24, living in the Hunter region.

2	families with 3 generations attended
8	cultural programs held
49	women and 17 children attended
12	staff and volunteers from the Community
17	resumes created
4	job-readiness panel discussions held
31%	felt more connected to Community, post-camp
58%	increase in confidence to apply for jobs

SCAN TO VIEW THE 2023 ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S RETREAT VIDEO



what is coming up next?

2024 Cultural Youth Camp
Years 9 - 11, October 2024

2024 Cultural Women's Retreat
October 2024

2024 HSC Cultural & Work-Ready Camp
April & November 2024

PROGRAM	PARTICIPANTS students	PARTICIPANTS teachers/support staff	TOTAL
Resurgence: Interwoven			
Walanga Muru at Macquarie University May 2023 – August 2023	32 students & teachers	-	32
Mount Hutton Public School April 2023 – June 2023	100	26	126
Singleton Public School September 2022 – November 2022	125	40	165
Wollotuka Centre of Indigenous Engagement & Advancement September 2022 – November 2022	38 students & teachers	-	38
Hunter School of the Performing Arts September 2022 – December 2022	18	5	23
Allambi Care Youth Program August 2022 – October 2022	10	3	13
Uniting Caves Beach Preschool July 2022 – September 2022	40	10	50
Resurgence: Possum			
Abermain Public School October 2022 – December 2022	83	20	103
2022-2023 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	446	104	550

*five pre-schools and one Local Aboriginal Land Council Resurgence Programs are currently in progress.



education

Speaking in Colour provides cultural education and resources to embed Aboriginal perspectives into teaching practice.

We aim to create more culturally safe and accepting schools and workplaces empowering our young people.

We have recently achieved NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) accreditation for 4 courses, with another 3 courses set to be added in the coming year.

At Speaking in Colour, we provide:

- NESA-accredited professional development Aboriginals Education topics
- Aboriginal education resources, written, and facilitated by Aboriginal presenters.
- Cultural enrichment and wellbeing programs, such as weaving, possum skin cloak making, art appreciation and artefact making.
- One-off workshops, guest lectures and whole-day NAIDOC Week celebrations in schools, preschools, and community settings.
- Online professional development via our E-learning platform.

**Multiple courses
NESA Accredited!**



Upcoming Teacher Professional Learning (TPL's) offerings:

Aboriginal Pedagogy in EYLF

11.5 hours online E-learning, 2 x 1 hr mentoring

NESA accredited

Cultural Capacity Training

3 hr face-to-face training

How to Embed Aboriginal Perspectives

2 hr training, onsite or online

Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives – Possum Skin Cloak

2 hr learning, onsite or online

NESA accredited

Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives – Interwoven

2 hr learning, onsite or online

NESA accredited

Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives – Creating Safe Spaces

2 hr learning, onsite or online

Embedding Aboriginal Perspectives – Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

2 hr learning, onsite or online

NESA accredited

SCAN TO VIEW
OUR EDUCATORS
WORKSHOPS



education

National Reconciliation Week 2023 - Be a Voice for Generations

Speaking in Colour chose to host National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event in partnership with Newcastle Museum. This was a closed event for our corporate clients and broadcasted live to their wider teams.

On the day, the panel consisted of **Virginia McDonald** (a local Elder), **Jaimon Suey** (a local Youth), **Kristin Sheldon** (a Speaking in Colour educator), **Julie Baird** (Director of New Mu) with Cherie Johnson as moderator.

The discussion explored 'What does a voice for generations' sound like? Who listens to it and what is the call to action? And by involving an ally in this discussion, it demonstrated how an ally can BE a part of this voice and stand with us.



“

A Voice for Generations is a brave theme, and we should take a moment to consider what it means. A voice needs to be able to speak freely, honestly and feel safe. Voices need to be heard and listened to. It is one thing to say we encourage diversity, but it's another to incorporate different opinions and viewpoints.

To this end, as part of our National Reconciliation Week activities, we attempted to tackle this theme by applying a creative lens and hosting a discussion that spanned generations.

As an educator, I know that breakthroughs happen when there are strong voices brave enough to have uncomfortable conversations. Being heard is the start but we need to follow through and make change.

CHERIE JOHNSON, OP-ED.

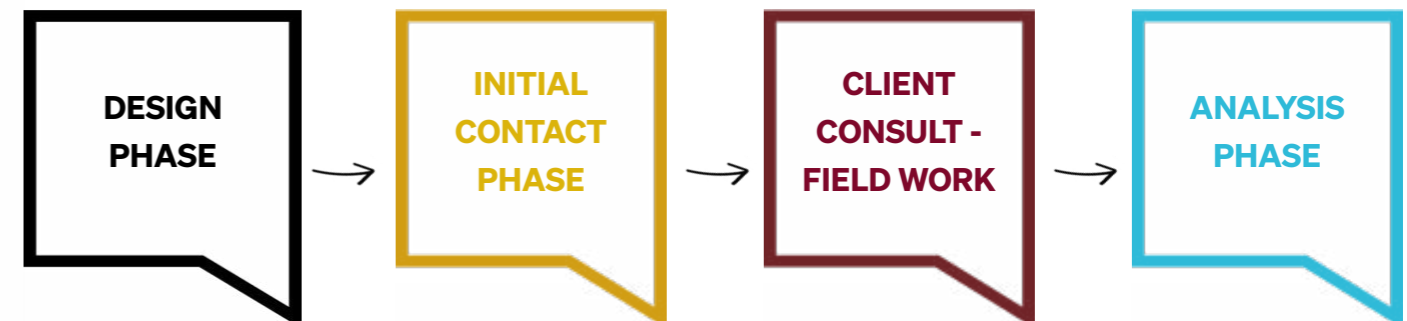
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Department of Education ECEC Needs Analysis (2022)

The NSW Department of Education engaged with Speaking in Colour to conduct Community consultations with the 36 Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCO'S) across the state of NSW, to understand the barriers and the needs, to help support and strengthen their service delivery.

Speaking in Colour conducts research using the Aboriginal methodology of yarning and report writing to allow Community to fully contribute. The information is collected and each individual's feedback is immediately de-identified. The anonymous research is then published in a final report.

The below infographic shows Speaking in Colour's four-step process of how we lay the foundations for project proposals.



“...I feel that a lot of people in positions of power making choices about our service and other similar services, do not necessarily have any cultural awareness of how things might be different in our service in comparison to other services.” (22CO8)

“Recruiting is a problem, but this is systemic due to poor wage and work conditions.” (14JO1)

“As changes arise, we need updates and information straight away. Can there then be a follow up call to check it has been received and understood?” (32CO8)

“Mandatory training in dealing with trauma with both children and families. Not to be a replacement service of mental health services, but the basic needs are able to be met by the staff, and the staff are able to learn ways to work through the conversations and address any of their own personal trauma raised from these conversations/manage their own wellbeing.” (21KO3)

“Ideally Aboriginal people with a background/ experience in early years education - so they know the kinds of issues services face, and they also have the cultural knowledge to support this. Strong Communication skills to be able to clearly and strongly advocate for our services.” (22CO8)





local micro-businesses

weaving resurgence supports local micro-businesses

The traditional Aboriginal practice of weaving is enjoying a resurgence and as a result we are now supporting 13 micro-businesses to meet increasing demand for unique, locally-made Aboriginal weaving.

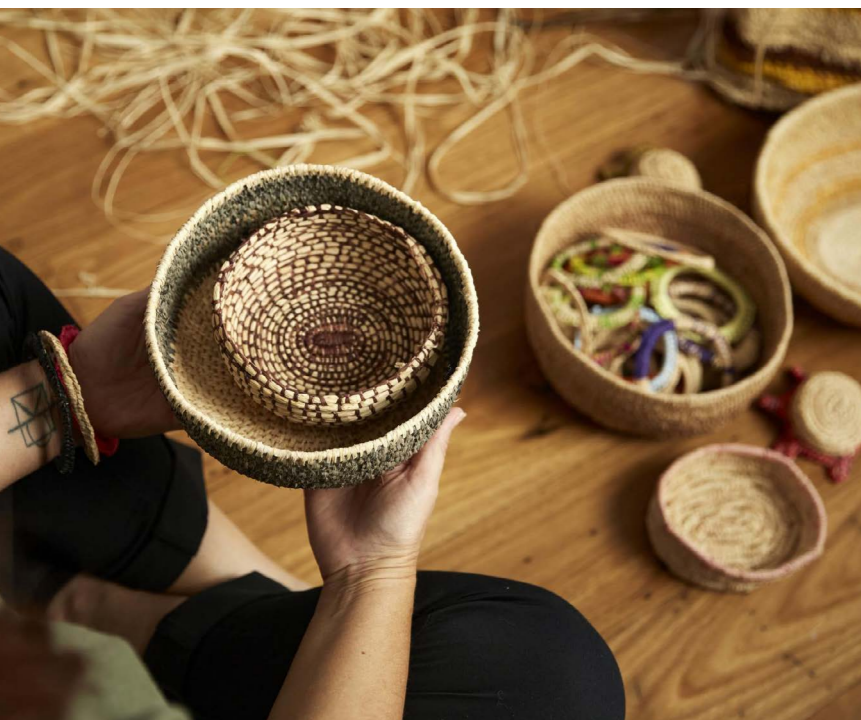
Speaking in Colour's Founder and Managing Director, Cherie Johnson, says the revival of this traditional practice has been inspiring and there is now a whole new generation of weavers ready to share this practice far and wide.

“Over the years, Speaking in Colour has supported dozens of micro-businesses to be established as suppliers with us in one way or another – including dancers, weavers and teachers. Currently, we are supporting 13 weaving suppliers with products available via our online shop.”



All the weaving products purchased through Speaking in Colour include the name of the weaver and the weaver's Language group.

Supporting community is at the heart of Speaking in Colour's approach to business with the corporate and education arms of the business supporting their social impact programs.



our deadly urban art centre is enabling women to thrive. our weavers are:

- Bonnie Strachan**
- Sue Darby**
- Jaimie Hobby**
- Lynelle Elliot**
- Anissa Harwood**
- Gabriella Johnson**
- Kiah Larrigo**
- Emma McDonald**
- Kristin Sheldon**
- Angie Davis**
- Sharleen Masters**
- Shannon Whyte**
- Ngaire Pakai**
- Tamara Jackson**



orders fulfilled so far in 2023:

2,300 units | PwC 'The Outside' Experience, May 2023

80 units | The AMaGA 2023 National Conference, May 2023

900 units | PULiIMA Indigenous Languages and Technology Conference, August 2023

we supply handmade woven items & educational resources to several local business:

Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG)

230 High Street, Maitland NSW 2320

The NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce Inc (NSWICC)

2/1 Sabre Close, Rutherford NSW 2320

Newcastle Visitor Information Centre

430 Hunter Street, Newcastle NSW 2300

SCAN TO LEARN MORE





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