

Role Description

Engagement Officer, First Nations (ID)



Role Description Fields	Details
Department/Agency	Australian Museum
Division/Branch/Unit	First Nations/Collections & Engagement
Role number	51025291
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 5/6
Senior executive work level standards	Not Applicable
OSCA Code	531111
PCAT Code	1339151
Date of Approval	03 September 2026
Agency Website	https://australian.museum

Agency overview

The Australian Museum acknowledges that we operate on the lands, waters and skies of many First Nations Peoples. As Australia's first museum, we share the responsibility of advocating for Country and honouring First Nations Peoples and knowledges.

The Australian Museum (AM) operating within the NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport cluster, is the first museum in Australia and was founded in 1827. The AM provides access, engagement and scientific research to increase our understanding of natural history and culture, particularly of the Australasian region. The AM holds more than 22 million objects of biological, geological and cultural collections and develops programs, exhibitions and school and community education initiatives onsite, online and offsite.

The AM mission is: *To ignite wonder, inspire debate and drive change.*

The AM vision is: *To be a leading voice for the richness of life, the Earth and culture in Australia and the Pacific. We commit to transform the conversation around climate change, the environment and wildlife conservation; be a strong advocate for First Nations' culture; and continue to develop world-leading science, collections, exhibitions and education programs.*

For more information, visit the [website](#).

About the First Nations Community Access to Archives (FNCAA)

FNCAA project purpose is to search the Australian Museum archives and digitise Aboriginal cultural and language materials to share with NSW Aboriginal communities for the purpose of language and cultural revitalisation. The project will run for three years starting July 2026 through June 2029. FNCAA will be First Nations-led; majority First Nations staffed and aims to enhance First Nations peoples' access to important archival material about culture, kinship, stories, and languages held within the AM Archives and Collections.

Primary purpose of the role

The Engagement Officer, First Nations is an AM FNCAA project-funded role which sits in the Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) unit. It supports the AM FNCAA project's community engagement outcomes for First Nations language and cultural revitalisation, community access to Museum archives, collection management enhancement, and museum functionality, and enables electronic access to the Museum collections.

This First Nations identified role supports a First Nations project that will deliver meaningful social and cultural outcomes while upholding cultural integrity and the Museum's reputation as a key divisional point of stakeholder contact. They will organise and facilitate engagement activities of multiple First Nations community stakeholders (primarily NSW) and other community outreach initiatives to connect First Nations communities to AM archival records and support community self-determination over their own cultural heritage and language.

The Australian Museum's First Nations Division leads the development and implementation of culturally informed policies, protocols, and practices to ensure respectful stewardship of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Pasifika, and World Cultures collections, support community access and repatriation, and foster partnerships based on self-determination and Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property (ICIP) principles.

Key accountabilities

- Implement and deliver on the AM FNCAA project's community engagement and outreach project phases by engaging closely with project stakeholders including Aboriginal community members, cultural advisors, practitioners, Elders, and Museum colleagues to connect First Nations peoples with their cultural heritage and language, accommodating the complexities of working with multiple communities at varying stages of their language revitalisation journeys (each with their own experiences with collecting institutions and cultural protocols for engagement).
- Ensure that the AM FNCAA project's First Nations community engagement and outreach requirements are implemented and follow the standards set for First Nations community engagement in the AM. This involves developing knowledge of First Nations-related AM archival material and demonstrating cultural competency and sensitivity through upholding cultural protocols, including Indigenous Cultural & Intellectual Property (ICIP) considerations.
- Follow established Cultural Collection Enhancement (CCE) standards and procedures for creation and editing of registration records, documentation data and metadata in EMu and Fotoware, liaising with the FNCAA team and Archives & Library staff.
- Follow safe handling procedures for museum archival material and collection objects to facilitate FNCAA community engagement activities, ensuring adherence to cultural protocols and AM Collections, Archives & Library staff advice.
- Assist FNCAA project colleagues with archival page turns, documentation enhancement and the creation and improvement of digital registration, catalogue documentation content, and multimedia records as part of the AM FNCAA project.
- Contribute to project management by providing and maintaining accurate up to date records and delivering clear and timely reporting.
- Support the work of the FNCAA project and Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) colleagues, as well as the First Nations Division generally, by undertaking other relevant duties as directed (consistent with skills, competency, and training) through assisting managers on a range of community engagement and administrative duties, including but not limited to servicing contracts, raising purchase orders and processing invoices.

Key challenges

- Supporting complex and sensitive consultations with diverse stakeholders, within agreed timelines, given their varying expectations, viewpoints, and interests. Understanding and navigating the sensitivities between First

Nations peoples and collecting institutions. Demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the AM's First Nations services and relay this information to stakeholders internally and externally.

- Ensuring cultural safety, ethical and best practice are maintained, and cultural protocols are followed when working with First Nations communities. This also includes ensuring appropriate Workplace Health & Safety (WHS) and collection security standards are maintained during visits to the AM by community members, stakeholders, project contractors/casuals. Handling a diverse range of fragile and culturally significant items in accordance with cultural and conservation guidelines while maintaining throughput and quality requirements.
- Working collaboratively with AM FNCAA team members and with Museum staff from various teams who are physically distributed across multiple sites.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Head of Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander)	• Take direction from, seek feedback and advice, and report to the Head of Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander), be primarily assigned to the AM FNCAA project. • Escalate and redirect issues as required; ensure the provision of accurate information; provide regular updates on tasks, projects, issues, and priorities. • As appropriate to level of skills, competency and training: answer questions; participate in discussions; and assist relevant AM FNCAA project deliverables.
Senior Project Coordinator - FNCAA	• Maintains an indirect reporting relationship with the Senior Project Coordinator, FNCAA, for project guidance and oversight for FNCAA project activities. • Liaises on project priorities, workloads, workflows, scheduling and process improvements. • Receives and shares project-specific information and updates.
Senior Collections Officer, First Nations	• Liaise with First Nations Collections team members regarding AM FNCAA project-adjacent community engagement activities, e.g. community requests to view AM Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections. • Provide data that may enhance collections records and reporting. • Assist on planning and delivery of community visits (onsite and offsite).

External

Who	Why
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community/stakeholders	• Organise and facilitate/participate in regular meetings and consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. • Respond to queries, identify needs, provide accurate information, communicate services, and redirect, escalate or resolve issues. • Provide assistance using cultural capability.
General public	• Communicate importance of the work of the First Nations Division at the Australian Museum.

Who	Why
	Contribute to increased awareness of the First Nations Collections and Archives materials, ensuring interpretation and research of First Nations cultural heritage is accurate and appropriate.

Role dimensions

Decision making

This role operates with limited autonomy, making decisions within its delegated authority and referring matters to the Head of Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) and the Senior Project Coordinator, FNCAA when they involve significant changes to outcomes or timeframes, potential escalation, or require submission to a higher level of management. This role is accountable for the delivery of work assignments on time and to expectations in terms of quality, deliverables, and outcomes.

Reporting line

Head of Collections & Engagement (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander).

Direct reports

Nil. From time to time the role holder may be responsible for supervising contractors and casuals during project work.

Budget/Expenditure

Nil.

Key knowledge and experience

- Demonstrated understanding and application of culturally appropriate museum practices, cultural awareness, and terminology in order to perform in processes that are culturally aware and appropriate. This includes the capacity to embed ICIP into work and community practice.
- Well-established relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, and the ability to maintain effective relationships with Elders, community members, stakeholders, and industry.
- Demonstrated administrative, written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills, including the ability to communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders, attention to detail and proof-reading skills.
- Working knowledge and experience with archival collections, information management, and/or collection digitisation techniques.
- Valid, current NSW Driver's licence and willingness to work across Australian Museum locations and to travel to community locations for outreach activities.

Essential requirements

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and lived experience. Aboriginality/Torres Strait Islander is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorised under section 14(d) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW).
- Appropriate approved qualifications and/or relevant equivalent professional experience in cultural heritage, collecting institutions practices, information management. Including demonstrated ability to work on museum projects and understanding the complexities and sensitivities required when working with First Nations languages and cultures in a revitalisation context.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	- Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change - Give frank and honest feedback and advice - Acknowledge when someone challenges your ideas, seek to understand why and respond appropriately - Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives - Respond professionally when under pressure and in challenging situations	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	- Adapt your existing skills to new situations - Commit to achieving work goals - Be aware of your strengths and areas for growth, and develop and apply new skills - Seek feedback from colleagues and stakeholders - Persist when tasks are difficult	Intermediate
 Relationships	Commit to Customer Service Provide customer-focused services in line with public sector and organisational objectives	- Take responsibility for delivering high-quality customer-focused services - Design processes and policies based on the customers' experience and engage people with lived experience to inform service improvements - Create opportunities to learn about and measure what is important to customers by engaging with a wide range of customer experience - Use customer data, feedback and insights to improve service delivery - Find opportunities to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to improve outcomes for customers - Maintain relationships with key customers in your area of expertise	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
		Connect and collaborate with relevant customers from the community	
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	- Build a supportive and collaborative team environment - Share information and learning across teams - Acknowledge outcomes that were achieved by working together effectively - Share information with others to solve problems together - Support others in difficult situations - Use collaboration tools, including digital technology, to work effectively with others	Intermediate
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	- Seek and apply specialist advice when needed - Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards - Take the initiative to progress and deliver your own work and that of the team or business unit - Contribute to assigning responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or business unit achieves goals - Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible - Proactively change or adjust plans when needed	Intermediate
 Results	Plan and Prioritise Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	- Understand the team and business unit's goals and set work tasks that contribute to meeting them - Set and develop team goals and plans, and use feedback to inform planning - Respond proactively to changing circumstances and adjust your plans when necessary - Consider how immediate and longer-term organisational issues might affect the achievement of your team and business unit goals - Adapt and respond proactively when priorities and work environments change	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Project Management Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	- Research and analyse data at a basic level to inform and support the achievement of project deliverables - Contribute to developing project documents and resource estimates - Contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements - Identify when projects differ from their plans and tell your supervisor	Intermediate

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity	Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	Intermediate
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively	Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	Intermediate
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Foundational
 Results	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Intermediate
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Foundational

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Business Enablers	Technology	Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Foundational
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Foundational