

Acknowledgement of the Gunai / Kurnai as Traditional Custodians.



Over Time We Come Together by Cassie Leatham

The Victorian constitution recognises the spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship that the Aboriginal people of Victoria have with their traditional lands and waters within Victoria. Acknowledging Gunai / Kurnai people as traditional owners affirms the unique status of Victoria's Aboriginal people as the descendants of Australia's first people.

Acknowledgment is necessary to enable the realisation of Aboriginal cultural rights – the right to the enjoyment of their identity and culture, the maintenance and use of language, kinship ties, spiritual material and relationship with the land and waters. It is a step towards the realisation of these cultural rights and promotes the health and well-being of Gunai / Kurnai people generally. We recognise that cultural survival is crucial to the health and well-being of Indigenous people.

**When is an acknowledgement of the Gunai / Kurnai people as traditional owners required?
Official events and at the beginning of any external meetings.**

The following words should be used when acknowledging the Gunai / Kurnai people as the traditional owners:

“I would like to acknowledge the Gunai / Kurnai People, the Traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered and pay my respects to their Elders both past and present”