

# Reparative and inclusive description practices

Rachel Merrick  
Lead Metadata, State Library



Words matter.

Language is powerful.

It conveys meaning, framing,  
and sets intentions.

Frick, Rachel L., and Merrilee Proffitt. 2022. *Reimagine Descriptive Workflows*. OCLC Research.  
<https://doi.org/10.25333/wd4b-bs51>

# Gigoomgan Station records (OM68-13)

Home to the Kabi Kabi [Gubbi Gubbi] people, prior to its establishment.

Journals record the use of Aboriginal labour and clashes with local tribes over livestock.



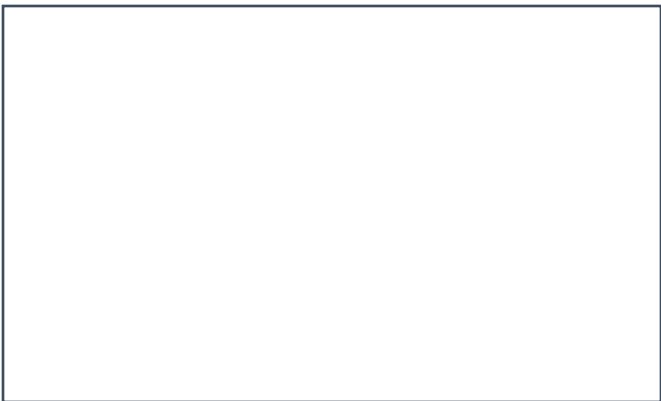
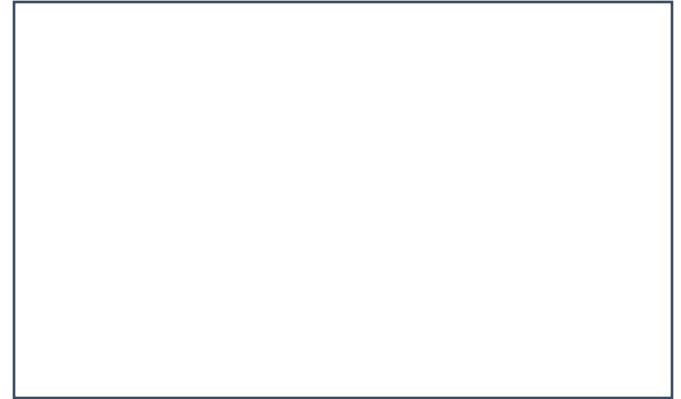
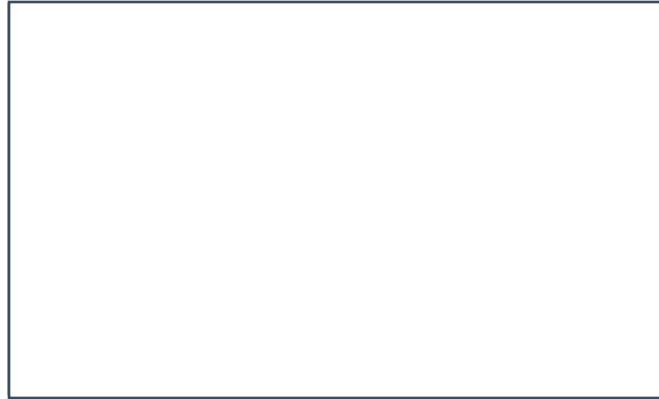
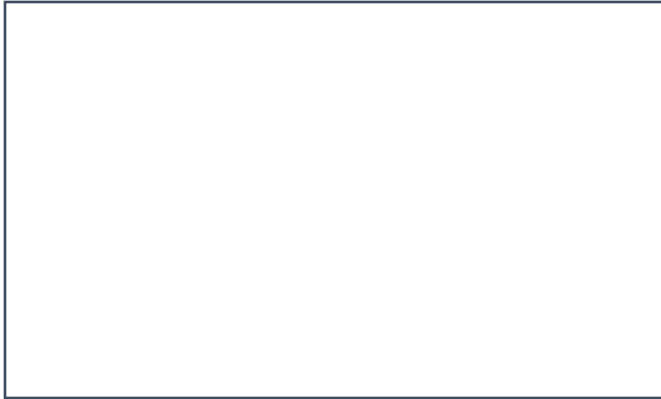


...by adjusting our perspective  
by only a few degrees,  
we see a vastly different world  
through the same window.

Pascoe, Bruce. 2014. *Dark Emu: Black Seeds: Agriculture or Accident?*. Broome, Western Australia: Magabala Books.

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# Content Description Principles



# Content Description Principles

Content is  
discoverable

Content is  
accessible

Descriptions use  
inclusive  
language

Descriptions have  
meaning and  
impact

Librarians must ... reflect on their own internal biases ...  
deconstruct language and decolonize the systems that  
perpetuate the continued marginalization of others.

To remain neutral about these systems is the very opposite of  
what it means to be a librarian in the twenty-first century.

Vaughan, Crystal. "The Language of Cataloguing: Deconstructing and Decolonizing Systems of Organization in Libraries."  
*Dalhousie Journal of Interdisciplinary Management*, vol. 14, Spring 2018. <https://ojs.library.dal.ca/djim/article/view/7853/7247>

# Guidelines for First Nations collection description



**AIATSIS**



Australian Library and  
Information Association



National and  
State Libraries  
Australasia





# Guidelines for First Nations collection description

## Culturally appropriate language

- Culturally inclusive language
- Derogatory terms
- Sensitivity warnings
- Self determined use of language

## Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

- Classification
- Subject headings
- Controlled vocabularies
- Descriptive notes
- Access conditions

<https://bit.ly/GFNCD>

# Guidelines for First Nations collection description

## Contextual information

- Historical events
- Cultural or societal influence
- Biographical information
- Critical reception
- Related resources

## Discrete Groupings

- Highlighting Indigenous materials
- Increasing accessibility
- Digital archives

<https://bit.ly/GFNCD>

# What we are doing – preferred language

- AIATSIS Pathways thesauri for First Nations places and subjects
- AustLang dataset for First Nations languages and peoples
- Homosaurus vocabulary for LGBTQIA+ materials



**AIATSIS**



# What we are doing – warnings

- Include specific sensitivity warnings for content itself, e.g.
  - *Captions in the album reflect the creator's attitude or that of the period in which they were written and are considered inappropriate or offensive today.*
  - *Watercolour paintings contain depictions of persons, objects, or events that are culturally sensitive*

# What we are doing – harmful terms

- Register and track records and content with identified harm
- Change identified harmful non-preferred terms applied to records by CATALOGUERS

## Displayed on One Search

- Aboriginal people tell their stories of cross-cultural experience in Australia in many settings.

## Private field in MARC

- Reparative Language Change: Previous description by cataloguer "Aborigines tell their stories of cross-cultural experience in Australia in many settings." [initials & date of change]



# What we are doing – additional information

- Acknowledge ICIP in material
  - *This material contains traditional knowledge or cultural expression which is Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).*
- Highlight First Nations persons, communities, land, and history related to material for effective discovery
- Include context for significant or sensitive material

# Before

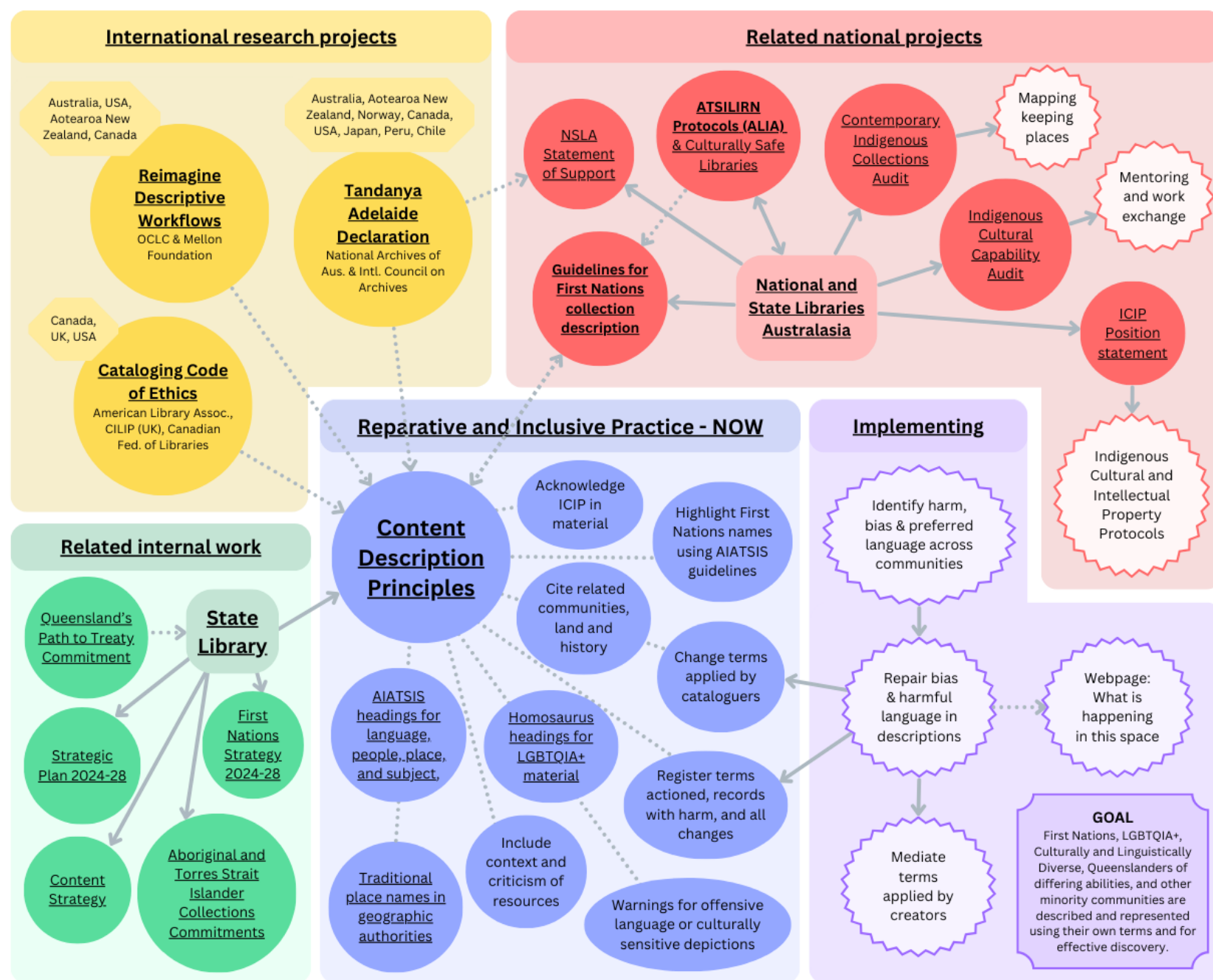
Title	Photographs of Aborigines at Stradbroke Island
Subjects	Aboriginal Australians - Queensland - Photographs Stradbroke Island (Qld.)
Notes	Includes photographs for Myora Mission

# Under new principles

Title	Photographs of Aboriginal Australians at Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah)
Subs	<div>Aboriginal Australians - Queensland - Photographs</div> <div>Noonuccal people E21 ; Ngugi people E26 ; Goenpul people E19</div> <div>Minjerribah / Stradbroke Islands (SE Qld SG56-15)</div> <div>Stradbroke Island (Qld.)</div>
Desc.	North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) is home to three tribes of the Quandamooka nation, each group having their own language. They are the Nughi (aka Ngugi), the Nunukul (aka Noonuccal, Moondjan) and the Goenpul (aka Koenpal) people. The Nughi lived primarily on nearby Moreton Island (Mulgumpin).
Conts	Individuals identified are: Sam Rollands, Sam [aka Puttingga], Granny Dungoo / Lifu (Lilian Lyons), Grandfather John Lifu; Fernandez Gonzales and family, Willie McKenzie. Localities include: Myora Mission (Moongalba), Myora State School, Campbells Flat, Amity (Pulan), Dunwich (Goompee)
History	Minjerribah, located in Moreton Bay, was originally joined to South Stradbroke Island, but split during storms in 1896 and is now divided by the Jumpinpin Channel. Minjerribah has three townships: Dunwich (Goompee), Amity Point (Pulan) and Point Lookout (Berarngutta). Native title rights and interests over the land and waters of Minjerribah were recognised on 4 July 2011.
Notes	Users are advised that this Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander material may contain culturally sensitive imagery and descriptions which may not normally be used in certain public or community contexts. Annotation and terminology which reflects the creator's attitude or that of the era in which the item was created may be considered inappropriate today. This material may also contain images, voices or names of deceased persons.



<https://bit.ly/CDP-SLQ>





**Queensland**  
Government