

Koala Dreaming

“An exploration of Indigenous methodologies in ecology conservation”

We would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the Traditional Custodians of Country. We would like to pay our respects to Elders, Traditional Owners and Ancestors past and present. We would like to extend that respect to any Indigenous person that reads this work.

Teresa Cochrane – PhD Student

A proud Dunghutti Gumbaynggirr women with strong cultural connections to Birpai/Birripi and Bunjalung Country.

Peta Jeffries – Primary Supervisor

Sentence

Scott McManus – Supervisor

He is a Ngiyampaa man who is a spatial and data science lecturer in the CSU School of Agriculture, Environmental and Veterinarian Science.

Lee Baumgartner – Supervisor

Sentence



Introduction

Higher Degrees of Research particularly in science have a well structured framework on how they can be completed, and this is reflective of Western approaches. The ‘traditional’ Western method is usually seen as completing a dissertation or thesis, but other methods can be used to communicate research findings. This PhD will challenge this Western approach by using Indigenous methodologies and science as the foundation for understanding and researching the ecology of Koalas and Eucalyptus.

PhD Room

This research PhD will be a interdisciplinary practice that will incorporate Indigenous and Western methodologies to allow for a holistic understanding of contemporary Australian science. The research findings will be communicated through an art-based approach through the style of an exegesis style. The art-based exegesis approach also allows for broader audiences of different education levels and cultures, as well as varied learning styles.

This research will draw on past and current Indigenous methodologies and the cultural knowledge of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but also the knowledge of Indigenous communities in internationally.

Research Topic

The main research topic is ‘What kind of Ancestor do I want to be?’ and will reflect my culture as a Dunghutti Gumbaynggirr women whose personal totem is the koala. It will consist of six subsidiary research topics to help in the exploration of koala conservation and preservation through Indigenous and Western Science.

Subsidiary research topics:

- Indigenous culture/knowledge as a tool for koala conservation
- Archive Study on koala observation by invaders and explorers
- Deterrents present in *Eucalyptus foliage* and the impacts on koala diet selection
- Koala monitoring and Indigenous Ranger engagement on Country
- Recommendations and further research for koala management
- What kind of Ancestor do you want to be?

Anticipated Outcomes/Aims

The main methods for my PhD will be gathering Indigenous knowledge and culture through yarning, and Western knowledge through archival and desktop research.

My PhD will comprise of two art installations/galleries, with one being on the topic ‘Koala Dreaming’, and the second on my PhD the findings of my research/scientific papers (Figure 1).

‘Koala Dreaming’

This art installation/gallery will be an accumulation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and culture across Country habitat ranges.

The room will split into two main sections and will reflect the colours of the Aboriginal flag. Black will be all of the stories, and culture related to the Dreaming, while Red will representing cultural on land like artifacts and pelts (Figure 2).

PhD Room

The PhD room will be divided into seven sections (Figure 3). The room will have Eucalyptus trees at different stages of life as a seed, sapling, juvenile and tree. The room guide the viewer clockwise. Section one (2a) of the room will be different from all the other sections (2b, c, d, e, f, g), and will feature a map of Country and Acknowledgement.

The rest of the sections (Figure 4), will be broken up into four parts. These are a part 1. ‘Title and Authorship’ of the artwork, part 2. an Indigenous art work that reflects the essence of the subsidiary research topic (SRT) document, part 3. that is an artists summary of the artwork and its relation to SRT, and part 4. SRT in the form of a written research scientific document probably in the format of a scientific paper or executive summary.

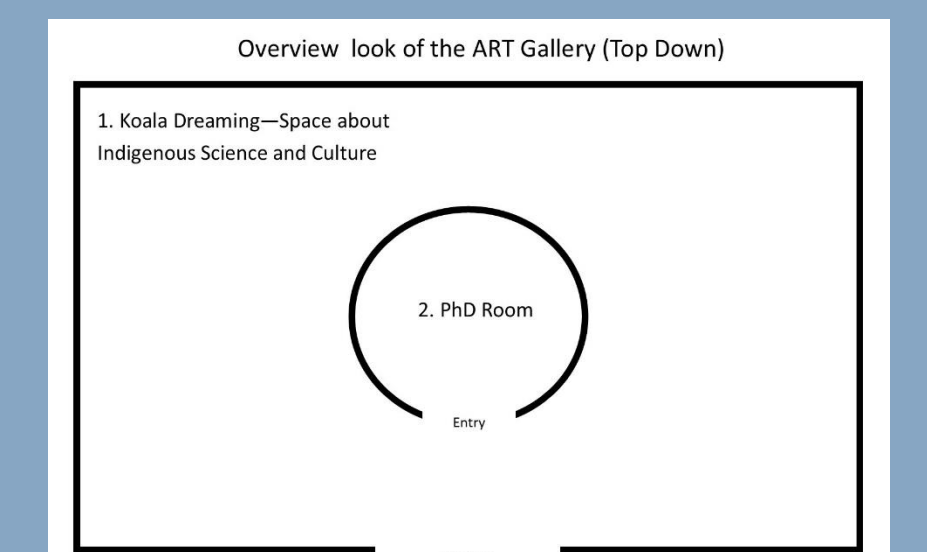


Figure 1. Name of this figure to be decided later. Might be two lines of text

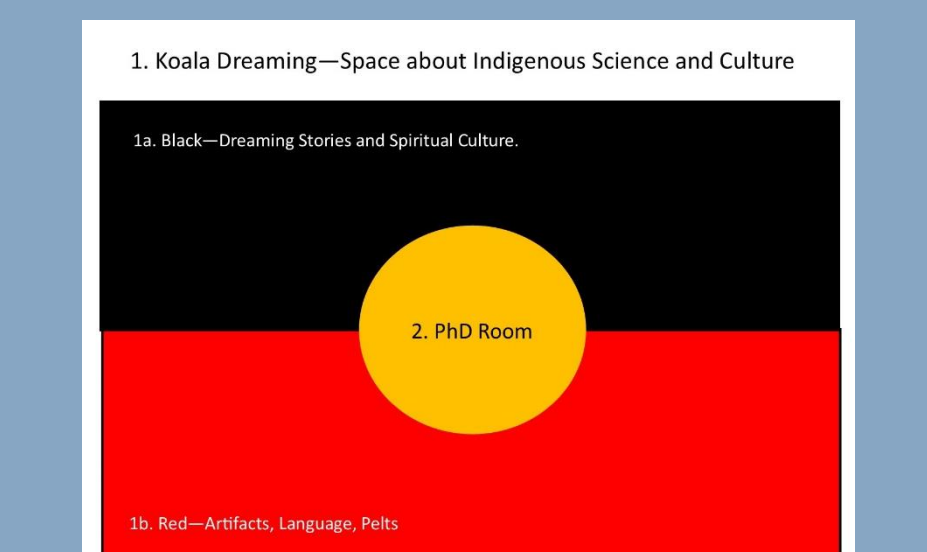


Figure 2. Name of this figure to be decided later. Might be two lines of text

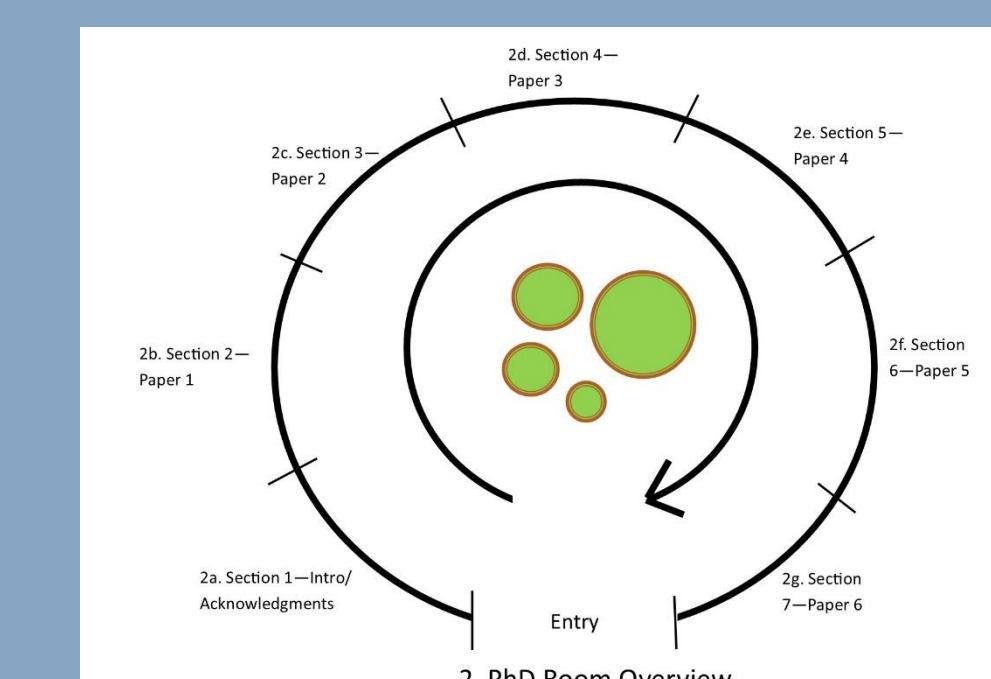


Figure 3. Name of this. Will probably be two lines

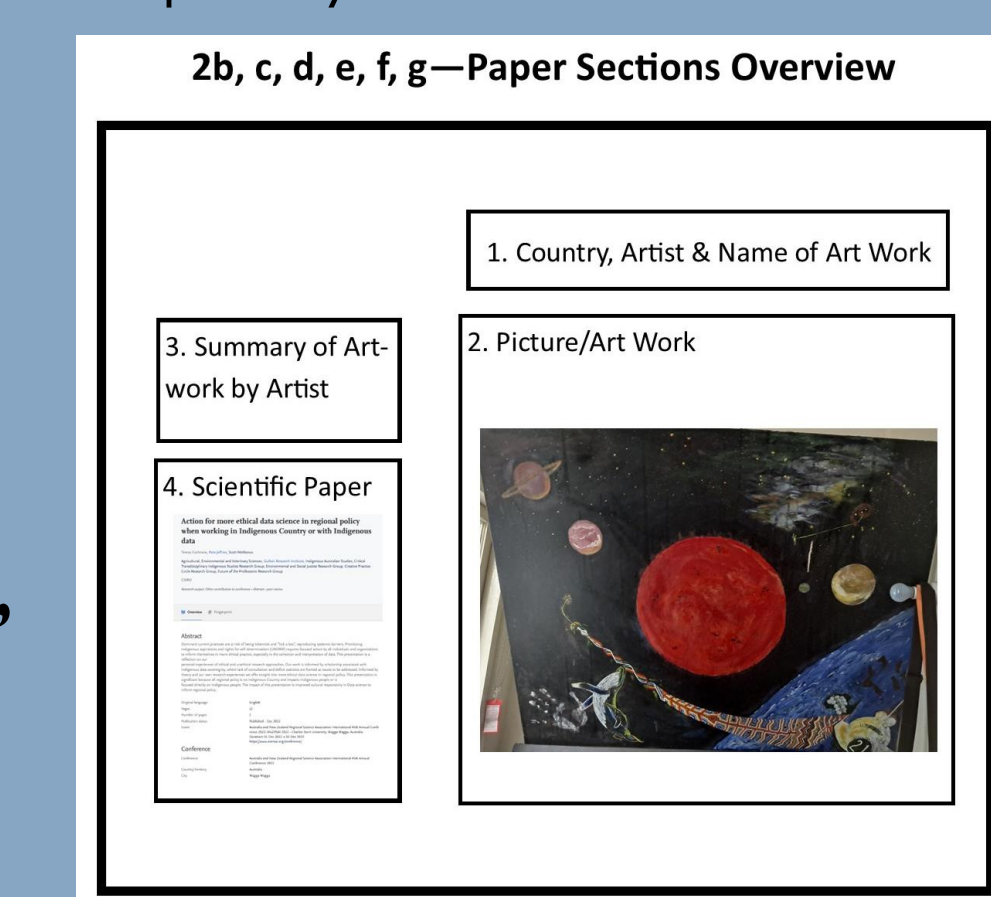


Figure 4. Name of this. Will probably be two lines