

RMIT UNIVERSITY

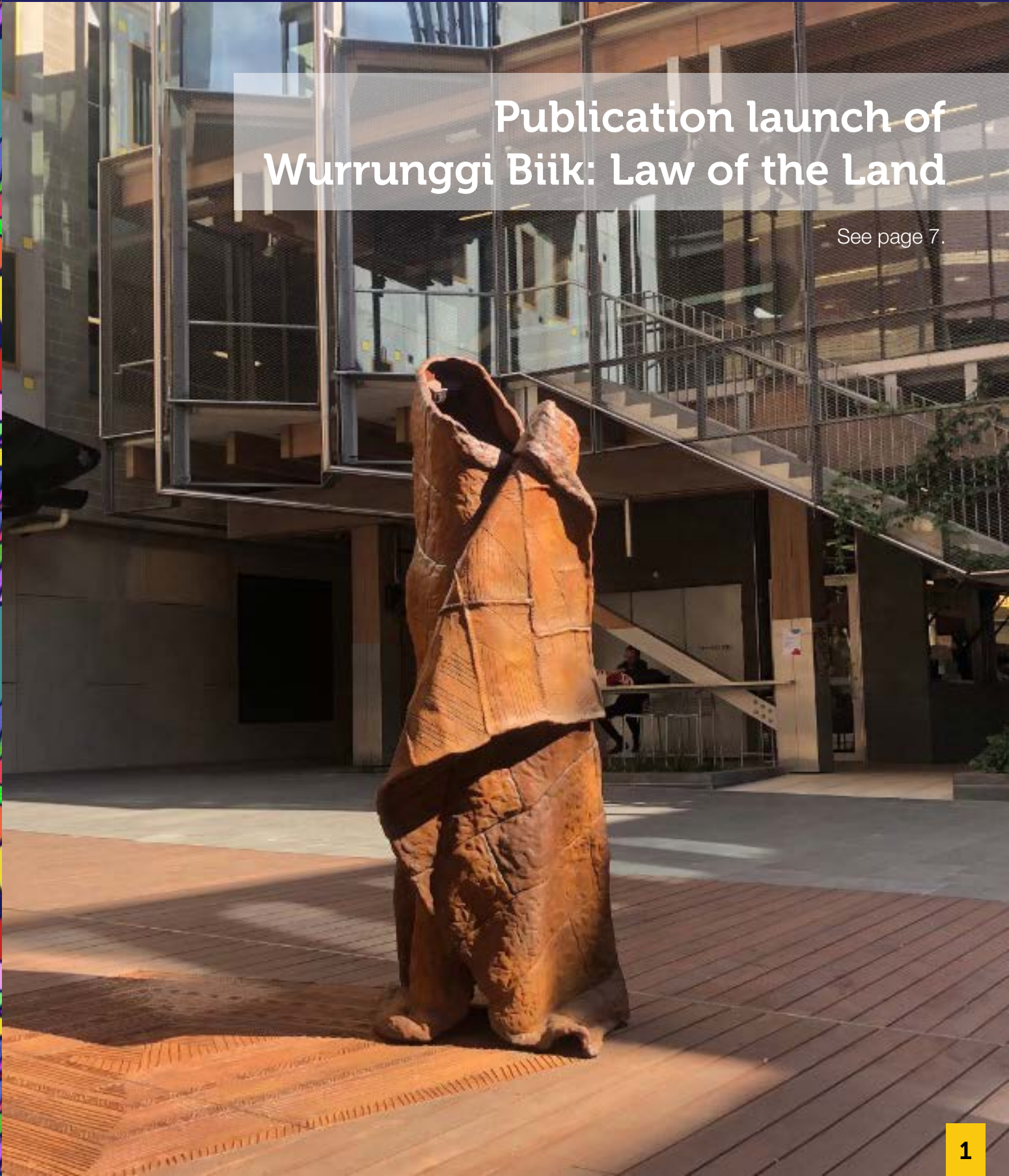
# NGARARA WILLIM NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 6 OCTOBER 2020

## Publication launch of Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land

See page 7.



## Significant and important dates

26 Oct - 10 Nov – Deadly STEM Experience

3 Nov – Public Holiday

8 - 15 Nov – NAIDOC Week

23 - 26 Nov – Deadly Careers Employer Workshops

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## Womin Djeka! Welcome to the 6th edition

Womin Djeka!

As we head into the last months of the year, we look forward to celebrating the achievements of our students.

We are still in the poorneet (tadpole) season and you might have been able to hear or see frogs if you are near the waterways and wetlands as they come together for breeding.

In this October issue, we hear from our student Kimberley Lovegrove and Deadly Alumni, Tiana Koehrer.

As our students begin their end of year exams and assessments, we want to remind them that we have resources and tips on how to keep on top of things and that tutoring is still available.

Ngarara Willim students and staff also engaged in two Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Community Blended (AMHFA) courses delivered by Girraway Ganyi Consultancy.

Our annual Deadly Day of Science will be delivered online this year and includes a name change to 'Deadly STEM Experience' to cater for the change in delivery. The program is running from the 26th October to 10th November and will actively engage students in a mix of culture and STEM themed sessions and workshops. Students will also get the opportunity to meet current students studying at RMIT and engage with our Alumni.

The Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land online publication was recently launched. We encourage all to get online and have a read at [issuu.com/rmit610/docs/wurrunggi\\_biik\\_\\_lawoftheland/10](https://issuu.com/rmit610/docs/wurrunggi_biik__lawoftheland/10)

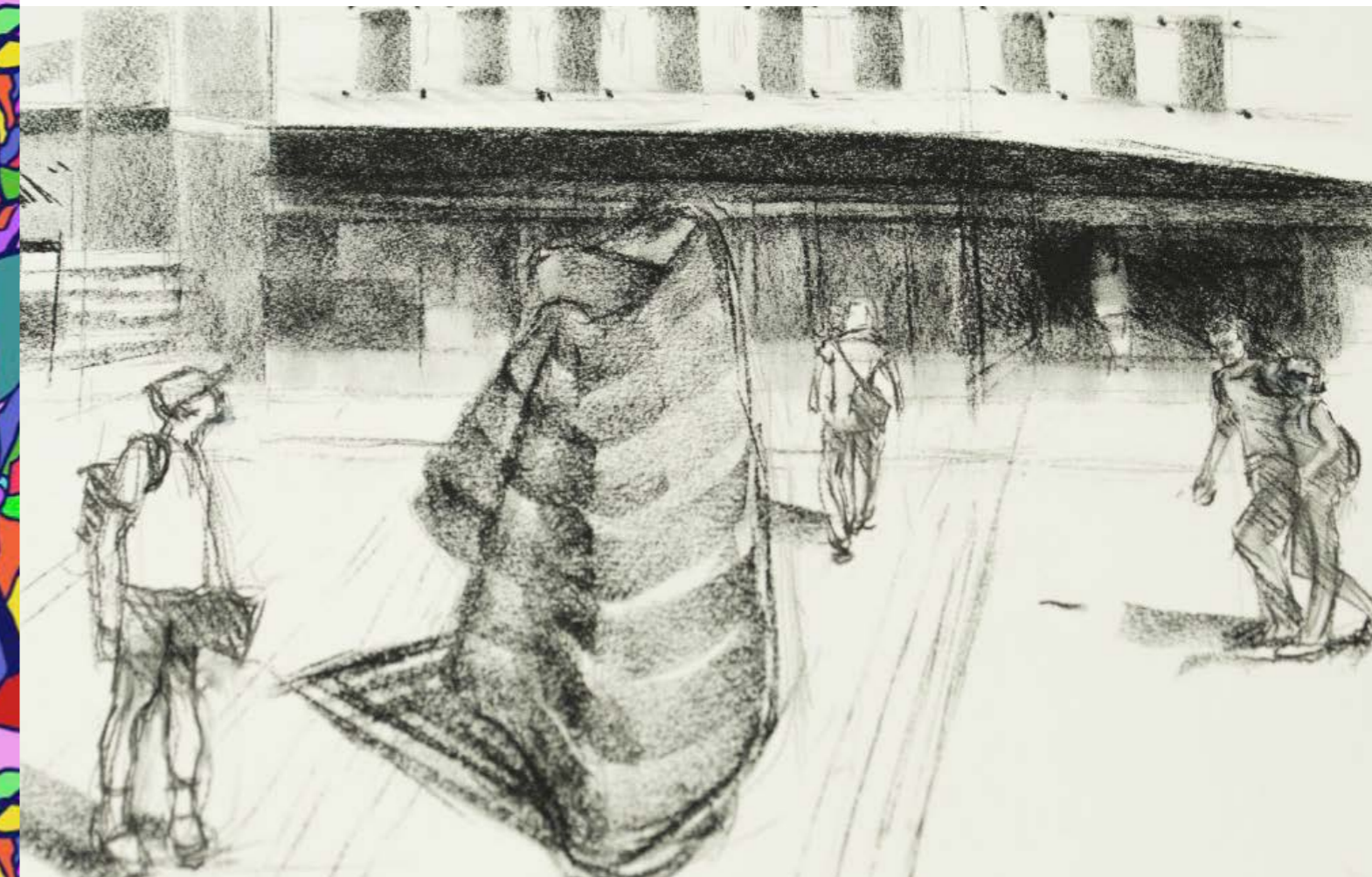
Congratulations to all involved.

Ngarara Willim and RMIT Short Courses have worked closely with the Vocational Business Education team to provide the Certificate IV in Project Management Practice to 16 Community members. The course is delivered online one day a week over eleven weeks.

Due to overwhelming interest we are working towards a second intake for February 2021.

We are particularly excited and proud of this program because it will strengthen the skills within our community.

We wish you all a wonderful NAIDOC Week!



# Preparing for Assessments and Exams

It's that time of the year where our students are managing their final assessments and exams. At the best of times this can be stressful and overwhelming but the shift to remote learning adds new challenges.

Even with the added challenge of online learning we would like to remind you that basic principles like effective time management and accessing support services can greatly reduce your stress levels and improve your outcomes.

You will be pleased to know that we still have loads of resources available and staff who are extremely knowledgeable to help keep you on track.

These include our Academic Support advisors and tutors. We can help you with a range of things from planning out your time, and mapping assessments, to brainstorming your ideas and helping you access resources. We really encourage you to contact us with any issues or challenges that you are facing that might be impeding on your studies.

Ngarara Willim staff consider themselves to be part of your support team and academic journey!

A practical way we can provide academic support is through the Ngarara Willim Tutoring Program. Students can apply for up to two (2) hours of tutoring per course per week for free. Applications for tutoring can be found on the Ngarara Willim website (link) or contact Ngarara Willim staff.

RMIT University provides other support services for all students. The Equitable Learning Service provide support and equal opportunities for students with a disability, long-term illness and/or mental health condition and primary carers of individuals with a disability. If you would like to access this service, feel free to contact the Ngarara Willim Centre to arrange a personal introduction with staff.

## Support while you study:

- Ngarara Willim Tutoring Program
- Enrolment Support Lab
- Study and Learning Centre
- Equitable Learning Services (ELS)
- Student Counselling
- Student Wellbeing support

At Ngarara Willim, we aim to make this transition to learning as smooth and as easy as possible for you. Remember help is available - Make sure you access it early!

Contact us on: **9925 4885**

## 7 tips for balancing work, life and study

- Create yourself a dedicated study space
- Stay connected to your family, friends and community- have a social outlet
- Plan your time or day - Be realistic with your expectations
- Get out of the house - take breaks away from the screen and exercise
- Keep your end goal in mind - It's a long journey
- Learn in a way that suits your lifestyle - perhaps study at different times of the day
- Take offers of help and support AND ask for help



## Ngarara Willim Tutoring

Are you having difficulty understanding the course work?

Are you finding it hard to get motivated?

Or maybe you need someone to explain to you the feedback you have received on your assessments?

That is where you would benefit with a tutor and some Academic Support.

When you work with a tutor, not only do they help you understand your assignments and help motivate you, you also have someone who can cheer you on and listen to what you think about the course. The tutors we have as part of the Ngarara Willim Tutoring Scheme have already done the course you are currently in.

[Apply here and drop Carlie and Catherine an email and we will start organising you a tutor today!](#)

# Student Spotlight: Kimberly Lovegrove



**Name:** Kimberly Lovegrove

**Mob:** Ngarrindjeri

**Course:** Graduate Certificate Business Administration

## Tell us about yourself (Your background/your journey)?

In 2013, I moved to Melbourne from Adelaide and studied at another institution which was not supportive at all. I did some researching and found out about a business course at RMIT.

In 2014, I was studying and kick off my comedy career leading on to 2017 and 2018, I was able to represent Victoria at Deadly Funny.

## What/who inspired you to study at RMIT?

My goal when looking for other courses in Public Relations, I found a great program at RMIT and was inspired to enrol. Fast forward to my first class, my lecturer reassured me that the decision to study at RMIT was a great one!

## What was it like transitioning to university?

When I moved to Melbourne I was staying at a hostel and typically kept to myself. While also studying at another University, there weren't any other Aboriginal students that I could connect with, so my first 6 months in Melbourne was lonely. Things changed for me in a positive way when I started at RMIT and was immediately able to connect with other Aboriginal students at the Ngarara Willim Gama-Dji dinner. I immediately felt this sense of belonging as I would have if I was at home in South Australia.

## What do you enjoy most about engaging with Ngarara Willim?

As soon as you walk in to Ngarara Willim, there's always someone there with a smile on their face and I always feel welcomed. Over time, I have even taken initiative to approach students that are new and help them feel welcome and part of the Ngarara Willim family. I also feel that as the Ngarara Willim family we push each other to succeed whether by helping us manage time or even getting assessments in!

## What does "Ngarara Willim" (Gathering Place) mean to you?

What Ngarara Willim means to me is that it is my second home. Even when I took a break from study and worked full time, I missed going to Ngarara Willim and yarning up with everyone. At Ngarara Willim, you know exactly where your place is and what you're doing!

## Tell us about relocating for study (If interstate/ from regional)

Before I moved to Melbourne, I was working as an admin officer at a hospital. It was when a work colleague asked me about where I want to be and what I would like to do with my life. I started applying for Universities across the country and had been offered a place at a university in Melbourne. After this, a friend helped me arrange accommodation and book a one-way train ticket to Melbourne. Although it was rough at the start, once I started at RMIT, my university experience got a whole lot better.

## What's your proudest moment/achievements since studying at RMIT?

Representing Victoria as a comedian for two years in a row was definitely a major accomplishment for me. I never thought of doing stand-up until a cousin had supported me in gaining the confidence to do so. This experience has really helped me break out of my shell and give this a shot!

## What would be your message to community members thinking of studying at university?

Have a think about your aspirations that you have and speak to universities and map out how you can achieve that. If you're thinking there maybe barriers like financial, accommodation or anything, there are services that exist to help you through that and to continue to succeed in your study, especially at Ngarara Willim. It's not only the staff that support you, it's the other Ngarara Willim students and even alumni!

# Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid

In September & October 2020, AJ Williams and Xam Tchen of Girraway Ganyi Consultancy facilitated two Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Community Blended (AMHFA) courses for our Ngarara Willim students and staff who work closely with our students.

AJ is of Wiradjuri / Wotjobulak background. He is the Founder and Director of Girraway Ganyi Consultancy. He is the Lead Cultural Facilitator, Social Worker, Counsellor and Mental Health First Aid Instructor. AJ also developed and implemented the *To-gip Gabaareng: Indigenous Employment and Career Development Framework* at RMIT University.

The course was provided in a culturally safe manner that allowed Aboriginal participants to explore the concepts surrounding mental health and mental illness, while providing clear evidence-based strategies to start conversations, assess for mental health crises and provide support including referral to professional services.

AJ offered advice and suggested that particularly "during this time it is important to reach out to your friends and family to make sure that they are doing OK. It is important to recognise the signs and symptoms of unwellness early, as your help and support could result in the person receiving appropriate professional help earlier or assist them through a mental crisis".

He also reminded the participants to make time to look after themselves.

Girraway Ganyi Consultancy provides a suite of Mental Health First Aid programs, cultural awareness training and cultural mentoring support programs.

Check them out at [www.girrawayganyi.com.au](http://www.girrawayganyi.com.au)



## Publication launch of Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land

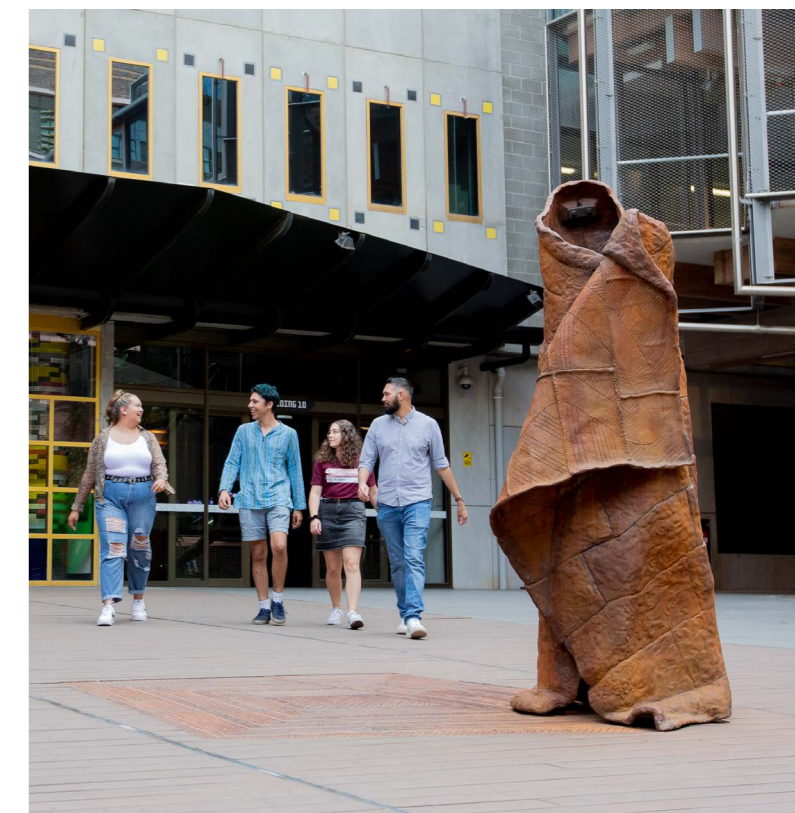
A new publication has been launched this year to celebrate the making of Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land.

The Wurrunggi Biik: Law of the Land public artwork is located on Bowen Street at RMIT's City campus and was designed by Indigenous artist and RMIT's Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Research Fellow, Vicki Couzens, in collaboration with Jeph Neale and Hilary Jackman.

The 2.4 metre artwork is made from cast iron and represents a possum skin cloak with an intricate wedge tail eagle shaped spirit memory imprint and signifies a long-lasting spiritual connection to country.

Co-curators, Grace Leone, RMIT School of Architecture and Design and RMIT alumnus Jessica Clark, in collaboration with Bowen Street Press, are excited to be launching the publication.

Bowen Street Press were engaged to produce the publication that shares the history of the Possum Skin Cloak and the physical creation of the artwork.



To view the publication visit:  
[issuu.com/rmit610/docs/wurrunggi\\_biik\\_lawoftheland/10](https://issuu.com/rmit610/docs/wurrunggi_biik_lawoftheland/10)

# Certificate IV Project Management Practice

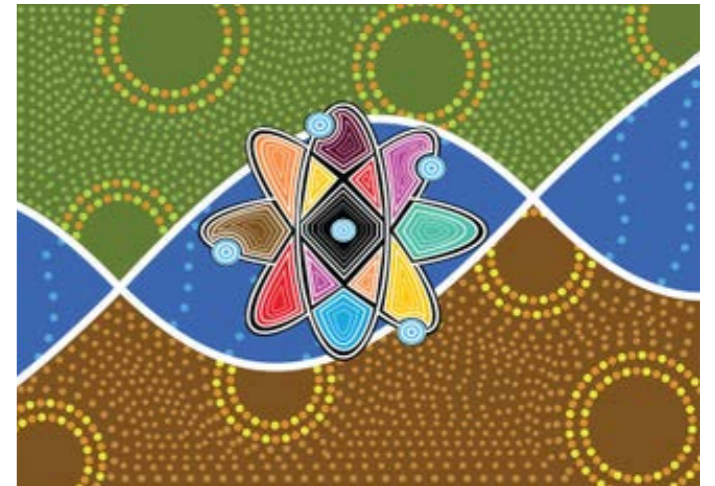
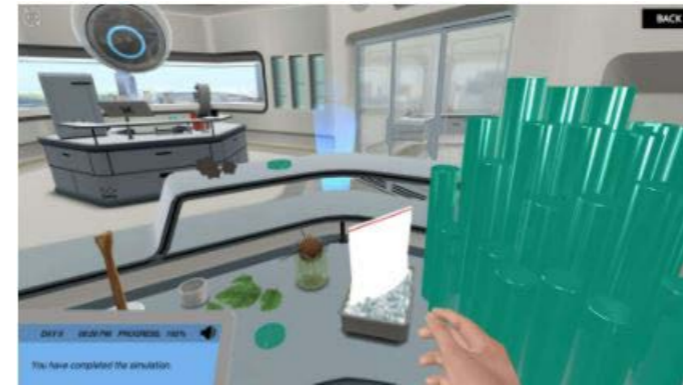
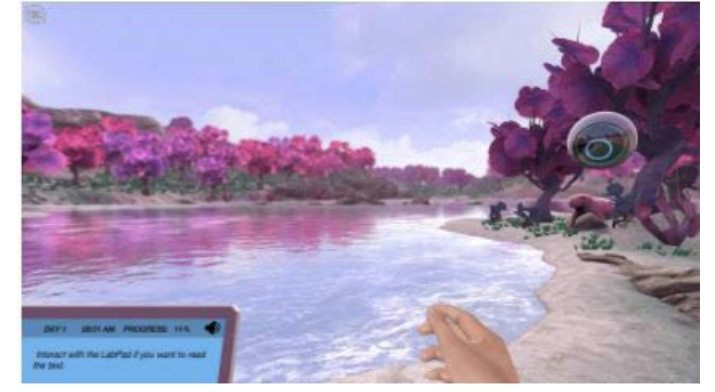
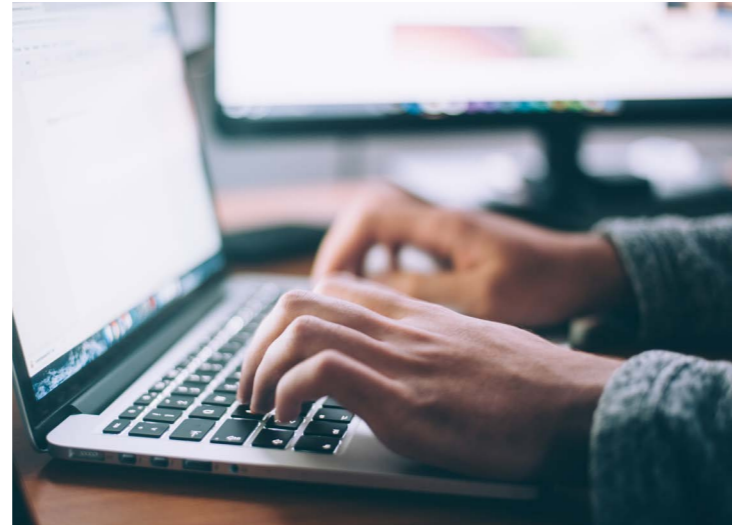
The Ngarara Willim Centre initiated a conversation based on feedback from the community with RMIT College of Vocational Business Education. This has led to a very exciting collaboration with RMIT Short Courses and RMIT College of VBE to deliver the Certificate IV in Project Management Practice exclusively for 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members with financial backing from Ngarara Willim and RMIT.

This program commenced in early October and will run through to the end of March 2021. Students in the program will learn valuable skills to bring to their workplace or gain new employment! These skills include time management, quality management, human resources, risk management and more!

Due to an overwhelming response, the Ngarara Willim Centre, RMIT Short courses and RMIT College of Vocational Business Education have planned to deliver the Certificate IV in Project Management Practice to

an additional 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members commencing in February 2021!

Watch this space to highlights and stories from the participants of the program.



## Deadly STEM Experience

RMIT University is excited to host the Deadly STEM Experience for around 100 Indigenous high school students from five different schools around Victoria and Australia. The program will actively engage students in a mix of culture and STEM themed sessions and workshops along with both current and former Indigenous students from RMIT.

The program will run from 26 October to 10 November and will include these exciting workshops:-

### Workshop 1 Deadly Day of Python

Come check out what Computer Science is all about in our Python Game Jam workshop! We will explore the basics of Python through developing a game, learn how to use a developer environment and understand how Computer Science translates into the real world.

### Workshop 2 Radio Rescue

Your radio transmitter broke down and you will need to repair it in order to contact your fellow colleagues in Antarctica. To do this you'll learn how resistors work, how their resistance is modified by different parameters, and how they are wired.

### Workshop 3 Cause of Contamination

In the Bacterial Isolation simulation, you'll investigate the cause of a contamination of poultry meat by a dangerous bacteria strain that is resistant to common antibiotics. After taking samples from the chicken farm, you will work in the virtual laboratory to isolate single colonies of the deadly bacteria among a variety of different species. To do so, you will learn how to work under sterile conditions, and be able to practice and perfect your plate streaking

### Student Experiences

Hear from current and former RMIT Indigenous and regional students and their journey into a STEM related pathway and field. Learn about what they've enjoyed from their experience being a University student as well as the challenges they faced in high school and how they overcame these. We'll send around bios of the students beforehand so you can think about some questions to ask them during the Q&A session.

### Virtual RMIT Cultural Tour

Join proud Wiradjuri woman April Goldring as she immerses you in First Nations Culture, sharing knowledge and the hidden history of Naarm through the Virtual Indigenous Culture Campus Tour crafted right here at RMIT University!



## T J Garvie Photography

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 [@tjgarviephotography](https://www.facebook.com/tjgarviephotography)  
 [@tjgarvie](https://www.instagram.com/tjgarvie)

Winner - RMIT University Award  
Koorie Art Show 2017

Finalist - National Photographic  
Portrait Prize 2018

Prints for sale

# Ngarara Willim Face Masks Update

We'd like to thank everyone who has purchased a mask from us - and especially to those who have paid it forward. To date around 80 masks will be going to community members in need, and this is only within our first month!

If you would like to purchase a mask or pay it forward visit: [www.ngararawillimcentre.com/shop](http://www.ngararawillimcentre.com/shop)



# Deadly Alumni:

# Tiana Koehrer

## Who are you? Who's your mob?

My name is Tiana Rose Koehrer and I am a proud descendant of the Ulupna and Moira Clans of the Yorta Yorta people and the Yarra Yarra of the Wurundjeri people.

## What did you study at RMIT?

I studied an Advanced Diploma of Business (in Public Relation) in 2015 and completed in 2016.

## What are you up to now? Work and life?

I just started a new job as a Senior Project Officer working for the Department of Justice and Community Safety in Parkville working directly for the General Manager of the precinct.

I absolutely love working here, with our young blakfullas and the rest of the young people, as well as having a strategic oversight and managing projects too.

I also sit across the Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Board as a director, and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Board as an observer as well as an Executive on the Koorie Youth Council!

Busy Busy, but I love every second of it. Other than that, I just moved back home to the eastside!

## Can you tell us about your journey into University?

RMIT was the best experience ever, I mean it.

I remember the open day, my applications, I remember my first day, my first friend, induction, everything! And that mainly comes down to Ngarara Willim.

I was not the best at school, it just wasn't for me, but I knew that I would enjoy Uni as it had a lot more flexibility and independence.

I originally wanted marketing but settled for PR and I am so glad I did, it taught me so much about the digital world, crisis management and most importantly for my current and previous roles, stakeholder and project management.



**Tiana Koehrer**  
Deadly Alumni

**Maybe your career doesn't exist yet- create your own pathways, don't be afraid to not have a 'forever career'.**

I think education is one of the most powerful tools and we are all so lucky that we have it at our fingertips.

## What did you enjoy most about engaging with Ngarara Willim?

Where to start!

On my application and to Ngarara Willim, I remember writing "when I walked into the centre it felt like home", and that's because it did, it still is. The amount of endless support and opportunities that NW provide is amazing.

I had some of the best memories of my life, made lifelong friends, got amazing study support and I was safe. To be honest, NW was half the reason I even came to Uni... haha

You would either catch me in class or in the centre, nowhere else!

Not to mention the beautiful staff, building of culture AND Indigenous Uni Games! (still a life highlight)

## What would your message be to our mob who may be considering studying at RMIT?

You can't go wrong! RMIT is the perfect choice for your studies.

With a welcoming and Community feel, great facilities and opportunities, support for study and cultural development and you will always be left smiling.

Ngarara Willim and RMIT will be able to develop you personally and professionally.

## Tell me about your RMIT experience.

### What did you study?

I studied an Advanced Diploma of Business (in Public Relation) in 2015 and completed in 2016.

### How did your course influence your career?

My course opened me up to a business and digital world that I didn't know existed. Every single unit that I ever took in that course, I use in my day-to-day job, and my course is so versatile that I can utilise my learning into any career path.

## What was your biggest takeaway from studying at RMIT?

Studying at RMIT taught me how to prepare for life. From the routine of things, to the reality of 'this is how the real-world works' (unlike how my high school did), it taught me patience (especially in group projects omg), and it taught me that no matter what, you will always have a home at RMIT.

## How are you still connected to RMIT and the Ngarara Willim community? Have you maintained any mentors from your time here?

Kimmy Lovegrove was my little mentor, bless, as she also studied PR- we are still very, very close today.

## Do you mentor/guest lecture/etc.?

I am still connected to various PR groups through my networks, however as I didn't enter into a career directly in that field, no I don't.

## What are the top three things you've learned in your career?

Maybe your career doesn't exist yet- create your own pathways, don't be afraid to not have a 'forever career', I mean hey, only a few short years ago I had never even imagined myself doing what I am doing

Take your time. If you can't get to something straight away, doesn't mean the world will end.

YOLO! - take EVERY opportunity you can, don't be afraid to ask or be assertive.

## What are your plans for 2021 and beyond?

Head down and work. I am at a really good place in my career where I have my foot in the door, so now I just need to home in on my niche and build up.

I also want to buy a house! Which is one of my bucket list goals!

And just get my mental health right, I think COVID was really hard on a lot of people, and I am looking forward to really focusing on my mental health and wellbeing.

## Connect with our Deadly Alumni

Are you an RMIT Alumni?

Register and connect with the Ngarara Willim and RMIT Community!  
[rmit.edu.au/alumni-and-giving/alumni/stay-connected](https://rmit.edu.au/alumni-and-giving/alumni/stay-connected)



# Meet our Staff



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**Manager**  
Indigenous Student Education



**Jason**

**Tharawal**  
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Indigenous Education



**Cathy D.**

**Irukandji**  
**Senior Advisor**  
Indigenous Access and Engagement



**Lewis**

**Gunditjmarra, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung**  
**Coordinator**  
Indigenous Outreach



**Carlie**

**Coordinator**  
Indigenous Student Education



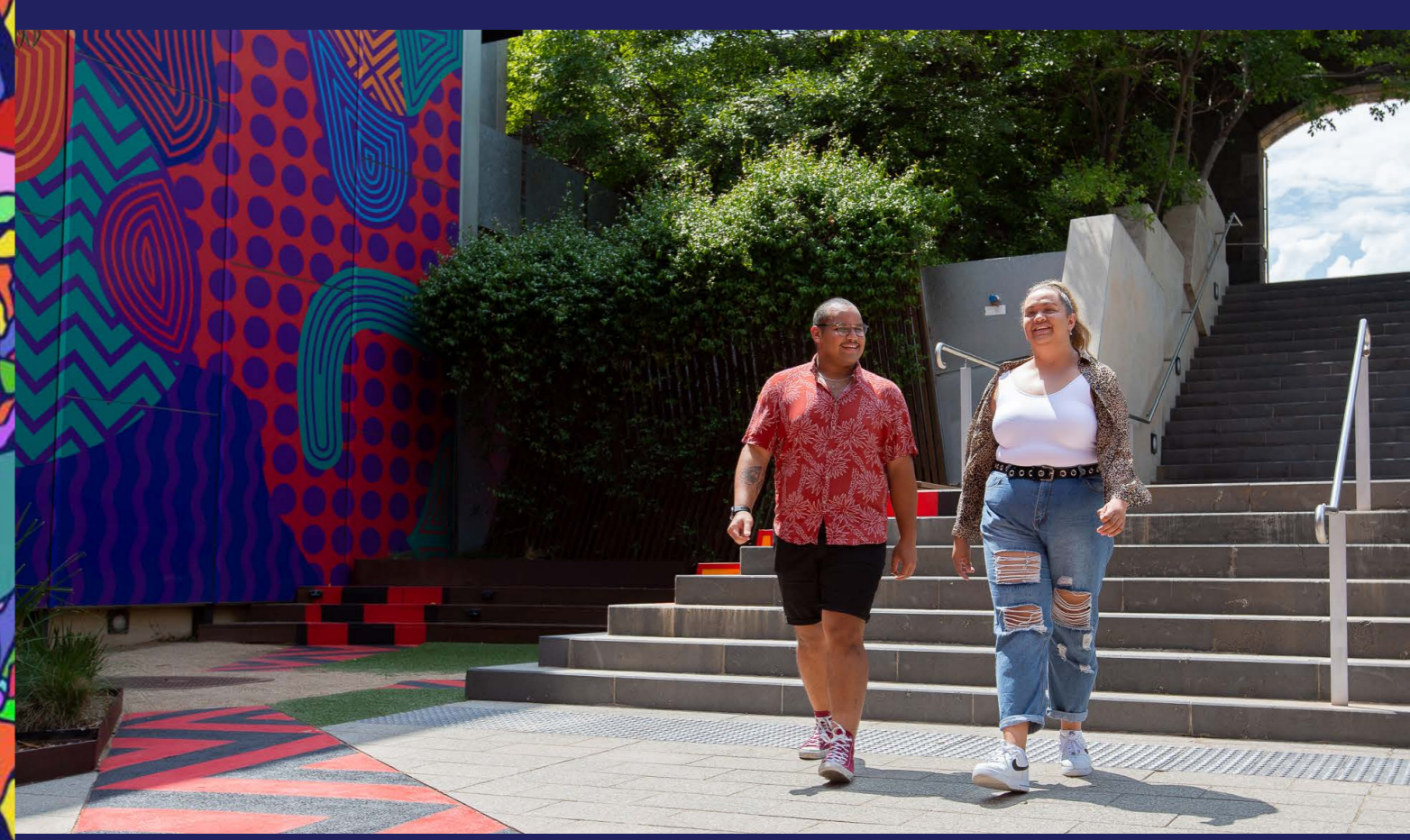
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**Arnernte, Luritja**  
**Officer**  
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**Charlotte**

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**Assistant**  
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## Connect with us

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(03)9925 4885



**City Campus**  
Building 5, Level 1, Room 5  
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**Bundoora Campus**  
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**Brunswick Campus**  
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## Join our mailing list

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### Our Contributors

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This newsletter is a collective effort that is written and created by the Ngarara Willim Centre team (see previous page)

