



RMIT
UNIVERSITY

Architecture
& Urban Design

YUT-EN DU WU-FEI-LA MU L-A-B



We design, build and practice on land which has been shaped and cared for by our First Nations Peoples for over 65,000 years.

The Yulendj Weelam Lab is a team of Indigenous and non-Indigenous architects, landscape architects, creative practitioners and knowledge holders. We work with First Peoples communities and design practitioners to ensure Australia's built environments connect with the Country upon which they stand.

'Yulendj Weelam' means 'deep knowledge' in the Boon Wurrung language. Our lab is grounded on the premise that all architecture, landscape architecture and urban design, requires a deep knowledge of the land in which it is designed on: of home.

What is the Yulendj Weelam lab?

RMIT
Architecture
and Urban Design
School



Sophia Pearce

Barkandji weaver/RMIT Creative Practice PhD candidate



N'arwee't Professor Carolyn Briggs AM

Boon Wurrung Elder and Adjunct Professor



Dr Jock Gilbert

Non-Indigenous registered landscape architect/academic



Associate Professor Christine Phillips

Non-Indigenous registered architect/academic



What we do: Industry

We work with built environment organisations to:

- > Build the cultural capacity of staff
- > Build organizational change through embedding and implementing processes and procedures of responsibility (responsible practice).
- > Co-bid on built environment projects

↑
Yulendj Weelam Lab
workshops with industry
partners.



What we do: Design Education

We connect RMIT Architecture & Urban Design Students with Indigenous communities:

- > Build the cultural capacity of students
- > Provide students with transformative learning experiences
- > Connect students with real world problems

↑
Indigenous partners:
Design Studies in the RMIT
School of Architecture &
Urban Design
Top: Culpus Murr Aboriginal
Cooperation, Culpus
Station, NSW
Bottom: Kiner Yihumung
Aboriginal community,
Framlingham, VIC.



What we do: Public

We bring Indigenous perspectives to the public realm to:

- > Provide a public forum for Indigenous voices
- > Connect the public with Indigenous perspectives about the built environment

Open House Melbourne
2022: Yulendj Weelam
Presenting Designing with
Country: Place, Place,
Present & Future, a public
conversation with Professor
Michael Shuman-Hatchers,
Professor Lesley Head,
Zaria Campion. Image
credit: Nick Bebbington

Page 6 / 32



What we do: Indigenous communities

We build meaningful and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities to:

- > Advance and develop the aspirations of community
- > Assist with the development of business, cultural and enterprise opportunities for communities

Top: Dr Christine
Phillips and Dr Jack
Gilbert connecting with
Gundlamarra ranger
Aaron Alberts
Bottom left: Dr Christine
Phillips, Dr Jack Gilbert
and Dr Karen Professor
Carolyn Briggs AM
connecting students with
the Barndi and Muga
Multi communities of
western NSW
Bottom right: Dr Christine
Phillips with Kinoo
Wharrong elder Uncle
Leonard Clark

Page 7 / 32



Our Approach

An innovative Indigenous-led experiential approach focused on relationship building that develops capacity in:

- > Acknowledgement/Welcome/Obligation
- > Deep Listening
- > Yarning

- > Authority
- > Reciprocity

We offer guidance and tools that facilitate differing modes of relationships with Indigenous, perspectives, knowledges and communities.

↑
Gandjimarra elder Aunty Edwen Alberts sharing stories with RMIT Architecture & Urban Design staff and students.

Impacts and Outcomes

Implementing cultural change and reconciliation through responsible practice

RMIT
University

Leadership

Driving leadership within the university to support Indigenous communities, knowledges and perspectives within the built environment.

Reciprocity

Ensuring all research is reciprocal and centred on supporting Indigenous communities and partners.

Research

Creating research opportunities focused on supporting Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and communities.

Indigenous
Community
Partners

Relationships

Building trustful relationships with Indigenous community partners.

Empowered

Empowering Indigenous communities to respectfully share their stories and culture through place. Enabling Indigenous communities to benefit culturally and economically through enterprise developments.

Self-Determination

Supporting Aboriginal self-determination

Unburdening

Taking the responsibility away from Indigenous partners and community members where relevant.

Reciprocity

Ensuring relationships with Indigenous partners are reciprocal and have mutual benefit.

Yulendj
Weelam
RMIT

Industry

Assisting industry partners to become responsible leaders of reconciliation within the built environment.

Competitive Advantage

Enabling industry partners to develop a competitive advantage through unique capability in Indigenous engagement and co-design opportunities.

Talent

Attract talent through demonstrated commitment to responsible engagement with Indigenous knowledges, perspectives and communities.

Professional Timelines

