

OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION



Artwork: Sid Domic *Together*

Modern reconciliation was built on the vision of a united Australia with the emergence of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation in 1991: “which respects this land of ours; values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage; and provides justice and equity for all”. These are core values held deeply within Griffith University and we are proud to launch our own statement on reconciliation, one that embeds truth telling, historical accuracy and acknowledges there is still much work to do in building a brighter future for all. Griffith University is committed to becoming a safe place, free from discrimination and actions which harm others. This means a zero tolerance to racism in condemning racist behaviour and actively seeking to eliminate racism at all levels. We will continue to maintain strong connections with cultural and spiritual practices that support resilience, in acknowledging Elders past and present, in providing Indigenous people the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of their Ancestors with pride, self-respect and dignity. In this way, Griffith will grow as an institution where Indigenous staff and students can actively participate and be proud to excel in an environment that celebrates their unique cultural identities, their knowledges, and histories, their ways of knowing, their ways of being and ways of doing.

Griffith University Reconciliation Statement

It is in respecting and the embedding of Indigenous knowledges and values that Australian universities can grow their understanding and mark themselves as unique and welcoming institutions of learning for people from all backgrounds. Developing an understanding of the world that draws from both Western and Indigenous knowledges is important for universities as institutions and in the practice of contemporary research and higher education. At Griffith we believe that true reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples is built on relationships of respect that honour both our similarities and our differences. We respect the common ground we all share and acknowledge the gaps in our experiences in having come together. Reconciliation allows us the opportunity to make Griffith a better place to learn, to teach, to conduct research and to work, striving to become a benchmark university that holds social justice and truth telling at the very heart of everything we do.

At Griffith we are led by our values in creating a brighter future for all where everyone should be given the opportunity to make a positive difference to themselves and others. We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have maintained unique relationships to the land, sea, waterways, and the air above and around us over tens of thousands of years as the oldest continuous surviving culture in the world and we acknowledge Aboriginal Australians as Traditional Owners within our campuses. Our passion and commitment to work with all staff, students, and external partners, in putting Indigenous knowledges and peoples first, is at the core of our values, and we extend this acknowledgment to every individual within our community.

Griffith University strives to be a place where all peoples of all cultures feel valued and respected, and where Indigenous Australian people, cultures, knowledges, experiences, and perspectives, form an integral part of our learning, teaching, research, and community engagement.

Reconciliation is entwined in our processes of strategic planning, and we commit to achieving ‘real life’ outcomes. We commit to implement, monitor, and evaluate the embedding of Indigenous value systems and knowledges into university structures, our learning and teaching and into our research. This includes embedding Indigenous knowledges into curriculum, and formal strategies that ensure that students take with them as graduates a strong foundational understanding of Indigenous values and knowledges. Griffith stays strong to our commitment to social justice, authentically translating our values into actions, embedding Indigenous voices into planning and outcomes, and supporting co-design with Indigenous people, and their unique approaches to learning, teaching and research. In this implementation, the intellectual property rights of Indigenous knowledges must be appropriately acknowledged, respected, and understood.

We believe all staff and students should have unimpeded access to the support and opportunities they need to succeed within a culturally safe environment as part of their individual lifelong learning. We acknowledge that reconciliation is a shared process where every student and staff member have a role to play in effecting positive change in building a better, more inclusive Australia. Griffith takes an ‘all of organisation’ approach to ownership in growing reconciliation to providing the tools within our learning, teaching, and research to effect this change at all levels of the University and beyond. We hold ourselves accountable to the belief that reconciliation is everybody’s business.