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## Aboriginal Reference Group: Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) is established to work with State Records of South Australia and the State Library of South Australia (the agencies) to enhance the availability of archival materials and services that relate to Aboriginal people and culture. The ARG will consider and be consulted on the agencies' programs and activities as they relate to Aboriginal people in South Australia.

### Acknowledgement

Building on UNESCO's Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and with specific reference to the Tandanya-Adelaide Declaration, the agencies acknowledge:

- the impact of the administration of the affairs of Aboriginal people and resulting issues faced by Aboriginal people and record holders,
- their responsibility to re-imagine their relationships with Aboriginal people,
- their desire to work towards becoming models of respect and collaboration, and
- that it is hard to know whether their work is meeting the needs and expectations of Aboriginal people without consultation.

The ARG establishes a consultative relationship, based on respect and collaboration, with a trusted group of people who can contribute ideas from the perspective of Aboriginal people.

### Aims and responsibilities

Members of the ARG will work collaboratively with agencies to:

- consider, develop and implement mutually respectful responses to the Tandanya-Adelaide Declaration
- understand and narrow gaps in the agencies' compliance with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network Inc. (ATSILIRN) Protocols.

The ARG will also:

- raise matters with agencies that are relevant to the services, aims and direction of the agencies in relation to Aboriginal people,
- help the agencies to ensure their activities reflect Aboriginal history, experience and culture,
- advocate for the interests of Aboriginal people and communities, including communities not represented by those in the ARG, and

- help the agencies to promote, engage and partner with Aboriginal communities in the delivery of their programs and services.

Together, the agencies will:

- engage openly and respectfully with all ARG members
- support ARG members in their awareness of the agencies' activities, services and policies,
- make and seek recommendations for ARG business,
- receive and consider feedback and advice from the ARG,
- provide administrative support for the ARG (including coordinating venues, online hosting, and agendas and minutes), and
- fund ARG members' sessional payments and expenses.

## **Membership**

Anyone of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent can nominate for membership of the ARG through personal expressions of interest.

There will be no more than nine ARG members.

Members are welcome to consider arrangements for proxy membership, or shared membership, where it will help with meeting arrangements and responding to sensitive matters.

Applicants should understand that they may potentially encounter material that contains images or descriptions of deceased individuals and other culturally restricted material. Members will not be required to engage in culturally unsafe discussions or practices.

Membership will be for a term of up to 24 months, and a member may be re-appointed for up to six years.

Membership may be suspended or terminated in situations involving misconduct or non-attendance.

When a member leaves, the agency Directors will decide how, or whether, to fill the vacancy.

Government employees may apply with management support, but will be appointed as members on their own behalf.

## **Selection of members**

The agency Directors will appoint members and will select one member to act as Chair.

Members will identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, preferably with a background in one or more South Australian Aboriginal communities.

Members will be well-known and respected amongst the South Australian Aboriginal community and as far as is practicable, will represent the interests of Aboriginal people throughout the State.

At least three members will be women and at least three will be men.

Members will be chosen to ensure a range of age and experience and a balanced representation from all parts of the State, and the major centres of Aboriginal population in South Australia.

Members will be able to show the following knowledge and experience:

- awareness of issues affecting Aboriginal people in relation to libraries, archives and/or records management
- awareness of the experiences of Aboriginal people affected by historic policies of separation
- good knowledge of Aboriginal history in South Australia
- understanding of the issues, policies and processes required to research records about Aboriginal people
- the capacity to represent a contemporary view of Aboriginal history and culture.

Members will be able to show the following behaviours:

- willingness to work with diverse stakeholders with a range of values, interests, backgrounds and expertise, and
- willingness to promote the sharing of information with stakeholders
- willingness to engage in a collaborative and respectful manner

## Meetings

At least four meetings will be held each year, with extra meetings and consultation activities arranged as needed. Meetings may be held in person, online, or a combination of both.

A meeting quorum is half of the group plus one. Meeting items not requiring decisions can be considered without a quorum.

Agency staff and the ARG Chair will collaborate to agree on business for the agenda.

Members will be entitled to sessional payments under the Premier and Cabinet Circular PC016 Remuneration for Government appointed part-time Boards and Committees, using *Remuneration Framework Level 6* (Committees). Reimbursement for travel and accommodation expenses may be negotiated under PC016 and Commissioner's Determination 3.2.

Members will share any conflicts of interest at the beginning of each meeting, including actual or perceived conflicts, and may choose to remove themselves from discussions if appropriate.

For issues requiring resolution and/or mediation, members should feel safe to raise matters with one or both Directors regarding any aspect of the Group's functions.

Members are welcome to invite observers to attend, including where it may be valuable for mentoring or development (such as for emerging leaders).

Non-members, including the agencies' Directors or delegates, may attend ARG meetings to speak on specific items or topics.

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## Reporting and access to information

The agencies will inform the ARG about any business activity which is likely to impact on Aboriginal people and communities, as well as other activities.

The ARG will have access to information it requires from the agencies, subject to any need to protect cultural sensitivity, privacy or confidentiality.

The ARG will, through the minutes, provide written updates to the Directors on its activities following each meeting. Reports or submissions might be shared outside of the agencies.

The ARG contributes to the work of public sector agencies and so is open to public scrutiny. Information provided to, or at, a meeting of the ARG may be subject to application for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*. The agencies may also proactively release information about ARG business if appropriate.

## Review

These terms of reference will remain flexible and will be adapted as requirements change. They will be reviewed at least annually in the first three years.

The ARG, in agreement with the Directors, may increase the scope to incorporate other South Australian archives. If such a change occurs, the ARG will provide advice and support to these other organisations in line with the terms of reference.

## References

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network Inc. (ATSILIRN) Protocols: <https://atsilirn.aiatsis.gov.au/>

Department of the Premier and Cabinet PC016 Remuneration for Government appointed part-time boards and committees: [www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/boards-and-committees/](http://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/boards-and-committees/)

Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, Determination 3.2: Employment conditions – remuneration – allowances and reimbursements: <https://www.publicsector.sa.gov.au>

Tandanya-Adelaide Declaration: <https://www.ica.org>

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: <https://www.un.org>

UNESCO's Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity: <https://en.unesco.org>

## Approval

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