ARTS WORKER EXTENSION PROGRAM FOUNDATION 2026

ANKA
ARNHEM, NORTHERN AND KIMBERLEY ARTISTS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
Working together to keep art, country and culture strong

Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ANKA)

Arnhem Northern and Kimberley Artists Aboriginal Corporation (ANKA) is Australia's first peak body for Aboriginal art and culture. Established in 1987, ANKA is a not-for-profit organisation governed by a proudly all-Aboriginal board serving a strong grassroots membership.

ANKA supports nearly 50 Aboriginal-owned, community-controlled art and culture centres across more than one million square kilometres of northern Australia, including the Top End of the Northern Territory and the Kimberley in Western Australia. ANKA works with over 6,000 Aboriginal artists and arts workers – many of whom are internationally recognised and respected leaders in their communities.

ANKA has four regions – Arnhem Land, the Kimberley, the Tiwi Islands and Darwin–Katherine – which collaborate to strengthen art, culture and community across the north. ANKA's mission is to support the self-determination of Aboriginal artists and art and culture centres. Its vision is to keep art, Country and culture strong.

It is really important for our mob to meet and work with the people who are running the mainstream galleries and organisations at those very high levels. This kind of course helps remote people to understand more and extend themselves. For the people from remote areas we are really stirring them around and opening their visions and their dreams to get into this open world. It is a new pathway opening up for arts workers – a new pathway for both sides.

– Dr Djambawa Marawili AM, ANKA Chairperson, 2000–present

Yolŋu (Aboriginal people) and Balanda (non-Aboriginal people) can train working together. There must be two-way learning. Because we are learning from one another. Sharing ideas together. Trying to help each other. Make art and culture centres strong and grow.

– Ruth Nalmakarra, ANKA Director, 2007–14 and Special Adviser 2017–26

We need the ANKA Arts Worker Extension Program to be ongoing. We need a lot of support for the arts workers. These are the young people who want to give their time and commitment to be trained up to work at their art and culture centres. A lot of skills are required, for example marketing and computer skills. It is a wonderful program and it should continue.

– Jedda Puruntatameri, ANKA Director, 2013–present

Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) Foundation

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitator and graduate mentors with the Barunga Statement, Parliament House, Canberra, May 2026

The AWEP Foundation is an intensive vocational program for Aboriginal arts workers from northern art and culture centres who want to develop new skills, grow their careers, expand their networks and engage more fully in the broader arts sector.

Its curriculum and delivery model are designed to equip participants with the tools, knowledge, networks and confidence they need to pursue further professional development, take on future leadership roles and potentially transition into higher education.

Participants in this year's AWEP Foundation took part in:

- Darwin-based professional development training
- individual workplace assessments and virtual site visits
- a two-week interstate trip including mini-internships at the Art Gallery of New South Wales and the University of Melbourne, and visits to major cultural and educational institutions in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne
- online workshops and peer-to-peer networking opportunities.

Participants receive an iPad and training in IT, including assistive technology to support reading and writing in English for arts workers whose first language is an Indigenous language. This year, they delivered presentations about their art and culture centres to national audiences in Sydney (for the first time, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales) and Melbourne. In past years, the group has presented at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

AWEP Foundation has produced strong results. This year, ANKA celebrates 100 graduates from more than 35 northern communities since the program began. Many graduates have gone on to leadership roles in their art and culture centres and contributed to strengthening a connected network of Aboriginal arts professionals across the Top End of the Northern Territory and Western Australia.

Celebrating over 100 AWEP graduates 2011–26

2011

Vivian Warlapinni Kerinaua

Tiwi Designs, Wurrimiyanga

Praxedes Tipungwuti

Tiwi Designs, Wurrimiyanga

Dora Griffiths

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Rachael Umbagai

Mowanjum Arts, Derby

Faith Thompson

Ngukurr Arts, Ngukurr

Miriam Charlie

Waralungku Arts, Borroloola

Jonathon Saunders

ANKA, Darwin

Ruth Nalmakarra

Milingimbi Art and Culture, Milingimbi

2013

Kevin Yarangku Winunguj

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Edward Yunupingu

Munupi Arts, Pirlangimpi

John Peter Pilakui

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Stanley Taylor

Mowanjum Arts, Derby

Betty Bundamurra

Kira Kiro Artists, Kalumburu

Jane Tinmarie-Yalunga

Warmun Art, Warmun

Sharon Anderson

Warnayaka Art, Lajamanu

Evangeline Wilson

Djilpin Arts, Beswick

2015

DJ Marika

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Deborah Wurrkidj

Bábbarra Women's Centre, Maningrida

Gloria Mengil

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Maxine Charlie

Warmun Art, Warmun

Gabriel Nodea

Warmun Art, Warmun

Aaron McTaggart

Merrepen Arts, Nauiyu (Daly River)

Troy Mardigan

Merrepen Arts, Nauiyu (Daly River)

Dylan Miller

Karungkarni Art, Kalkarindji

2019

Ribgna Green

Warlayirti Artists, Wirrimanu (Balgo)

Lynley Nargoodah

Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing

Bernadette Mungatopi

Munupi Arts, Pirlangimpi

Risha McDonald

Mimi Arts, Katherine

Rodriguez Wilson

Durrmu Arts, Peppimenarti

Bitharr Maymuru

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Leon Dhamarrandji

Milingimbi Art & Culture, Milingimbi

Angelina Boona

Kira Kiro, Kalumburu

2023

Karen Rogers

Ngukurr Arts, Ngukurr

Cecilia Umbagai

Mowanjum Arts, Mowanjum

Rose Wilfred

Numbulwar Numburindi Arts, Numbulwar

Megan Yunupingu

Elcho Island Arts, Galiwin'ku

Narelle Morris

Karungkarni Arts, Kalkarindji

Hayden Wilson

Durrmu Arts, Peppimenarti

Alison Cooper

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Maicie Lalara

Anindilyakwa Arts, Groote Eylandt

2025

Michelle Bush

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Sprotin Bangaar

Injalak Arts, Gunbalanya

Tracey Mulardy

Broome Circle/ Bidyadanga Artists, Broome

Travis Seccin

Djilpin Arts, Beswick

Janette Murrungun

Numbulwar Numburindi Arts, Numbulwar

Corina Jadai

Bidyadanga Artists, Bidyadanga

Sebastian Butcher

Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing

April Nulgit

Warmun Art, Warmun

2012

Bulmirri Yunupingu

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Janice Murray

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Jennifer Dickens

Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing

Roseleen Park

Warmun Art, Warmun

Regina Pilawuk Wilson

Durrmu Arts, Peppimenarti

Marilyn Nakamarra

Mimi Arts, Katherine

Alan Joshua Jr

Ngukurr Arts, Ngukurr

Yimunthu Max Gumana

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

2014

Barayuwa Munungur

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Marcus Pascoe

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Jimmy Mungatopi

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Selina Gallagher

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Mally Pindan

Mowanjum Arts, Derby

Serena Pinday

Warmun Art, Warmun

Rhoda Hammer

Waralungku Arts, Borroloola

Kieran Karritpul

Merrepen Arts, Nauiyu (Daly River)

2016

Paula Gumana

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Raylene Bonson

Bábbarra Women's Centre, Maningrida

Michelle Woody

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Augustina Kennedy

Djilpin Arts, Beswick

Jangu Nundhirribala

Numburindi Artists, Numbulwar

Ishmael Marika

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Jason Marrkula

Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts, Gapuwiyak

Jennifer Wurrkidj

Bábbarra Women's Centre, Maningrida

2020–21

Hozaus Claire

Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing

Josephine Burak

Munupi Arts, Pirlangimpi

Colin Puruntatameri

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Jemima Abdulla

Tiwi Designs, Wurrimiyanga

Bradley McAdam-Wynack

Yarliyil Arts, Halls Creek

Bruce Balwaldja Mununggurr

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Illiam Nargoodah

Mangkaja Arts, Fitzroy Crossing

Daniel Ngurruwuthun

Anindiliyakwa Arts, Alyangula

2024

Russell Davey

Ardyaloon Arts, Ardyaloon

Nathan Thomas

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Chantelle Murray

Marnin Studio, Fitzroy Crossing

Arthurina Moreen

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Annie Roberts

Waralungku Arts, Borroloola

Cathy Ward

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Dhamarrarr Mununggurr

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

Elijah Nelson

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Anita Churchill

Waringarri Arts, Kununurra

Walter Brooks

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

Lesley Phillips

Injalak Arts, Gunbulanya

Ricky Ankin

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Bipila Mununguritj

Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka, Yirrkala

By the end of 2025, more than 90 Aboriginal arts workers from Aboriginal community-controlled art and culture centres had completed AWEP Foundation. In 2026, the ANKA Board is proud to celebrate the graduation of a further eight Aboriginal arts workers, bringing the total number of graduates to 101.

AWEP Pathways

Evare Elvis Gari and AWEP Pathways 2024 participants at the Grimwade Centre, November 2024

AWEP Pathways is a long-running career support initiative, established in 2012, which connects AWEP Foundation graduates with ongoing training and higher education opportunities.

Graduates can access further in-house training with ANKA and tailored professional development projects with industry, as well as support to apply for specialist programs including the National Gallery of Australia's First Nations arts leadership program.

ANKA has partnered with educational institutions to improve access to higher education in conservation, arts administration and curatorship for Aboriginal arts workers in remote communities. To date, the most established pathway is in conservation and collection care.

The University of Melbourne postgraduate Specialist Certificate in Cross-Cultural Conservation and Heritage is a first-of-its-kind two-way learning qualification, co-designed by ANKA and the Grimwade Centre at the Robert Cripps Institute for Cultural Conservation.

The program is delivered in intensive study blocks, enabling participants to gain recognised qualifications while continuing to live and work in their communities. Entry is based on completion of AWEP Foundation, art and culture centre workplace experience and recognition of the Indigenous traditional knowledge participants hold.

Nineteen AWEP graduates from remote communities have completed the postgraduate Specialist Certificate in Cross-Cultural Conservation and Heritage. By 2030, ANKA aims to have supported a further 30 graduates – with at least five going on to complete the Graduate Certificate in Arts (Advanced) – Cultural Materials Conservation, or the Master of Cultural Materials Conservation. ANKA also aims to expand access to qualifications in arts administration and curatorship through developing partnerships.

AWEP Foundation participants 2026

1

Philinka Dolby

Mowanjum Arts, Derby

2

Leah Nanala

Warlayirti Artists, Wirrimanu (Balgo)

3

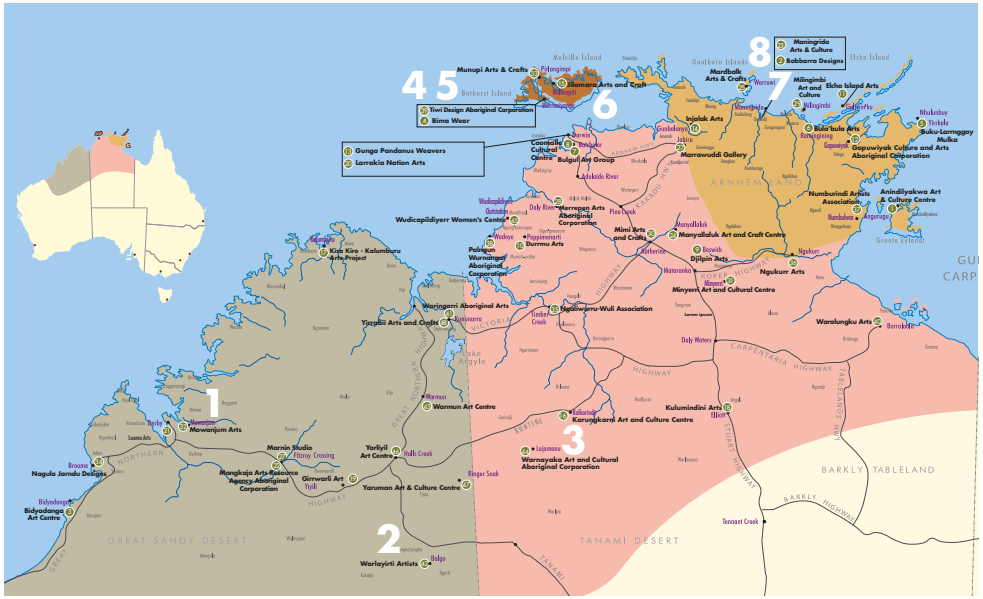
Ursula Marks

Warnayaka Art, Lajamanu

4

Martina Baxter

Tiwi Designs, Wurrimiyanga



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Theresa (Tara) Munkanome

Bima Wear, Wurrimiyanga

6

Raylene White-Miller

Jilamara Arts, Milikapiti

7

Jacinta Burukumalawuy

Milingimbi Art and Culture, Milingimbi

8

Angus Darcy

Maningrida Arts & Culture, Maningrida

Art and culture centre:
Tiwi Designs

Position:
Arts worker, Board Director

Languages:
Tiwi, English

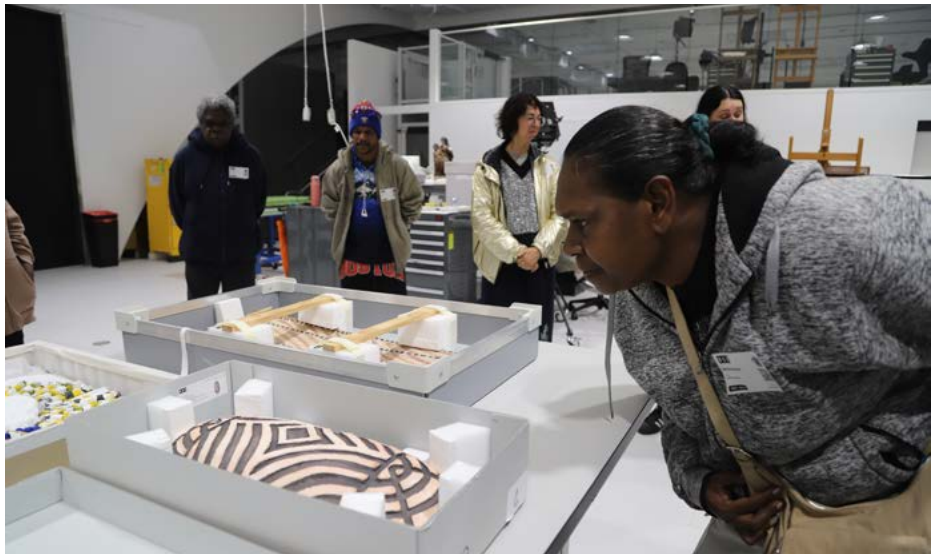
Born:
1976

Martina Baxter at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Tiwi Designs
Puantulura St, Wurrimiyanga,
Bathurst Island NT 0822
+61 8 8978 3982
tiwidesign@tiwiart.com
tiwidesigns.com

Tiwi Designs is an Aboriginal-owned art and culture centre on Bathurst Island in the Tiwi Islands. The centre supports Tiwi artists to maintain and share cultural knowledge through a diverse range of artistic and cultural practices.

Artists create traditional ironwood carvings, ochre paintings on paper and canvas, painted tunga (bark baskets), ceremonial objects, textiles, prints and ceramics. Their work reflects Tiwi culture, ceremony and ancestral stories while embracing both traditional and contemporary forms of artistic expression. The studio provides a place for artists to work together, strengthen cultural knowledge and share Tiwi culture with audiences across Australia and internationally.


Martina Baxter in a conservation lab at the National Gallery of Victoria, June 2026

Martina is an arts worker and trainee museum curator at Tiwi Designs in Wurrumiyanga on Bathurst Island. She cares for the community collection, documents artworks and supports exhibitions, while also serving as Board Director and Treasurer.

Martina enjoys working alongside artists during exhibition installation and joined AWEP to build her knowledge of artwork handling and curatorial practice. The program strengthened her understanding of conservation across canvas and bark paintings, carvings and ceramics. Having seen many older works damaged or lost, she is committed to protecting Tiwi cultural material and hopes to continue studying conservation and curating and to develop her financial skills.

A memorable AWEP moment was seeing her aunt Anunciata Pilakui's painted tunga in the NGV Australia *Bark salon* exhibition, reinforcing the importance of preserving cultural heritage. Martina shares her knowledge with local students and believes in two-way learning, bringing together Aboriginal cultural knowledge and western museum practices.

I joined AWEP to step up and do more leadership for my art and culture centre. I love my work and hope to build more skills in curating which I am passionate about!

Jacinta Burukumalawuy

Art and culture centre:
Milingimbi Art and Culture

Position:
Arts worker,
collections djagamirr (caretaker)

Languages:
Djambarrpuyŋu, English

Born:
1984

Jacinta Burukumalawuy at Trinity College, the University of Melbourne, June 2026

Milingimbi Art and Culture
53 Gadupu Rd
Milingimbi NT 0822
+61 477 998 287
art@milingimbi.com
milingimbi.com

Milingimbi Art and Culture (MACAC) is a Yolŋu-governed art and culture centre based on Yurrwi (Milingimbi Island) in north-east Arnhem Land. Established by senior Yolŋu leaders, it operates as a not-for-profit Aboriginal corporation under the guidance of a representative board. All creative work is directed by Yolŋu law, cultural authority and community priorities.

MACAC supports fibre and weaving practices, bark painting, sculpture, carving and cross-disciplinary projects grounded in Country and language. Artists harvest natural materials locally, maintaining cultural and custodial responsibilities. The centre fosters daily studio practice, intergenerational knowledge sharing, professional development and exhibitions at local, national and international levels.

Jacinta Burukumalawuy, Ursula Marks and Leah Nanala in a conservation lab at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026

Jacinta has worked at Milingimbi Art and Culture as a Djalkiri Keeping Place collections djagamirr (caretaker) since 2024 and as an arts worker since early 2026. She previously worked for ten years as a library officer and assistant teacher and holds qualifications in teaching and early childhood education.

Her role includes cataloguing photographs, documenting artworks, translation and caring for the Djalkiri Keeping Place, where photographs and cultural records are preserved. She also supports Board meetings through translation and community engagement, and in 2024–25 was a member of the Australian Library and Information Association's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Expert Group.

Jacinta joined AWEP to expand her skills and learn more about conservation and collections work. She learnt new techniques for caring for bark paintings and repairing historic textiles and spoke passionately at public events about Yolŋu knowledge and the importance of art and culture centres.

Highlights included a supplementary visit to see the exhibition *Luku dhin'thun: Always following the path of our ancestors*, which she named, at Cross Art Projects in Sydney, and seeing her grandfather Djimbarrdjimbarrwuy's painting *Mundukul* (1961), part of the Art Gallery of New South Wales collection.

My vision for the centre is to keep bringing back history so that the young generation can connect with the past. It needs to be a place where culture can continue and my work is important in that.

Angus Darcy

Art and culture centre:
Maningrida Arts and Culture

Position:
Arts worker

Languages:
Nakkara, Burarra, English

Born:
1965

MANINGRIDA ARTS AND CULTURE

Angus Darcy in a conservation lab at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Maningrida Arts and Culture
Lot 725
Maningrida NT 0822
+61 8 8979 6555
maningridaarts@bawinanga.org.au
maningrida.com

Maningrida Arts and Culture (MAC) represents more than 700 artists from the Maningrida region in Arnhem Land, making it one of Australia's most significant Aboriginal art and culture centres. Artists here work across a wide range of media, including bark painting, wooden and fibre sculpture, weaving, prints and cast works in bronze and aluminium.

Art from the Maningrida region is dynamic, diverse and innovative, reflecting the many languages, cultural traditions and artistic practices found across the region. MAC is also home to the Djomi Museum. Both are within walking distance of the airstrip, offering visitors an accessible and enriching cultural experience.

Walter Brooks, Angus Darcy and Eleanor Vallier in a conservation lab at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Angus is an arts worker at Maningrida Arts and Culture, where he supports artists through practical tasks such as organising bush trips, collecting bark and packing and freighting artworks. He also helps with daily centre operations including transport. He previously worked with Bawinanga Rangers on coastal and fire management and vehicle maintenance.

Angus joined AWEP to build his computer skills, learn about caring for artworks, especially bark paintings, and to meet arts workers from other communities.

A program highlight was seeing his father Jack Nabulaya's male creator spirit painted carving (1991), brought out especially for him at the National Gallery of Victoria collections store. Presenting about Maningrida Arts and Culture and explaining how bark is collected increased his confidence in public speaking.

Angus hopes to keep learning about computers, bark strapping and work preparing art materials collected on Country and values teamwork and sharing knowledge.

I love learning about how to look after our artworks. How to keep the bad bugs and problems from damaging them so that we can keep them at home in our community. I also look forward to telling people in Australia about life in community and in our art centre.

Art and culture centre:
Mowanjum Arts

Position:
Arts worker, tour guide

Languages:
Walmatjarri, Kukatja, English

Born:
1983

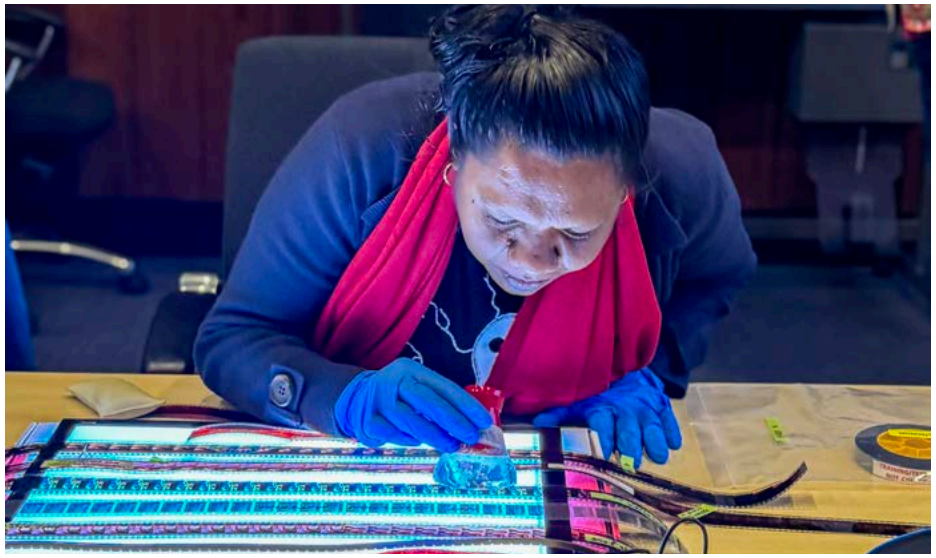
Philinka Dolby with *Waanungga* (2019) by Gudu Mungulu at Parliament House, Canberra, May 2026

Mowanjum Arts

Gibb River Rd
Derby WA 6728
+61 8 9191 1008
sales@mowanjumarts.com
mowanjumarts.com

Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture is a creative hub for the Woddordda, Ngarinyin and Wunumbal peoples who make up the Mowanjum community outside Derby. These three language groups are united through their shared belief in wandjina as a sacred spiritual force and creator of the land and as custodians of wandjina law and iconography.

The centre hosts exhibitions, workshops and cultural programs and includes a commercial gallery and state-of-the-art museum. It is also home to the annual Mowanjum Festival, one of Australia's longest-running Aboriginal cultural festivals, celebrating and sharing junba (traditional song and dance).



Philinka Dolby at the National Film and Sound Archive, May 2026

Philinka has been an arts worker and tour guide at Mowanjum Aboriginal Art and Culture since 2024. She welcomes visitors, manages the retail gallery and supports the centre's day-to-day operations.

Philinka joined AWEP to broaden her skills as an arts worker, seeing the program as an important step towards her goal of becoming a gallery manager.

During the program, Philinka encountered artworks and cultural material by her family and community held in major public collections. Highlights included works by senior Kalumburu artist Lily Karadada, and a large screenprint titled *Waanungga* by her oldest mother, Gudu Mungulu, at Parliament House in Canberra. She also saw family artefacts from the 1800s in museum collections.

Another highlight was seeing the historic Barunga Statement at Parliament House, Canberra, co-painted by ANKA Chairperson Dr Djambawa Marawili AM, and celebrating his Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Advocacy and Leadership in Sydney.

Proud to work for her people, and an artist herself for the past 20 years, Philinka hopes to apply her learnings in collections care to preserve cultural knowledge for future generations.

I want to meet people from different places, learn how they work and bring ideas back home. I love my job and want to learn more skills in arts management.

Art and culture centre:
Warnayaka Art

Position:
Arts worker

Languages:
Warlpiri, English

Born:
1979

Ursula Marks at the National Film and Sound Archive, May 2026

Warnayaka Art
Lot 245, Rarri St
Lajamanu NT 0852
+61 8 8975 0808
art@warnayaka.com
warnayaka.com

Warnayaka Art is a Warlpiri-owned art and culture centre located in Lajamanu, a remote community in the northern Tanami Desert of the NT. Staffed by Warlpiri people from the local community, the centre is a place where culture, creativity and community come together.

Artists create bold paintings on canvas and linen, traditional artefacts and works across a range of contemporary media, sharing stories of Jukurrpa (Dreaming), Country and family. Artistic practice is guided by local Warlpiri artists, whose cultural knowledge and authority shape the work produced at the centre. The studio provides an important space for artists of all ages to gather, paint and pass knowledge between generations.

Ursula Marks at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Ursula has been an arts worker at Warnayaka Art in Lajamanu for more than 20 years. She catalogues and stores artworks, records and translates stories, cares for senior women in the studio, and helps preserve and share Warlpiri culture.

Ursula enjoys representing her centre at art fairs in Darwin, Sydney and Canberra, and helping visitors understand the stories and cultural knowledge held in artworks.

She joined AWEP to learn more about professional arts practice and how galleries and museums operate – particularly how artworks are presented, cared for and shared with audiences across Australia and internationally.

A highlight was seeing pioneering Warlpiri artist Yulyurlu Lorna Napurrurla Fencer's *Headdress* (1999) in the National Gallery of Victoria conservation lab. Ursula also valued learning from other art and culture centres, gaining knowledge she can share with her community.

One of her proudest moments was presenting to the public about her community and her work, highlighting the importance of supporting Elders and passing knowledge on to younger generations.

I am a teacher first in my community. I teach young girls to dance and about our songlines. I hope to share my stories with other arts workers and learn new skills to take back home.

Art and culture centre:
Jilamara Arts

Position:
Arts worker

Languages:
Tiwi, English

Born:
1988

Raylene White-Miller in the *Bark salon* exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, June 2026

Jilamara Arts
Lot 218/219, Milikapiti NT 0822
+61 8 8978 3901
info@jilamaraarts.org.au
jilamara.com

Established in 1989 on Wulirankuwu Country, Jilamara Arts is an Aboriginal-governed art and culture centre based in Milikapiti on Melville Island. As the cultural hub of the community, the centre includes working studios, wood carving and screenprinting workshops, the architecturally designed Kutuwulumi Gallery, the Wurrungura digital archive and the Muluwurri Museum collection. Through training, workshops and professional representation, Jilamara supports members of diverse abilities to build careers as arts workers, cultural leaders and internationally recognised artists.

The term Jilamara refers to design inspired by ceremonial ochre markings painted on the body for yoyi (dance). These cultural foundations have guided the organisation for decades, from its early beginnings translating Jilamara designs into screenprinted garments in the 1980s to producing major exhibitions and cultural outcomes as a thriving Aboriginal-governed art and culture centre today.

Raylene White-Miller in a conservation lab at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Raylene is a long-time arts worker at Jilamara Arts. Her role includes screenprinting, teaching culture classes, supporting Elders and mentoring young people. As lead screenprinter, she cares for the screenprinting studio, supports the Executive Committee and represents the art and culture centre at art fairs through exhibition installations and customer service.

Raylene is proud to be taking on greater responsibilities as a Traditional Owner, saying simply, 'Land is very important'. She sees screenprinting as a way of carrying culture forward for future generations.

During AWEP, Raylene valued the opportunity to experience the cultures of different nations and learn alongside other arts workers. A highlight was a supplementary visit to Spacecraft Studio in Melbourne to see different approaches to screenprinting. She also viewed paintings and carvings by her great-great-grandfather, Tommy Mungatopi, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

I have been a long-time arts worker at Jilamara Arts and I am a Traditional Owner of Milikapiti. My passion is screenprinting so I hope to explore this throughout AWEP.

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome

Art and culture centre:
Bima Wear

Position:
Arts worker

Languages:
Tiwi, English

Born:
1964

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome on the Monash Road overpass, June 2026

Bima Wear

Lot 397, Kerinauia Dr
Wurrumiyanga NT 0822
+61 480 485 311
info@bimawear.com
bimawear.com

Founded in 1969, Bima Wear is one of Australia's oldest Aboriginal art and culture centres. Located on Bathurst Island, in Wurrumiyanga, Bima Wear is a women-led, Tiwi-owned centre producing bold, hand-printed textiles and garments.

Bima Wear plays an important role in preserving and sharing Tiwi culture through clothing designed for both ceremony and everyday life. Each piece is designed, sewn and printed on Country in the island studio, making every item a unique work of cultural art grounded in place and made with care. Visitors are welcome to explore the collection in-store or shop online. Bima Wear continues to thrive through strong cultural governance, community pride and a deep connection to culture.

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Tara is a respected Elder, designer and lead screenprinter at Bima Wear, where she has worked since 1984. She plays a key role in developing designs, producing textiles and supporting daily operations. Tara is also preparing to take on a cultural guide role, leading tours and sharing Tiwi stories, culture and design practices with visitors.

An experienced communicator, Tara speaks with customers about Bima Wear designs and their meaning, assists with Tiwi language translation for the Catholic Church, and has extensive customer service experience.

Tara joined AWEP to build her computer and administrative skills, connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts workers nationally, and learn about galleries and museums. She developed her knowledge of digital design and art and culture centre operations, particularly enjoying new printing technologies.

An AWEP highlight was a supplementary visit to Spacecraft Studio in Melbourne. Proud to see Bima Wear designs worn and celebrated, Tara hopes to mentor the next generation of Tiwi women at the centre and continue sharing Tiwi culture with new audiences.

I love my work as an arts worker and screenprinter. I have worked at the centre for decades and look forward to travelling to other parts of Australia to learn more skills and share my stories.

Art and culture centre:
Warlayirti Artists

Position:
Arts worker

Languages:
Walmatjarri, Kukatja, English

Born:
1983

Leah Nanala at Basil Hall's studio, May 2026

Warlayirti Artists
Lot 1, Nyirla Warlayirti Rd
Wirrimanu (Balgo) WA 6770
+61 407 123 478
admin@balgoart.org.au
balgoart.org.au

Warlayirti Artists is based in Wirrimanu (Balgo), on the edge of the Great Sandy and Tanami deserts. Established in 1987, the art and culture centre represents artists from across the Kutjungka region, including Mulan and Billiluna.

Artists come from diverse language groups including Kukatja, Ngardi, Warlpiri, Walmajarri and others, each contributing distinct stories, styles and cultural perspectives. Known for vibrant colour palettes and bold forms, Warlayirti artworks reflect deep cultural knowledge and strong connections to Country. Supporting more than 200 artists, the centre fosters intergenerational learning, cultural continuity and community wellbeing.

Leah Nanala at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Leah is an arts worker at Warlayirti Artists, Balgo. She lives in the small homeland community of Mulan, around 44 km south-west of the art and culture centre, where she prepares painting boards, mixes paints and supports artists in the studio.

Leah joined AWEP to learn more about art and culture centre work and to broaden her skills. She enjoys working with Elders, arts workers and management, and values the strong relationships she has built through her role.

During the program, Leah confidently shared stories about the significance of paintings of Country. She saw works by her grandmother, Ningie Nanala, her mother, Winifred Nanala, and her uncles in major collections, and viewed one of her own paintings at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory – a memorable experience alongside the achievements of earlier generations.

Proud to follow in her family's footsteps, Leah hopes to travel internationally and one day help lead an art and culture centre.

I am looking forward to travelling to new places that are far away from our home and to learning more skills about how to care for our artworks in community and in our centre.

The 2026 Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) Foundation began in April, when eight arts workers from ANKA's four regions gathered together in Darwin for the first professional development block.

Supported by ANKA staff and graduate mentor, Walter Brooks (AWEP Foundation 2025), the week-long Darwin intensive provided a rich program of professional development in conservation, repatriation, exhibition installation, governance, social media, iPad use, assistive technologies and public speaking.

Visits to major institutions, galleries and arts businesses introduced participants to a network of industry partners, contextualising the role of remote art and culture centres within the broader visual arts sector.

A conservation workshop at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) provided arts workers with techniques for repairing and preserving various materials at their remote centres. Tours of MAGNT's collections stores and exhibitions provided participants with a deeper understanding of museum practices including collections management, conservation, curatorial practice and exhibition planning.

At Charles Darwin University (CDU), participants visited the collections stores, where they were introduced to recent acquisitions, along with collections management and registration practices. In Darwin, participants were also hosted by Parliament House, the Supreme Court, Chapman & Bailey, Outstation Gallery and Aboriginal Bush Traders.

Martina Baxter and ANKA Director Lily Roy at ANKA, April 2026

Arts workers undertook an assistive technology workshop. The training introduced participants to inbuilt iPad functions such as 'text to voice' and 'voice to text', which can support day-to-day operations such as documentation of stories for workers in remote communities.

Behind-the-scenes visits to arts businesses and galleries exposed arts workers to a range of art world roles in the fields of curatorship, conservation and arts administration. The visits encouraged participants to reflect on the different ways art institutions and remote art and culture centres operate and the role each plays within the wider art world.

Angus Darcy and Ursula Marks at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome at ANKA, April 2026

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitators, graduate mentors and staff at Parliament House, April 2026

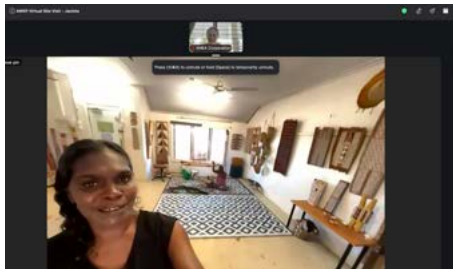
Raylene White-Miller, Jacinta Burukumalawuy, Leah Nanala and Eleanor Vallier at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

Walter Brooks with the Ngarra law painting by James Gaykamangu at Parliament House, April 2026

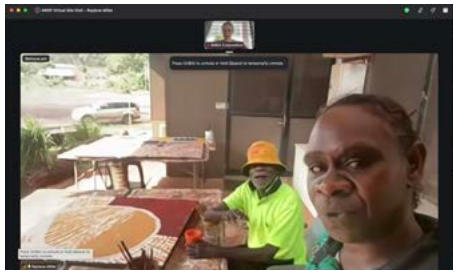
Raylene White-Miller at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, April 2026

In May, the 2026 AWEP participants took part in virtual site visits with ANKA staff. During these visits, participants led a tour of their art and culture centre, introducing their managers and colleagues and sharing their workplace, facilities and surrounding Country. They also demonstrated their day-to-day work, from supporting artists in the studio and preparing materials to cataloguing artworks, coordinating freight, assisting with exhibitions and caring for collections. The visits gave ANKA staff a valuable understanding of each participant's role and workplace, enabling them to better provide tailored support during the program.

Arts workers also completed a skills and goals evaluation which involved identifying strengths and areas they hoped to build on through the program and beyond.



Screen shot of virtual visit hosted by Jacinta Burukumalawuy with Honey Abbott, May 2026



Screen shot of virtual visit hosted by Raylene White-Miller with Honey Abbott, May 2026

Screen shot of virtual visit hosted by Theresa (Tara) Munkanome with Honey Abbott, May 2026

Although the Canberra program was shorter than in previous years, participants experienced a rich series of visits to national cultural institutions, made possible through the generosity of curators, conservators and collection specialists who shared their knowledge and expertise.

The arts workers visited the National Film and Sound Archive, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), the National Museum of Australia, Parliament House and the National Gallery of Australia.

At the National Film and Sound Archive, participants received an introduction to the care and preservation of audiovisual collections. Hosted by Sophie Lewincamp, Head of Conservation and Collection Management and colleagues, and Keir Winesmith, Chief Digital Officer, the team outlined its new digital access to collections material and demonstrated different film and audio formats, the risks these materials face over time and the specialised conservation techniques used to preserve them for future generations.

At AIATSIS, participants searched historical records relating to their own communities. Exploring photographs and archival materials with the support of AIATSIS staff was a rewarding experience, providing opportunities to reconnect with community histories and cultural records.

At Parliament House, participants viewed the Barunga Statement (1988) alongside significant works from the Parliament House Art Collection, exploring the enduring role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art as a powerful expression of culture, identity and political advocacy.

Adam Ford and Jacinta Burukumalawuy at the National Gallery of Australia, May 2026

The program included a hands-on printmaking workshop with master printmaker Basil Hall, who shared insights from decades of collaboration with remote art and culture centres. Participants created their own etchings, gaining first-hand experience of the printmaking process.

The visit concluded at the National Gallery of Australia, where Adam Ford, Curator First Nations Art, guided participants in a discussion about the Aboriginal Memorial and the care, conservation and interpretation of First Nations art within Australia's national collection. Throughout the visit, participants were encouraged to reflect on the different roles of national collecting institutions and remote art and culture centres, and the important contribution each makes to Australia's cultural landscape.

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitators, graduate mentors and staff at Parliament House, May 2026

Principal partner:

National Gallery of Australia

The National Gallery of Australia (NGA) has been an important partner of AWEP since the program began. Due to extensive renovations, the NGA was unable to participate in the 2026 program. ANKA looks forward to continuing this long-standing partnership in 2027.

Partners:

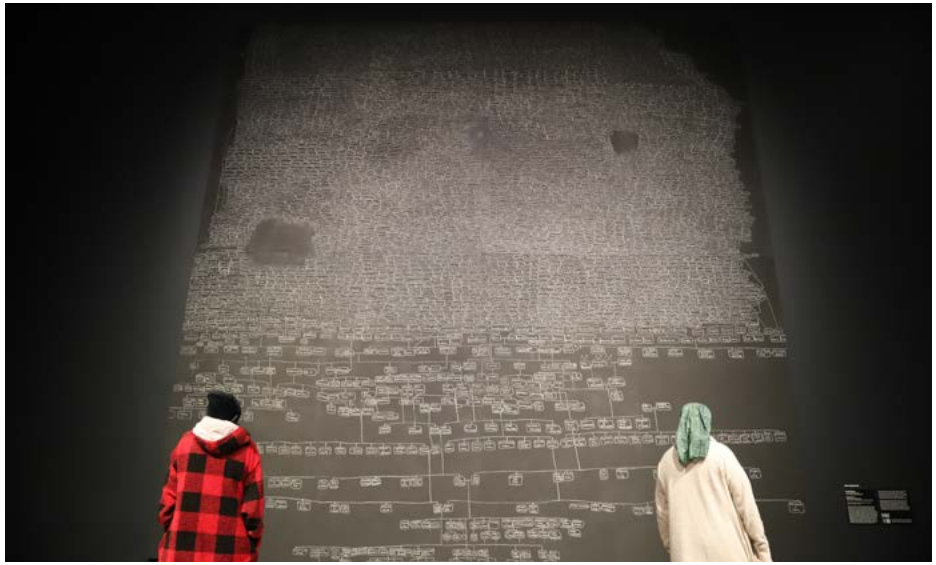
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
- National Film and Sound Archive
- National Museum of Australia
- Parliament House
- Basil Hall Editions

The National Gallery of Australia (NGA) strongly supports ANKA's Arts Worker Extension Program Foundation. The program delivers meaningful training, hands-on skills development and practical outcomes for remote Indigenous arts workers. It also provides valuable behind-the-scenes insight into the wider arts sector through visits to national and state galleries, museums and cultural institutions. The professional development opportunities it offers – both immediate and long-term – are significant.

The NGA has observed with excitement and confidence the emergence of a growing group of knowledgeable, capable and empowered arts ambassadors who are well placed to lead the remote Indigenous art and culture sector into the future.

– Tina Baum, Head Curator Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art, National Gallery of Australia

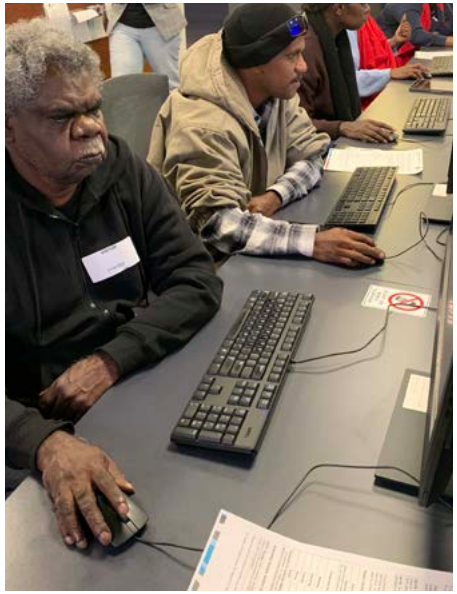
Jacinta Burukumalawuy reading the Barunga Statement, Parliament House, May 2026



Theresa (Tara) Munkanome and Leah Nanala with *Family tree* (2021) by Archie Moore at the National Gallery of Australia, May 2026

Basil Hall and Ursula Marks at Basil Hall's studio, May 2026

Cameron Rees and Theresa (Tara) Munkanome at the National Film and Sound Archive, May 2026



Angus Darcy and Walter Brooks at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, May 2026

The Sydney trip included a two-day internship at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), a long-standing AWEP Foundation supporter and a key partner in 2026.

Head of First Nations, Cara Pinchbeck, generously hosted the internship, with workshops, tours and discussions. This included learning from the AGNSW conservation team, visits to collection storage areas, a digital art workshop, and a curating workshop around *Yolŋu power: the art of Yirrkala*, a blockbuster exhibition developed by the AGNSW in partnership with Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre.

A highlight was viewing the *Ngurrara canvas II* (1997) at the AGNSW as part of the Biennale of Sydney. Created by over 40 Traditional Owners from the Great Sandy Desert in Western Australia, and originated by former ANKA Chairperson Mr Ngarralja Tommy May, the canvas is a living map of Country, culture and ancestral knowledge. It was central to winning the Kimberley's largest native title claim in 2007.

Participants also gave presentations about their work in northern art and culture centres to an auditorium of gallery staff, industry partners and invited guests, with the event live-streamed.

At the Chau Chak Wing Museum, the University of Sydney, participants saw ancient artefacts from Greece and Egypt. Particularly meaningful was the chance to view contemporary and ancestral works by their community and family members held in storage spaces. At the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA), Director, First Nations Art and Cultures, Keith Munro discussed his curatorial practice and introduced Tony Albert's retrospective *Not a souvenir*.

Jacinta Burukumalawuy and Leah Nanala in Sydney, May 2026

Thanks to a special invitation from Creative Australia, the group attended a dinner at the MCA to support ANKA Chairperson Dr Djambawa Marawili AM as he received a prestigious Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Advocacy and Leadership (nominated by ANKA and Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka).

The Sydney trip concluded with a visit to the Australian National Maritime Museum to view artworks and cultural material from ANKA's regions. These included a painting by Dr Djambawa Marawili AM from the Saltwater Collection (1997), which he coordinated to support the successful Blue Mud Bay sea rights case that followed in 2008. Manager Indigenous Programs, Matt Poll, hosted the group on a Sydney harbour tour aboard the *John Louis*, a restored pearl lugger from Broome.

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitator and graduate mentors at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Principal partner: Art Gallery of New South Wales

Partners:

- Chau Chak Wing Museum, University of Sydney
- Museum of Contemporary Art Australia
- National Maritime Museum

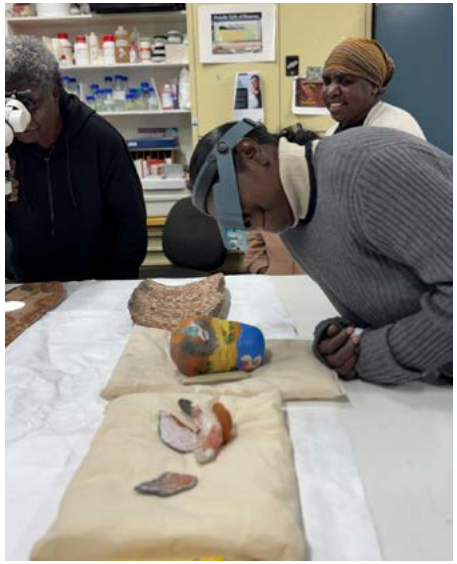
The work AWEP does, building career pathways and leadership for Aboriginal arts and cultural workers from remote communities across the north and north-west matters enormously. It is always a privilege to be a part of the work ANKA does building pathways to arts leadership. And an absolute highlight of our year to show you some of the work we do bringing the deep knowledges of Sea Country at the Australian National Maritime Museum. Thank you for bringing your knowledge, your stories and your company to us again this year.

— Matt Poll, Manager of Indigenous Programs, National Maritime Museum

Keith Munro, Lynley Nargoodah, Martina Baxter, Colin Puruntatameri and Walter Brooks in front of the John Prince Siddon wall painting at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, May 2026

The Art Gallery of New South Wales is grateful for the opportunity to have engaged more deeply with participants in ANKA's Arts Worker Extension Program this year. This expansive program provides exceptional professional development for remote Aboriginal arts workers who undertake vital work across Australia's north. Strengthening the participants' expertise is of direct benefit to their individual art centres, while the engagement and advocacy of the participants during the program fosters increased capabilities of staff within institutions, like the Art Gallery. The participants' presentations were a 'lightbulb moment' for many Art Gallery staff in understanding the significance of Aboriginal art centres and the invaluable role of local arts workers.

— Cara Pinchbeck, Head of First Nations, Art Gallery of New South Wales



Angus Darcy, Jacinta Burukumalawuy and Leah Nanala in a conservation lab at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Angus Dolby in a conservation lab at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Lynley Nargoodah with the *Ngurrara canvas* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome, Raylene White-Miller, Jacinta Burukumalawuy and Marika Duczynski at the Chau Chak Wing Museum, May 2026

Philinka Dolby at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, May 2026

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitator and graduate mentors at the University of Sydney, May 2026

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitator and graduate mentors with Marika Duczynski and Maggie Hall at the Chau Chak Wing Museum, May 2026

Dr Djambawa Marawili AM, with David Marika and Kathy Wirrpanda, receiving the Red Ochre Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cultural Advocacy and Leadership, Creative Australia First Nations Arts and Culture Awards, May 2026.
Photo: Stephen Wilson Barker

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitators and graduate mentors with Matt Poll at the National Maritime Museum, May 2026

Angus Darcy and Walter Brooks at Vivid Sydney, May 2026

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome at the Chau Chak Wing Museum, May 2026

The second week of the interstate trip was focused on a three-day internship at the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, Robert Cripps Institute for Cultural Conservation, the University of Melbourne. Arts workers participated in practical conservation training in the Grimwade laboratories with tutors and researchers. This included learning how to treat works on paper, canvas, fibre works and carvings damaged by dirt, water and mould.

The internship also involved a visit to Grimwade Conservation Services in North Melbourne, where the arts workers participated in hands-on workshops in caring for works on paper, paintings and objects.

While at the University of Melbourne, arts workers were invited to a lunch and tour at Trinity College hosted by the Reverend Professor Russell Goulbourne, Warden of Trinity College, and Benjamin Thomas, Rusden Curator of Cultural Collections.

The group also visited the Potter Museum at the University of Melbourne, where Ashley Perry and Lisa Slade generously brought out selected objects from the Donald Thomson Collection, along with other items from the university's collections connected to the regions, communities and families represented in the AWEP group. This was an important and thoughtful visit, creating space for participants to engage directly with material connected to their own places and histories. It also opened up valuable discussion about cultural care, repatriation, sacred and sensitive objects, and how universities and collecting institutions can work more closely with remote Aboriginal communities to share, display and return knowledge in culturally appropriate ways.

At the National Gallery of Victoria, the group was generously hosted by the First Nations team, who gave a tour of the new exhibition space, *Wurrdha marra*, at NGV Australia. A visit to the *Bark salon* within these dynamic First Nations galleries was a key highlight for the group who were able to find many works from their own families and communities. Conservator of Indigenous Art Genevieve Sullivan led the group behind the scenes in the conservation labs.

The trip to Melbourne also included a visit to Melbourne Museum where the group met with leading Indigenous curators and workers. Participants were welcomed into the Indigenous collections storage, where arts workers found many woven objects, carved items and important artefacts from their communities. This visit inspired further conversations on repatriation and how remote communities could care for their own collections in the future. The group also visited the *First Peoples: Bunjilaka* exhibition.

The Melbourne visit culminated with arts workers giving a presentation on their work and their art and culture centres to staff, researchers, students and invited guests at the University of Melbourne, followed by a celebratory dinner.

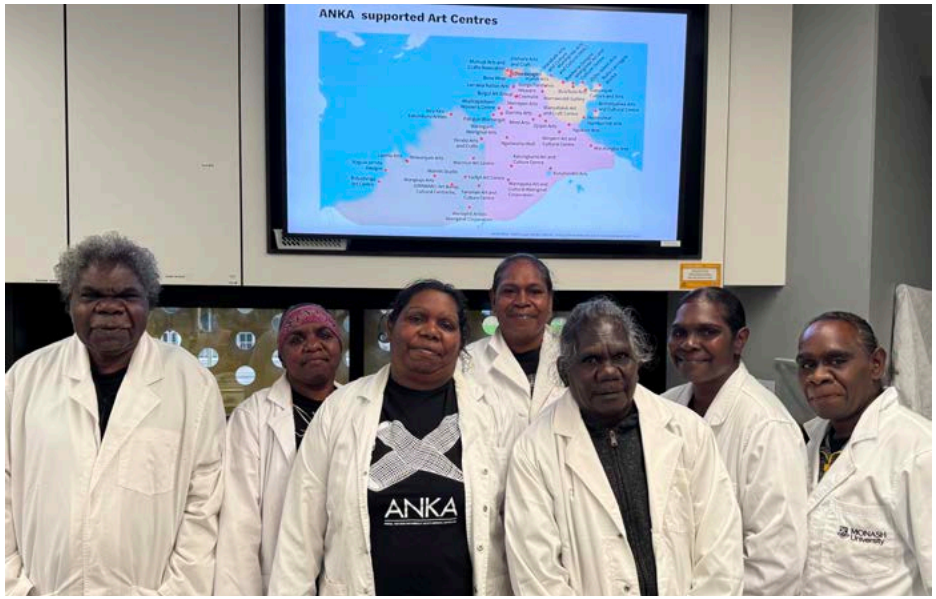
Principal partner:

Robert Cripps Institute for Cultural Conservation, the University of Melbourne

Partners:

- Melbourne Museum
- National Gallery of Victoria
- The University of Melbourne
- Trinity College, the University of Melbourne

Theresa (Tara) Munkanome at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026



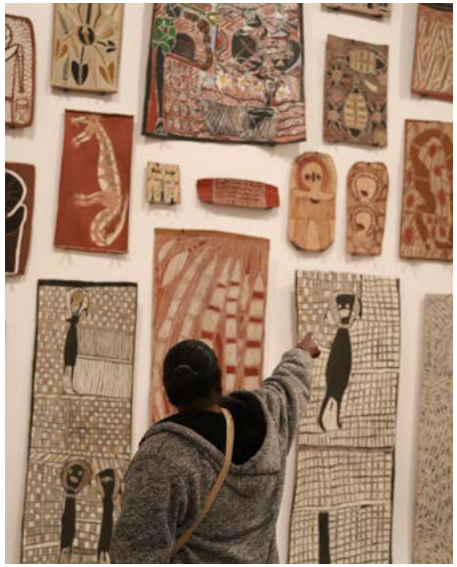
Angus Darcy, Leah Nanala, Ursula Marks, Martina Baxter, Theresa (Tara) Munkanome, Jacinta Burukumalawuy and Raylene White-Miller at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026

Amelia-Rose Trioriori, Jacinta Burukumalawuy, Ursula Marks and Leah Nanala at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026. Photo: Stamatina Hasiotis

The important partnership between the Robert Cripps Institute for Cultural Conservation and ANKA supports the ANKA network to develop conservation skills among their members so that they can look after their own art and cultural material.

– Professor Robyn Sloggett AM, Cripps Foundation Chair in Cultural Materials Conservation and Director, the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitators and graduate mentors with Sharn Geary, Genevieve Sullivan and Jessica Clark at the National Gallery of Victoria, June 2026



Ursula Marks in the *Bark salon* exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria, June 2026

Amelia-Rose Trioriori and Ursula Marks at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026

Martina Baxter and Philinka Dolby at the Potter Museum, June 2026

AWEP Foundation participants mapping cultural collections risks at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026

Ursula Marks with her Robert Cripps Institute of Cultural Conservation certificate, June 2026

Angus Darcy on the Monash Road overpass, June 2026

Angus Darcy at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026

AWEP participants, facilitators, graduate mentors and staff at a lunch hosted by Trinity College, June 2026

Angus Darcy, Bridgid Stapleton, Martina Baxter and Raylene White-Miller at the Grimwade Centre, June 2026.
Photo: Stamatina Hasiotis

AWEP Foundation presentation event at the University of Melbourne, June 2026

Jacinta Burukumalawuy at Melbourne Museum, June 2026

AWEP Pathways, introduced on page 4 of this booklet, creates pathways from AWEP Foundation to further professional development opportunities, both accredited and non-accredited. A key initiative is the pioneering partnership with the University of Melbourne's Grimwade Centre and Trinity College to deliver the postgraduate Specialist Certificate in Cross-Cultural Conservation and Heritage. Established in 2019, it is the first university course in Australia designed specifically for remote Indigenous arts workers. In 2024, a further five participants graduated with the postgraduate Specialist Certificate. They were:

- Arthurina Moreen
- Colin Puruntatameri
- Stanley Taylor
- Cathy Ward
- Hayden Wilson.

The Specialist Certificate will recommence in 2026, continuing to provide remote Indigenous arts workers with specialised two-way professional development in conservation, collections care and cultural heritage.

Walter Brooks and Colin Puruntatameri performing a yoi (Tiwi dance) at the AWEP Foundation presentation event, the University of Melbourne, June 2026. Photo: Stamatina Hasiotis

Lynley Nargoodah and Colin Puruntatameri at the National Film and Sound Archive, May 2026

Acknowledgements

AWEP Foundation 2026 participants, facilitators, graduate mentors and staff with Russell Goulbourne and Ben Thomas at Trinity College, June 2026

The Arts Worker Extension Program (AWEP) Foundation 2026 has been made possible through the dedication, generosity and collaboration of many individuals and organisations. These include ANKA directors, art and culture centre managers, staff, industry partners and funding partners. The ANKA Board sincerely thanks everyone involved. Special thanks go to Creative Australia for its multi-year support of the program since 2021.

ANKA acknowledges the extensive and generous collaboration of participating art and educational institutions who have enthusiastically supported this program since 2010–11. In particular, we thank ANKA's long-standing principal program partners, the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; and the Robert Cripps Institute for Cultural Conservation at the University of Melbourne; and 2026 principal partner, the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

ANKA acknowledges the contribution of the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, Darwin; Parliament House Collection, Canberra; National Museum of Australia, Canberra; the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra; Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney; Chau Chak Wing Museum, the University of Sydney; Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Melbourne Museum; Trinity College, the University of Melbourne; and other leading galleries, museums and arts businesses visited by program participants.

The ANKA Board thanks this year's program staff, Honey Abbott, Carly Day and Colin Puruntatameri as well as graduate mentors Lynley Nargoodah (Mangkaja Arts) and Walter Brooks (Jilamara Arts).

In 2026, ANKA will celebrate its 101st AWEP graduate since the program began. ANKA acknowledges the contribution of art and culture centre managers and boards who have supported all participants in AWEP Foundation and Pathways from 2010 to 2026.

Contact details

For further information about the program, contact:

ANKA ARNHEM, NORTHERN AND KIMBERLEY ARTISTS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
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ANKA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

ANKA's core program and operational support is provided through the Australian Government's Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support (IVAIS) program. The Australian Government also provides assistance through Creative Australia, its principal arts funding and advisory body. ANKA is proudly sponsored by the Northern Territory Government and the City of Darwin, whose sponsorship also contributes to core program and operational support.

Australian Government
Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support

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Front cover: AWEP Foundation 2026 participants at Trinity College, June 2026
Back cover: Angus Darcy and Raylene White-Miller at the National Film and Sound Archive, May 2026

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