

# 2017 Community HART Awards

## FINALISTS

HELPING ACHIEVE RECONCILIATION TOGETHER





## SUPPORTED BY



## THANKYOU

**Vicki Clark, Chelsea Ayling and Daniel Carter** for judging this year's awards.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our hosts, the **Koorie Heritage Trust**

**Vicki & Trevor Clark** and **Mick Harding** for the prizes awarded to the winners of each category

**Mazart Design Studio** | [www.mazartdesignstudio.com](http://www.mazartdesignstudio.com) for the Artwork and Graphic Design

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# MESSAGE FROM VLGA AND RECONCILIATION VICTORIA

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Community HART Awards celebrates and honours the efforts of local governments and community groups across Victoria, which are Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together throughout the year.

We are inspired by the variety of nominations this year. From memorials and markers to cultural trails and community gardens; from radio programs and festivals to sporting initiatives and health promotion; and from the development of resources and education initiatives to making local spaces culturally safe. The 2017 nominations highlight the diversity of approaches across the state, empowering local communities and building strong relationships.

Reconciliation is not a static or generic term but an approach that can be interpreted and utilised in a myriad of ways; its strength comes from the people involved and the commitment to deepen the relationships based on mutual understanding, respect and genuine reconciliation.

Each year, the stories of the finalists demonstrate that when Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and organisations commit to meaningful,

long-term, two-way relationships, we can achieve tremendous change. In 2017 we have seen more people engaged in reconciliation activities, we have seen local councils take leadership, and community groups develop and champion initiatives that deserve to be shared.

In sharing these stories, we are shining a light on the local initiatives and champions who are making a real difference in their communities and workplaces, so that others might take ideas and inspiration forward. We thank each nominee and finalist for the important work they are doing. We thank Bank Australia for its third year of support of the Community HART Awards, and we are encouraged to see the Bank's commitment to reconciliation grow through its Impact Fund and via the development of a fourth Reconciliation Action Plan. We also thank Local Government Victoria for its support of the 2017 HART Awards.



**Cr Margaret Attley**  
VLGA President



**Belinda Duarte**  
Reconciliation Victoria Co Chair



**Michelle Isles**  
Reconciliation Victoria Co Chair



# ABOUT THE Community HART Awards

The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Community HART Awards (Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together) are delivered in partnership with Reconciliation Victoria, the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) and supported by Bank Australia and Local Government Victoria. They are designed to recognise Victorian partnerships and initiatives that contribute to local reconciliation outcomes.

Since the success of the inaugural awards in 2014, each year has seen an impressive number of quality nominations, featuring a wide breadth of initiatives across the state. Nominations are submitted for Victorian local government and community group initiatives that demonstrate Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people working together, and initiatives that have contributed to reconciliation through relationships, respect and understanding.

## LAST YEAR'S HART AWARD WINNERS AND HIGHLY COMMENDED

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT CATEGORY

#### 2016 WINNER

City of Yarra for the Connecting with the Aboriginal History of Yarra: A Teachers' Resource

#### 2016 HIGHLY COMMENDED

City of Whittlesea for their Sorry Space and associated Sorry Day Activities

### COMMUNITY ORGANISATION CATEGORY

#### 2016 WINNER

Geelong One Fire Reconciliation Group & Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative for their Reconciliation in the Park (Geelong) Festival

#### 2016 HIGHLY COMMENDED

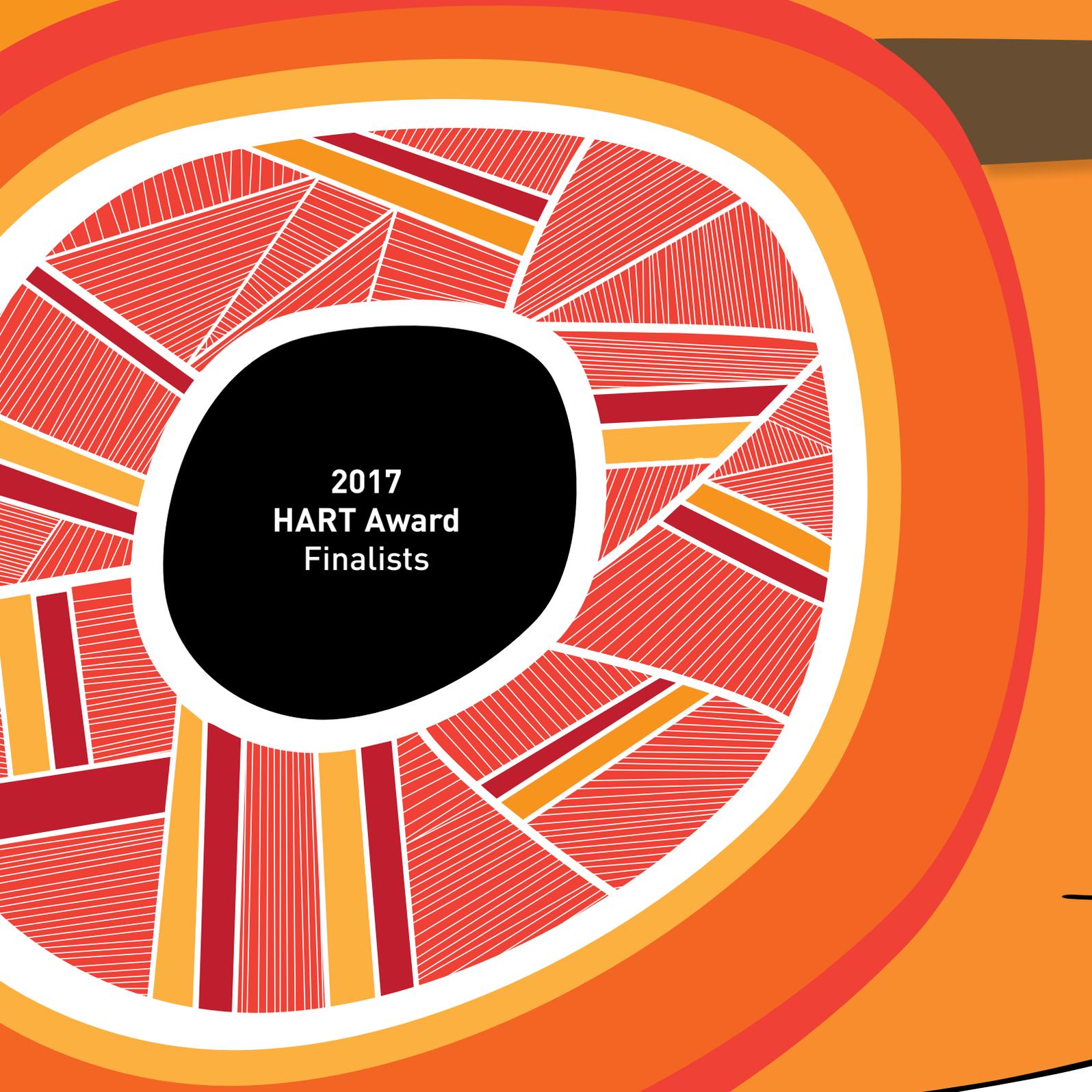
Wandooon Estate Aboriginal Corporation received highly commended last year for Coranderrk Aboriginal Mission Station

Check out [www.reconciliationvic.org.au](http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au) for previous years winners

## BACKGROUND TO THE AWARDS

The VLGA and Reconciliation Victoria first dreamt of the HART Awards to promote the impressive Reconciliation initiatives happening across Victoria as well as to encourage and inspire community groups and local governments to engage with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We believe the Community HART Awards provide an opportunity to have an important impact on Reconciliation at the local level through the development of meaningful relationships and opportunities for healing.



**2017  
HART Award  
Finalists**

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT CATEGORY

## RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA BULLAWAH CULTURAL TRAIL PROJECT

The Bullawah Cultural Trail was developed along the Ovens River shared path to showcase, share and record our local Aboriginal cultural heritage. The word 'Bullawah' is a Pangerang word and means "two over the river" and signifies the new suspension bridges that are now providing access to areas of the landscape that had not been possible previously. Bullawah also signifies Indigenous and non-Indigenous people walking together hand in hand toward reconciliation and the coming together of cultures. The Bullawah Cultural Trail incorporates interpretive signage, sculptures, public art, short films, medicinal plants, bush tucker and the Marmungun Rock that honours local Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in the community.



## CITY OF BALLARAT LIBRARY

Since 2015, the City of Ballarat Library has been transformed into an engaging, welcoming and respectful space for the Aboriginal community. A new partnership has been built between the Ballarat Library and members of the Councils Koorie Engagement Action Group (KEAG) and the wider Aboriginal community. This has led to new initiatives and measures to make the library a more welcoming space, such as flags, Indigenous collection of resources, and welcome mat. There has also been a marked increase in cultural awareness programs and events being delivered by the library with increased attendance and positive feedback from the community.



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CATEGORY

### **CITY OF CASEY: VALLEY BROOK KINDERGARTEN YARNING NETWORKS AND WORKSHOPS**

Local Yarning Networks and Workshops have been established by Diana Bellion and the team of educators at the Valley Brook Kindergarten, in partnership with professionals supporting the Indigenous community and local Elders from the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung Peoples.

These sessions aim to increase educators' knowledge, build respect and increase understanding of Australian history and cultures. Through interactive and reflective Yarning Sessions, educators realise the importance for all Australian early childhood services to celebrate Aboriginal perspectives within their programs. The sessions include opportunities to explore beliefs, values and develop confidence to support a sense of place and belonging for all children and families within diverse communities across the City of Casey.



### **GANNAWARRA SHIRE A COMMEMORATION TO THE STOLEN GENERATION**

Gannawarra Shire Council's project came about when Elder Auntie Shirley McGee sought support for a memorial for the Stolen Generation of which she was a member. Gannawarra Shire Council's strong relationship with local Elders was a vital part in the process of developing this concept. Council saw the need to recognise and show respect for the Stolen Generation and through collaboration with local Elders and community partners the Stolen Generation Plaque project was thoughtfully developed. The plaque was unveiled in 2017 and is the centrepiece of the Gannawarra Children's Centre sensory garden which serves as a place of remembrance for those children who were removed from their families, culture and communities.



## **MILDURA RURAL CITY COUNCIL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT**

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial project was delivered by Mildura Rural City Council in collaboration with the local Aboriginal Community.

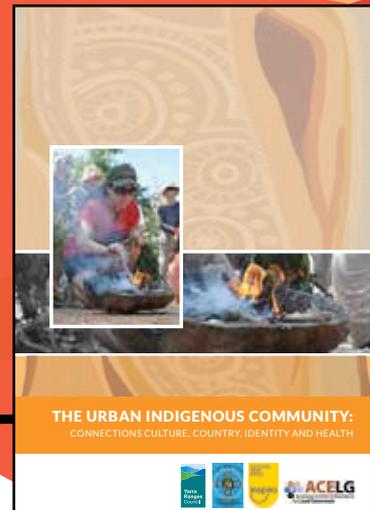
The project delivered a permanent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial which sits proudly in Mildura's Henderson Park, creating a foundation for future cultural and historical learning, healing, recognition as well as a space for conversations about reconciliation within the Mildura community.

The project created an opportunity for collective action in community recognition, healing and reconciliation. The collaborative efforts and involvement of community from start to finish highlighted exactly what is needed for genuine community engagement and how to truly strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.



## **YARRA RANGES COUNCIL THE URBAN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY, CONNECTION TO CULTURE, COUNTRY, IDENTITY AND HEALTH RESEARCH PROJECT**

Yarra Ranges Council with partners, Healesville Indigenous Community Services Association and Inspiro Community Health embarked on the research project offering new knowledge regarding the complexities of urban Indigenous culture, the importance and authenticity of identity and of Country, and their critical connections to health and wellbeing in a contemporary urban context. The Project Report provides local government and others with effective strategies to improve Indigenous health and wellbeing and to assist with effective, culturally informed planning and evaluation. The Report also highlights Indigenous culture and heritage as that of all who call Australian home.



## COMMUNITY CATEGORIES - SMALL

### **MULLAGH WILLS FOUNDATION RECONCILIATION THROUGH SPORT - "JOURNEY TO THE G"**

The Mullagh Wills Foundation initiated the "Journey to the G" project in celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1866 Boxing Day match between the MCC and the All Aboriginal Cricket Team. The Mullagh Wills Foundation is a volunteer run organisation that worked with 11 Councils to promote reconciliation through Sport and increase community awareness of the contributions made to sport and the community by Johnny Mullagh and Tom Wills who were members of the first All Aboriginal Cricket team.



### **PHOENIX FM KOORI SHOUT-OUT**

Phoenix FM's Indigenous Program "Koori Shout-Out" provides a great opportunity on a weekly basis for both the local Central Victorian Indigenous Community and the wider community to get to hear about what is happening in our region. The program runs for two hours a week and includes interviews, local and national Indigenous news and of course some great Indigenous music. Koori Shout-Out is presented by a three person team – Ed Story, Skye Anderson and Anne Conway with others assisting in research and transport. Koori Shout-Out is an example of Phoenix FM's commitment to Indigenous Broadcasting.



## **TARERER GUNDITJ PROJECT ASSOCIATION INC TARERER FESTIVAL, 'SHARING CULTURE'**

The Tarerer festival is primarily a music festival encouraging Koorie, Non-Koorie and other nationalities in a celebration of the art and culture of the South West district and includes: music, dance, visual arts and crafts and environmental exchange.

Now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year the Tarerer Festival, 'Sharing Culture' 2017 was no exception with Irish Celtic, Philippine, Scottish Celtic and an element of Japanese culture amazing the audience with our show of unity, brilliant talent and respect for each other. In addition to this Tarerer initiated an Aboriginal dance project for young girls and boys in the lead up to our festival. Tarerer was also involved in an event called Culture Creativity and Place II, an Aboriginal water ceremony. Canadian First Nation representatives were also invited to attend who enjoyed their stay and experience.

## **WARRNAMBOOL COMMUNITY GARDEN INC. INDIGENOUS RECOGNITION SEAT**

Warrnambool Community Garden Inc. has been working closely with local Indigenous Elder Rob Lowe Snr and others on producing and installing a recognition seat at the Community Garden. This has provided an opportunity for Rob to come along and tell the story of why this area is significant for the local Indigenous people and to pass on other cultural heritage information. In addition to the seat we have also installed a bush-food garden to educate people on how to grow native plants with a food or medicinal value. It is also a beautiful space where people can enjoy and learn about the plants and their use in the kitchen, including in some cases the Indigenous name of the plant.



# COMMUNITY CATEGORIES - LARGE

## COHEALTH

### WELLNESS DREAMING – PREVENTION TEAM

cohealth is a community health organisation providing health support services across Melbourne's CBD, northern and western suburbs. Wellness Dreaming is a highly successful Koolin-Balit initiative, which built the skills of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to work together in facilitating strength-based conversations - Dreaming Circles, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in community settings.

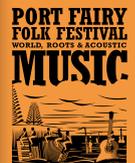
It has:

- Encouraged people to flip their thinking away from what's wrong and towards what's STRONG in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- Worked in partnership to build upon the capacity of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workforce in the north-west metropolitan region to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community
- Fostered the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, enabling local, community-led, culturally appropriate actions for wellbeing
- Developed, trained and promoted strengths-based approaches with stakeholders in local government, education, employment, housing, health, mainstream, non-government and community controlled sectors

## PORT FAIRY FOLK FESTIVAL COMMITTEE INC.

### 2017 OPENING CEREMONY TAARNDIEN CHUURNUURN – 'BIG RIVER' – THE MILKY WAY

The 41<sup>st</sup> Port Fairy Folk Festival opening ceremony Taarndien Chuurnuurn – 'Big River' – The Milky Way celebrated the culture of Pyipgil (Port Fairy) Peek Whurrong country. It was a project that exemplified reconciliation, collaboration and celebration. Local Indigenous artists worked with school and community groups to gather in ceremony to welcome all and open the festival with stories, dance and song from this country. It featured the Koontapool Kaarweeyn Dancers, Brett Clarke, Andy Alberts and images by Fiona Clarke telling the story of "Big River" that stretches across our southern skies, representing the fires of the ancestors camped along the Big River.



cohealth

**THE SOVEREIGN HILL MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION/  
WATHAURUNG ABORIGINAL CORPORATION  
T/A WADAWURRUNG  
GNARRWIRING NGITJ ('LEARNING TOGETHER')  
FESTIVAL**

Last year marked the first year of the Gnarrwirring Ngitj ('Learning Together') Festival, a program of events taking place during Reconciliation Week that was developed by Sovereign Hill Museums Association in partnership with Wadawurrung, the Traditional Owners in Ballarat. Through a varied program of guided tours, lectures, street performances and workshops, the festival served to educate attendees about Wadawurrung history, as well as the part played by the local Aboriginal people in the Victorian Gold Rushes. The Gnarrwirring Ngitj Festival has been nominated for being an outstanding local initiative which fully reflects its aim of 'learning together'.



**VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE  
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE TEAM**

The VAHS Healthy Lifestyle Team sponsored 'parkrun' (a free, weekly, 5k timed run) to help create new event locations in three suburbs in Victoria: Lalor, Darebin, and Echuca. These suburbs have large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, and these parkruns are unique in that they begin each run with an Acknowledgement of Country, and display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. These initiatives have successfully increased the number of Aboriginal participants in parkrun, and have increased exposure and education of Aboriginal culture to non-Indigenous participants—thereby building relationships, and increasing respect and understanding.



# ABOUT US



Reconciliation Victoria was established in 2002, a product of the people's movement for Reconciliation in Victoria. Governed by a Council of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Co-Chairs.

We are the state-wide body for promoting reconciliation and act as a focal point for advancing deeper understanding, respect and justice for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our work focusses on supporting the growth of Local Reconciliation Groups and promoting reconciliation across the local government sector, through a range of initiatives, facilitating connections and sharing resources.

Visit our website for information on our programs and for opportunities to get involved in reconciliation in Victoria.

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

The VLGA is a membership organisation and peak body for councillors, community leaders and local governments. We work to strengthen partnerships and collaboration between communities and the local structures that govern them.

Our role is to support, mentor, develop and enhance the knowledge and practice of councillors in governance and leadership; advocating for sustainable sector reform; and delivering projects and developing tools that assist councils to connect to their communities.

Building responsive and democratic local governance is at the heart of our role.

The VLGA will 'walk its talk' on reconciliation with Treaty and Indigenous self-determination. The VLGA will take active steps in building relationships, respect and trust between the Association, Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader local government sector.

# MAGGOLEE: Here In This Place

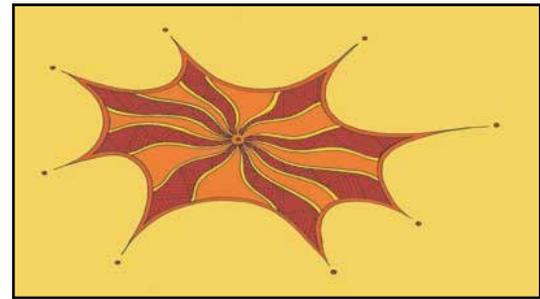
We encourage local governments to access and utilise the Maggolee website which celebrates good practice in Victorian local government Aboriginal engagement and reconciliation and aims to bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, local communities and the councils that serve them together.

The Maggolee website has been developed by Reconciliation Victoria, with funding from the Victorian Government, as a resource for local councils to work more closely with Aboriginal communities. The site includes information on policy and programs, protocols and cultural awareness, key contacts, relevant local data, news and events.

It contains information about each of the 79 Victorian local government areas, and about actions councils can take across key function areas to build closer relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to progress reconciliation.

The website is a place where councils can find ideas and resources to enable:

- Stronger partnerships between Aboriginal communities and local government
- More Aboriginal employment in local government
- Wider use of council services by Aboriginal people
- Stronger council and community support for reconciliation
- Greater involvement of Aboriginal people in the development of council policies
- Deeper appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal culture
- Engagement with the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Local Government Action Plan.



Maggolee also allows councils to showcase their work through their own dedicated space where they can detail services, policies and other initiatives that support Aboriginal communities.

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



Ferne Millen Photography

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