

MEDIA ALERT

WA ALLIANCE SEEKS TO RAISE THE BAR FOR CO-DESIGN IN ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION

ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP THURSDAY, 7 – FRIDAY, 8 APRIL 2022

In response to the widespread opposition from Aboriginal communities to the McGowan Government's rushed *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 (WA)* (ACH Act), the WA Alliance of Native Title Representative Bodies and Service Providers (the Alliance) is hosting the 'Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Protection Co-Design Workshop'. The gathering will focus on the implementation of the ACH Act; its associated guidelines, regulations and on-going review, and explore a credible, best practice co-design approach.

For genuine co-design to be achieved, the workshop is an important first step in engaging with relevant stakeholders – including government and industry representatives, heritage professionals, and co-design experts – in an Aboriginal-led conversation about what 'co-design' truly is.

Dr Christopher Kueh, an expert in co-design from Edith Cowan University, has been invited to share his knowledge of the potential for co-design to revolutionise how to protect and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage.

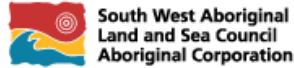
"Co-design is about designing *with*, not *for*," said Dr Kueh. "It's a collaborative effort that engages communities to identify and unpack the complex challenges they face. By focusing on story-telling and iterative transformation, we can create a sustainable approach to design, that is open to continual feedback and improvement."

Day One of the workshop will be an opportunity for Aboriginal people to come together to discuss their priorities and goals for the co-design process. Participants will then share their expectations on the drafting of the regulations and how co-design should work in practice.

Day Two will welcome industry, investors and government representatives to build on the conversation to collectively improve Aboriginal cultural heritage protection.

WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon. Dr Tony Buti MLA, will also join the workshop on Day Two to hear from delegates and update attendees on the current status of the ACH Act and its implementation.

It is widely known the McGowan Government has made repeated commitments to co-design the statutory regulations and guidelines governing the day-to-day operation of the new legislation with Aboriginal people, however information regarding what this will entail has been limited.



Outcomes from the workshop will be presented to Minister Buti, to inform him and those departments responsible for the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage on how they should fully engage Aboriginal people in a genuine co-design partnership.

Quotes that can be attributed to the Alliance:

“This workshop is the first stage of what should be an ongoing process of sharing stories, identifying challenges and co-designing solutions.”

“Moving from consultation to co-design is an important shift away from government-led policies and processes to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage.”

“We welcome the State Government’s renewed commitment to co-design, and wish to work with them in an effort to determine an appropriate pathway forward from here.”

END

The Alliance event partners hosting the workshop include Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation, South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, Native Title Services Goldfields, and the National Native Title Council.

For more information regarding the workshop and other related activities, please visit

<https://protectaboriginalheritagewa.org.au/>

Traditional Owner spokespersons can be available for media interviews at the conclusion of the event, which will be coordinated on the day.

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