



First Nations engagement protocol

Bush Blitz aims to bring together scientists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to document species new to science and enrich our shared understanding of Australian biodiversity. That's why authentic engagement and benefit sharing are important to Bush Blitz. The exchange between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and scientists enriches the program and provides opportunities for employment, skills transfer, knowledge sharing and an increase in cultural awareness for everyone involved. Bush Blitz expeditions can also be the start of beneficial relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and research organisations.

When undertaking fieldwork, Bush Blitz will respect Traditional laws and uphold Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocols. Bush Blitz will work with land managers, relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and their representatives to negotiate the level and type of engagement that will suit them and fit within the budget and logistical constraints of the expedition.

Consultation and planning

Bush Blitz will engage with Traditional Owners and Custodians as early as possible before an expedition to:

- allow time for adequate consultation and planning of the expedition
- meet to discuss the project proposal and provide a contact person to liaise with Traditional Owners and Custodians
- engage an interpreter if needed
- identify potential collection sites

Permits and fieldwork agreement

Bush Blitz will organise the following permits and agreements:

- permits from the relevant land council or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Association to enter and undertake research on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander land
- enter into or prepare a Bush Blitz fieldwork agreement with the land managers when appropriate

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participation and benefit sharing

Bush Blitz will investigate ways where expeditions can benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and meet their information needs, which could include some of the following:

- identify specific areas or species that are of interest to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and aim to include it within the scope of the expedition
- undertake an educational activity or demonstration at the local school or host a Bush Blitz community event to share stories about the research
- assist relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to participate in fieldwork
- provide training and/or development opportunities (if requested)

- remuneration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants on Bush Blitz expeditions for their time and expertise when they are not already supported through a relevant state or federal government program (this will be provided by Bush Blitz through the relevant State agency or Aboriginal or Torres Strait groups following their respective rates and policies, if applicable)
- involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups in promotional activities and develop shared key messages
- consider proposals from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply services required for the expedition (proposals will be assessed and contracts awarded in accordance with Government procurement guidelines).

Fieldwork practices

While on Country, Bush Blitz will:

- invite Traditional Owners to perform a Welcome to Country and brief researchers on cultural protocols and sensitive sites when appropriate
- ensure researchers follow reasonable direction from Traditional Owners or Custodians at all times, including taking direction on suitable sites for sampling and requests for researchers to be accompanied to particular sites during fieldwork
- not disturb or remove cultural material without permission
- not release information that is considered to be confidential to any person without prior written consent
- ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants consent to being photographed, filmed or recorded.

Bush Blitz deliverables and opportunity for Traditional Owners or Custodians to review contents of reports, papers and presentations

After each expedition, Bush Blitz will compile the scientific results into a final report and will:

- provide participating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and land managers with a copy of the final draft of the report and plain English summary before publishing and distribution
- provide a selection of photographs and final edited version of any video footage taken during the Bush Blitz
- ensure that if researchers plan to publish or present results from the Bush Blitz that includes ICIP provided by Traditional Owners or Custodians, the researchers will be asked to send a draft of the paper or conference presentation to the Traditional Owners or Custodians for review and approval before publication.

Ownership of materials

- use of ICIP in reports and other outputs shall be negotiated with prior consent of the providers.
- intellectual property and entire copyright of all Traditionally owned materials (such as songs, images, stories, names and other Traditional knowledge) that is recorded and otherwise documented in association with the Bush Blitz shall remain the sole property of the original owners.
- contract between each scientific institution and the Director of National Parks (DNP) [i.e., Bush Blitz] specifies that any new intellectual property generated by the project will be owned by the parties who generate it, but they will grant DNP a license to use it.

- if any new intellectual property created in partnership with Traditional Owners or Custodians and researchers under contracts to DNP is of commercial value, researchers will be required to negotiate a new agreement with the Traditional Owners or Custodians and their representative organisation.

Acknowledgements

For all resulting scientific outputs, Bush Blitz will:

- ensure all publications produced by Bush Blitz acknowledge the contribution of Traditional Owners or Custodians and their Country
- encourage scientists to collaborate and seek co-authorship of research papers with Traditional Owners or Custodians as a means of acknowledging their Cultural expertise and knowledge if it has assisted with the research outcomes or is included in the report.

More information about what we do and how we work can be found here:

bushblitz.org.au/indigenous-communities

bushblitz.org.au/expedition-resources

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