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Beyond Symbolic Inclusion

Building a collective mandate for Indigenous-led Understanding Measurement Evaluation & Learning (UMEL)





A warm Welcome.

Slido: 3182345



On what country do you live and work?

slido



Jessica Yamaguchi



Corrine Hodson



Liz Wren



Gulwanyang Moran



Slade Sibosado

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Session overview

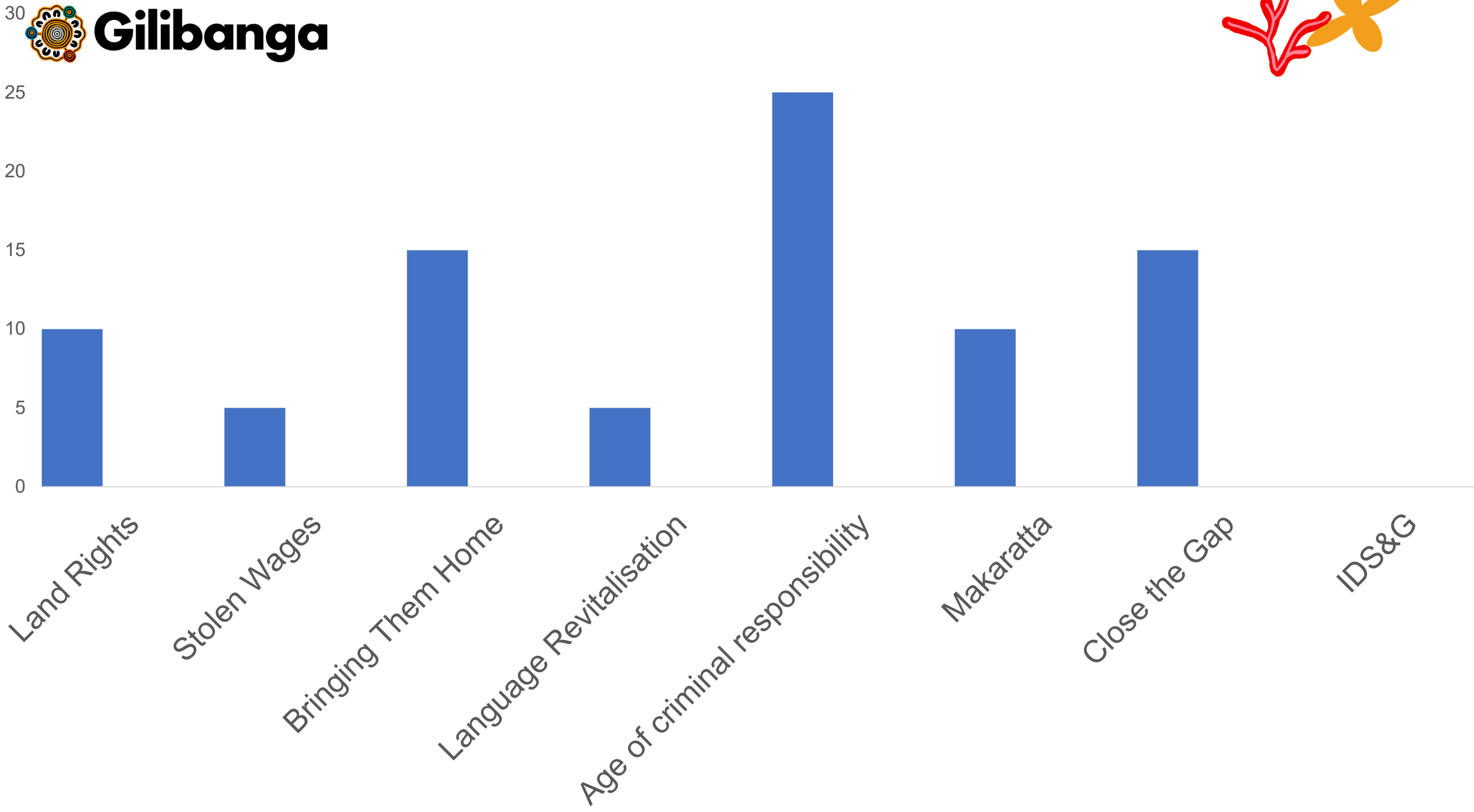
- Survey
- Panel discussion –
  Beyond Symbolic Inclusion
- Next steps
- The most significant thing about today was…



Survey






30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Land Rights
Stolen Wages
Bringing Them Home
Language Revitalisation
Age of criminal responsibility
Makaratta
Close the Gap
IDS&G



What did you see? How do you feel?

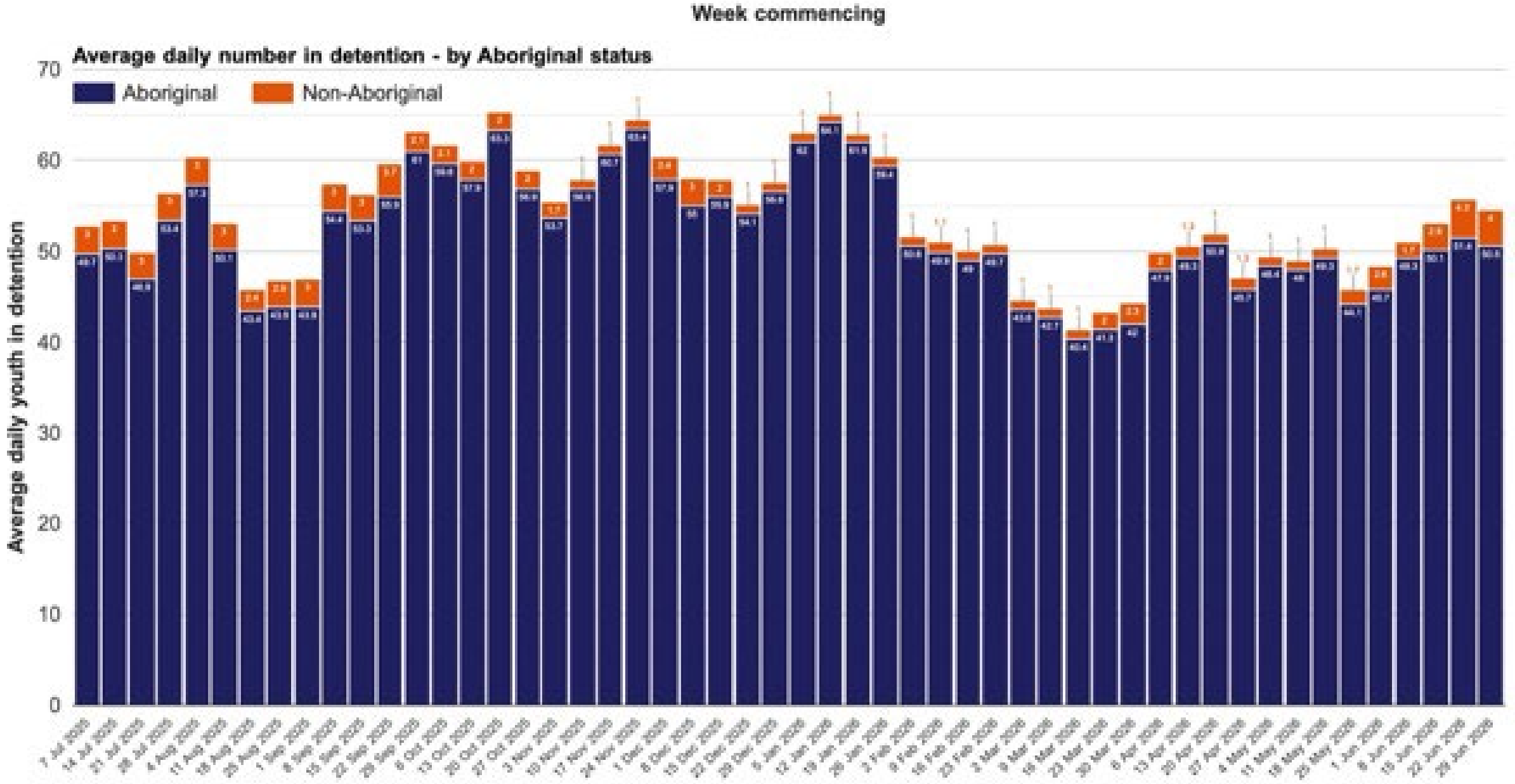
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What happened?

- Survey was rushed (limited time to fill out)
- Analysis was rushed (limited time for analysis)
- Pre-determined findings (conclusions reached ahead of time)
- Incorrect conclusions (no one cared about IDS&G but questions was not clearly asked)
- Careless treatment of data (cherry picking and sweeping under a rug)
- Violation of trust (took you on a journey and then let you down)
- Substandard consent process (lack of informed consent; no one gets the option to not participate)
- Tokenistic remuneration (voucher impossible to redeem)
- Lack of participatory design (survey designed without consultation)

What’s the real impact of working this way?




Week commencing
Average daily number in detention - by Aboriginal status
Aboriginal
Non-Aboriginal
Average daily youth in detention
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0



"The Indigenous status of perpetrators of violence against First Nations women **is not available for reporting**. Note that such violence is perpetrated by men of all cultural backgrounds, not just First Nations men (Our Watch 2018)."

AIHW, 2026

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Panel Session

Beyond Symbolic Inclusion: Building a collective mandate for Indigenous-led Understanding Measurement Evaluation & Learning (UMEL)



Topics

- Material decolonisation
- Structural reformation
- Dual accountability
- Broadening the definition of evaluator


First Nations Social Enterprises Learning Circle 2
Sitting in MIDDLE space is hardest part
both sides of the FENCE
how do we Create space to see & feel what it can be?
FLEXIBILITY
LONG TERM
no TIMEFRAME
just because you're mob, doesn't mean it's comm-unity lead
Saying the UNSAID
help see eachothers PERSPECTIVES
can't evaluate that in a BOADROOM
take it back
check alignment with community VALUES
EVERYTHING changes when we turn up FULLY
Constantly EDUCATING
quality of the ENVIRONMENT
understanding the
lived manifestation of UMEL principles
translating concepts & meanings
shifting NARRATIVE
understanding & Commitment
ACCOUNTABILITY
making a level playing field
LAYERS of community
intricacies of working with community
relationship FIRST
WITH my mob, not ON my mob
Visual scribing by

Archival Wayfinding

A Decolonised Evaluation utilising UMEL

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
Gulwanyang Moran

Community-led wayfinding for First Nations language and cultural resurgence

KEY ACTIVITY

Turning lived experience and knowledge into practical wayfinding: access guides, field notes, a tools and collections directory, case studies and video.

HOW I EVALUATE

Community-defined success, BEFOREHAND— measures set up front with the critical stakeholder, not top-down. Evaluating process, outcomes and impact.

Mixed methods, triangulated — analytics, circle yarns, thematic analysis, resource feedback, case studies of use and institutional reform, audited with mob-made tools.

A DECOLONISED EVALUATION — FOUR PRINCIPLES

1 Material Decolonisation

Auditing real change — policy implemented, contracts and templates rewritten, Indigenous Data Sovereignty upheld (not symbolism).

2 Structural Reformation

A collaborative, not competitive, environment — an ecosystem of shared learning, not organisations forced to compete and findings locked away.

3 Dual Accountability

Balancing community's time, energy and cultural integrity with the project's delivery timeframes — knowing when to push back and when to pivot.

4 Broadening the 'Evaluator'

Mob as both participants and evaluators — place-based, relational and lived expertise counts as evidence.

Understanding

- Community-defined success.
- The barriers and the landscape — creating the baseline.

Measurement

- Site analytics — reach and engagement.
- Circle yarns to surface and measure success.
- Mob-designed audit tools and feedback.

Evaluation

- Process, outcomes and impact.
- Thematic analysis; case studies of use and reform.
- Judged against community-defined measures.

Learning

- Findings back to community and the ecosystem.
- Adapting the resource as we go.
- Shared openly on the blog; informing reform.

GROUNDED IN CARE Principles · Maiam nayri Wingara · Indigenous Evaluation Strategy (PC 2020) · Ngaa-bi-nya · True Tracks · AIATSIS Code of Ethics

Evaluating a First Nations project means decolonising the evaluation itself.

Different hats: roles in evaluation

Many First Nations people perform vital evaluative work under diverse role descriptions that reflect community service and connection.

- Community Connector
- Project Officer
- Frontline Service Delivery
- Community Engagement Officer
- Local Community Board
- Community Data Officer
- Community Broker
- Language Officer/Interpreter
- Survey Support
- Community Researcher
- Local Researcher
- Evaluation Assistant
- Evaluation Governance Group

Different papers: specialized lived expertise

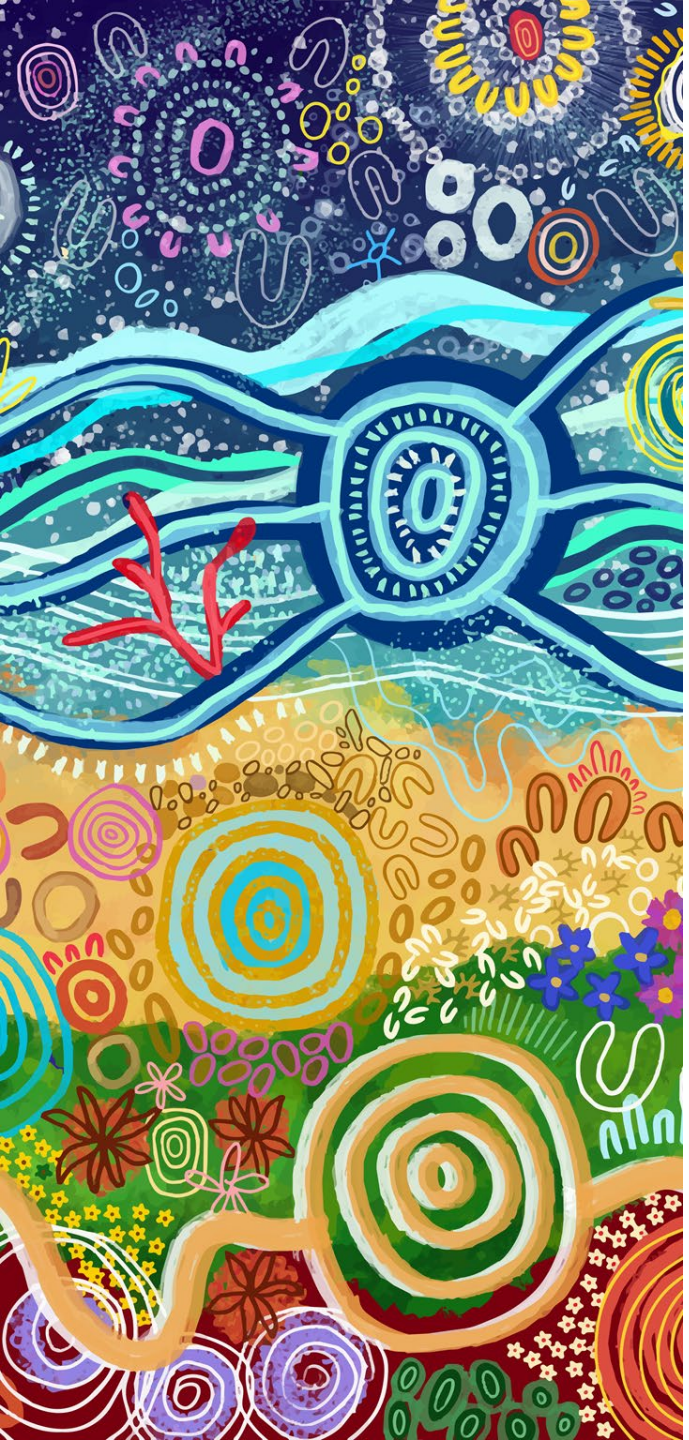
Credentials extend beyond academic degrees to include the power of people, place, and intergenerational knowledge.

- Knowledge from kin, connections to Country and deep understanding of place
- Holder of relationships, responsibility and knowledge
- Meaning making
- Pattern seeing
- Learning from the land
- Language and interpretation
- Cultural and community obligations
- Deep knowing of why
- Intergenerational /old knowledge
- Lived experience

Different doors: unlocking authentic insights

Harnessing diverse First Nations skills opens doors to deeper reasoning and culturally safe engagement.

- Understanding underlying reasoning and unspoken insights
- True and full story
- Connections to those hard to reach
- Honouring stories and diverse voices
- Validation of insights through sense-making and sense-checking



Gilibanga Principles

- **Connection**
- **Reciprocity**
- **Cultural excellence and integrity**
- **Kinship**
- **Justice and equity**

Next steps

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- Network Development
- Training & Learning
- Knowledge Sharing



What will you do?



Next Monday I’m going to...

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The most significant thing about this session was...

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Create-Make light

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Blak Evaluators & Trusted Allies Network

THANK YOU

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