

## Urban Futures Symposium | 21 – 25 August 2023

**Candidate:** Amos Atkinson

**School:** School of Media and Communication

**Presentation:** Confirmation of Candidature

**Title:** How connecting to Country, Culture and Identity can heal First Nations people

**Abstract:**

My research is concerned with the role of Indigenous cultural practice in supporting First Nations peoples' healing and wellbeing. I am interested in how this knowledge practice intersects with First Peoples politics and places, especially when this knowledge/practice is grounded in Country and the physical environment. I want to bring a new politics and accountability to bear on the social relations between people and place as they apply in a community context. These concerns are pertinent in the current climate as the debate rages about the Indigenous voice to parliament and treaty.

My central research question is: In what ways can my people make connections with Country, given so many of us live both on and "off Country" or often "between Country", and between two worlds: Indigenous and non-Indigenous. I plan to study how connecting to culture can have benefits in all aspects of First Nations peoples' lives from our general wellbeing, spiritual, physical, identity and mental health. Areas of my research focus will be the Dja Dja Wurrung Nation as well as the Bangarang Nation as I have lived and worked on these parts of Country my entire life and know them best.

