

Guidelines for a respectful Acknowledgement of Country

- Know the difference between Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.
- Avoid formulaic acknowledgements or giving the same one twice.
- Aboriginal protocols require that the most 'senior' person provides the Acknowledgement. Within ANU hierarchy this would mean the person with the most senior position. The default is not the closest First Nations person.
- Keep it personal, relational, connected: What place/Country are on? On whose Country were you born? What does Country mean to you? What is the reason you (you all) are there? How does this relate back to Country?
- Appropriate people should give one at first gathering but there is no need to do it at every event in a series (e.g. every lecture). Guests might be the best people to provide the Acknowledgement when visiting (eg when teaching courses). The default is not the closest First Nations person.
- The sincere use of local language is generally welcome, particularly if it is an acknowledgement crafted by the local mob. If there is not an acknowledgement crafted by the local mob for the institution/organization to use, it is respectful to get explicit permission from the local mob for you personally to use language.
- Be yourself; insincerity will be noted.
- Keep it short.
- Remember it is about country, not you, the reason you are there or even the people you are with.
- If in doubt, run your Acknowledgement past the mob you live/play/work with

These guidelines were developed, and approved for widespread sharing, by the Indigenous Australian participants in the Fenner decolonizing research and teaching Circle. The Fenner Circle forms in the Fenner School of Environment & Society at the Australian National University.

We hope they help you craft meaningful acknowledgements of country.