

2023 AIATSIS Summit Report



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SUMMIT | JUNE
2023
NOONGAR BOODJA PERTH



AIATSIS



South West Aboriginal
Land and Sea Council
Aboriginal Corporation

The 2023 AIATSIS Summit on Noongar boodja was an enormous success, surpassing all previous events with over 1750 delegates and 400 presenters in attendance.

The Summit, in partnership with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC), brought together government representatives, academics, researchers, legal professionals, GLAM sector members, and members of the community and public policy sectors. Discussions focused on crucial topics aimed at supporting and enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander governance, culture, and knowledge. This year's Summit saw a record number of attendees, with over 1,500 people physically present and 200 virtual participants.

The 2023 Summit, held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, centered around the brilliance and significance of Indigenous ways of perceiving and understanding the world. With the theme 'Navigating the spaces in between,' the program delved into sub-themes of belonging, identifying, connecting, interacting, and becoming. Throughout the event, attendees enjoyed First Nations artwork, cultural presentations, and entertainment, all centred

around various topics such as research, constitutional transformation, Country, native title, women's empowerment, treaty, health, and reuniting with one's community.

The Summit began with a keynote address from Justin Mohamed, the Ambassador for First Nations People, who shared his insights in his first months as Ambassador. Delegates eagerly awaited the Hon. Linda Burney MP, Minister for Indigenous Australians, who had previously given a closing plenary speech at the 2022 Summit.

The AIATSIS Mabo lecture was introduced by Aunty Gail Mabo, daughter of the renowned land rights advocate Eddie Koiki Mabo, and her son Kaleb. They recounted the history of Mer Island and the story of Malo before GBK Chair Ned David took the stage to deliver the 2023 Mabo lecture. Ned expressed his deep sense of honour and privilege when asked to give the presentation and provided an overview of GBK's commitment to empowering communities and creating a platform for their growth.



Stan Headland preparing the smoking ceremony. Photo: AIATSIS

About AIATSIS

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) is Australia's only national institution focused exclusively on the diverse history, cultures and heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

We care for a growing collection of over one million items, including films, photographs, audio recordings, art and objects, printed and other resource materials.

We conduct research to the highest ethical standards, benefiting our communities.

We publish award-winning books and content that engages people with the story of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

Our partnerships span the world, including government, academia, corporate, cultural and community sectors.



AIATSIS Summit and SWALSC staff at the morning briefing. Photo: AIATSIS

The hosts

Thanks to the six Noongar Corporations involved in AIATSIS 2023. They have brought immense value to the conference by sharing their unique perspectives, knowledge, and experiences. Their contributions have enriched the field of Indigenous research and fostered a greater understanding and appreciation of Noongar culture and heritage.

Ballardong Aboriginal Corporation has been instrumental in providing valuable insights into the traditional knowledge and cultural practices of the Noongar people. Their involvement has helped bridge the gap between academia and the community, ensuring research is conducted respectfully and collaboratively.

The Gnaala Karla Booja Aboriginal Corporation has played a crucial role in highlighting the cultural significance of the Noongar lands and advocating for their protection. Their knowledge and expertise have been invaluable in preserving the unique ecosystem and promoting sustainable practices.

The Karri Karrak (South West Boojarah) Aboriginal Corporation has focused on promoting cultural tourism and education, allowing visitors to experience Noongar culture firsthand. Their efforts have provided economic opportunities for the community and fostered a greater understanding and appreciation of Noongar traditions.

The Wagy! Kaip Aboriginal Corporation has been at the forefront of promoting Noongar language revitalisation. Through their initiatives, they have worked tirelessly to preserve and teach the Noongar language, ensuring its survival for future generations.

The Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation has been instrumental in advocating for the rights and welfare of the Noongar people. Their involvement in AIATSIS 2023 has helped raise awareness about the social and political challenges faced by the community, paving the way for necessary changes and improvements.

Lastly, the Yued Aboriginal Corporation has contributed to AIATSIS 2023 through its efforts to preserve Noongar heritage sites and artifacts. Their dedication to conserving and protecting cultural resources has been crucial in continuing Noongar traditions and history.



Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre Noongar boodja.
Photo: AIATSIS

The co-convenors

The South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (SWALSC) is the Central Services Corporation for the South West Native Title Settlement. SWALSC delivers administrative, corporate, financial, and unique services to the six Noongar regional corporations.

The South West Native Title Settlement (Settlement) is the largest native title settlement in Australian history. It affects an estimated 30,000 Noongar people, encompasses approximately 200,000 square kilometres in Western Australia's southwest, and has a financial worth of approximately \$1.3 billion.

The Settlement formally recognises that, since time immemorial, the Noongar people have maintained a living cultural, spiritual, familial and social relationship with Noongar boodja (land).

The Noongar Nation is one of Australia's largest Aboriginal cultural blocs, covering the entire south-west corner of Western Australia.

The Settlement involves six Noongar Native Title Agreement Groups and represents a significant social and economic investment in the Noongar community and the shared future of Western Australia.

The Noongar regional corporations represent the six individual Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs). They are:

- Yued (Jurien, Moora, Lancelin, Gingin)
- Gnaala Karla Boodja (Mandurah, Bunbury, Donnybrook)
- Karri Karrak (Busselton, Dunsborough, Margaret River, Pemberton, Nannup)
- Wagyl Kaip and Southern Noongar (Katanning, Gnowangerup, Albany)
- Ballardong (York, Northam, Hyden, Kondinin)
- Whadjuk (Perth metropolitan area)



Left: Brendan Moore Chairperson SWALSC. Photo: Redhanded
Right: Delegates on Day 1 of the 2023 AIATSIS Summit. Photo: AIATSIS

Attendance and engagement

- **1,580** delegates
- **200** virtual attendees
- **400** presenters across the five days
- **1,082** registered to attend the gala dinner
- More than **50** exhibitors



Summit program

The 2023 AIATSIS Summit featured over 150 presentations (including workshops) from over 400 presenters.

Among these were keynote addresses by the Ambassador for First Nations People, Justin Mohamed; Indigenous human rights advocate and lawyer Dr Hannah McGlade; ILSC CEO Joe Morrison; ILSC Board Director Gail Reynolds-Adamson and ILSC Chairperson Ian Hamm; Noongar Elders Liz Hayden and Dr Richard Walley OAM; Professor Gaye Sculthorpe of the Deakin University and Zac Roberts of the Macquarie University.

Eddie Koiki Mabo's daughter Gail Mabo and grandson, Kaleb Mabo, gave a moving opening address on the significance of the AIATSIS Summit to the Mabo family, and GBK Chair Ned David presented the 2023 Mabo Lecture.

In addition to the presentations, there were several workshops, including Indigenous Women's and Men's Talking Circles, conservation, and digitisation workshops, PBC futures and a Youth Forum. Each day of Summit began with a smoking ceremony from respected Noongar men Stan Headland and Terry Morich.

Program breakdown

Day 1	Chair opening remarks: Jodie Sizer, AIATSIS Brendan Moore, SWALSC Keynote: Justin Mohamed
Day 2	Keynote: Dr Hannah McGlade Panel: Joe Morrison, Gail Reynolds-Adamson, Ian Hamm 'National Indigenous Land and Sea Strategy Launch'
Day 3	Mabo Lecture keynote: Ned David
Day 4	Noongar representative keynotes: Liz Hayden, Dr Richard Walley OAM
Day 5	GLAM sector keynotes: Professor Gay Sculthorpe, Zac Roberts

Top: Delegates on Day 4 of the 2023 AIATSIS Summit.
Bottom: Gail and Kaleb Mabo delivering their opening address
at the Day 3 morning plenary. Photos: AIATSIS



DAY 1

The 2023 AIATSIS Summit officially opened on the lands of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, the Traditional Owners of Boorloo (Perth). Delegates were welcomed by Whadjuk Elder Geri Hayden and treated to a powerful ceremonial tribute of Noongar dances. The first plenary session opened with addresses from our Summit partner, SWALSC Chair Brendan Moore, and Chair of AIATSIS, Jodie Sizer. Gooreng Gooreng man and Australia's inaugural Ambassador for First Nations People, Justin Mohamed, delivered a keynote address.

The summit on Noongar boodja brought together cultural and community leaders, academics, government officials, legal experts, and native title stakeholders to celebrate and explore this year's theme, 'Navigating the spaces in between'.

The official Welcome Ceremony took place in the evening, with Hon. Linda Burney, the Minister for Indigenous Australians, as the special guest opening the AIATSIS Summit 2023. The night was filled with music, and a sense of celebration, marking a fantastic start to the summit.

Left: The Hon. Linda Burney officially opening the 2023 AIATSIS Summit.

Right: Chair of AIATSIS, Jodie Sizer presenting at the morning plenary.

Photos: AIATSIS



DAY 2

On day two, the conference began with a powerful speech by Dr Hannah McGlade. As an advocate for Indigenous rights, she emphasised the importance of recognising and respecting Indigenous land and sea rights and highlighted the need for meaningful engagement and collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Later in the day, a panel discussion featured esteemed guests Joe Morrison, Gail Reynolds-Adamson, and Ian Hamm. They discussed the significance of the “National Indigenous Land and Sea Strategy” and its potential to address key land and sea rights issues. Attendees engaged in thought-provoking conversations and gained valuable insights.

One of the panel’s most exciting highlights was the official launch of the “National Indigenous Land and Sea Strategy.” This initiative aims to provide a comprehensive framework for protecting and managing Indigenous lands and seas across the country. The launch event was attended by dignitaries, Indigenous leaders, and community members, all of whom celebrated this significant milestone in Indigenous rights.

Throughout the day, attendees also had the opportunity to participate in various workshops, including sessions on research, native title, and languages. These sessions allowed for knowledge-sharing and collaboration, fostering a sense of empowerment and unity among participants.

Left: Liz Hayden and Terry Morich presenting the Welcome to Country.

Right: Panel discussion.
Photos: AIATSIS



DAY 3

On the third day of the AIATSIS Summit, there was a significant increase in the number of delegates attending, mainly focusing on the native title sector. The plenary hall opened with Gail Mabo and Kaleb Mabo being welcomed on stage to loud applause from an enthusiastic audience. Gail Mabo announced that she was passing on her responsibilities to her son, Kaleb Mabo, to allow the next generation to take charge and excel.

Kaleb Mabo spoke about the importance of the Summit for the Mabo family and how the spirits of their ancestors would guide the new generation as they continue the Mabo legacy. He shared his family's background and history before receiving a standing ovation and handing over to Ned David, Chair of the

Gur A Baradharaw Kod Torres Strait Sea and Land Council (GBK), who delivered the 2023 Mabo Lecture.

The day's discussions included heritage protection, strengthening the place of Indigenous peoples in universities, concepts of 'belonging' in academia, environmental stewardship, storytelling and colonial control, Aboriginal women's experiences of cultural renewal, identity, and healing, land and sea management, protecting cultural and intellectual property rights, and First Nations-led fire management and innovative solutions.

The day ended with a socialising and networking event at the Claremont Showgrounds, allowing delegates to relax and connect with each other at the halfway point of the Summit.

Left: Ned David, Chair, GBK, Sea and Land Council, Torres Strait delivering the keynote address.

Right: Panel discussion.
Photos: AIATSIS



DAY 4

On day four of the event, esteemed Noongar Elders Liz Hayden and Dr Richard Walley OAM delivered keynote addresses that captivated the audience with their insights into Indigenous culture and heritage. Liz Hayden spoke about the importance of preserving and revitalising Indigenous languages, emphasising their role in connecting Indigenous communities to their land, ancestors, and cultural identity. Her speech highlighted the need for ongoing efforts to protect and promote Indigenous languages.

Dr Richard Walley, OAM, drew on his extensive experience as a performer and cultural ambassador to deliver a powerful keynote

address on the significance of Indigenous art and its ability to convey important stories and messages. His speech showcased the richness and diversity of Indigenous artistic expression.

In addition to the keynote addresses, the event featured workshops and interactive sessions on day four. These sessions allowed attendees to participate in hands-on activities such as traditional art demonstrations, storytelling, and cultural performances. Participants had the opportunity to learn directly from Indigenous artists and community members, deepening their understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture and heritage.



Left: Panel discussion.
Right: Dr Richard Walley
OAM delivering the
keynote address.
Photos: AIATSIS



DAY 5

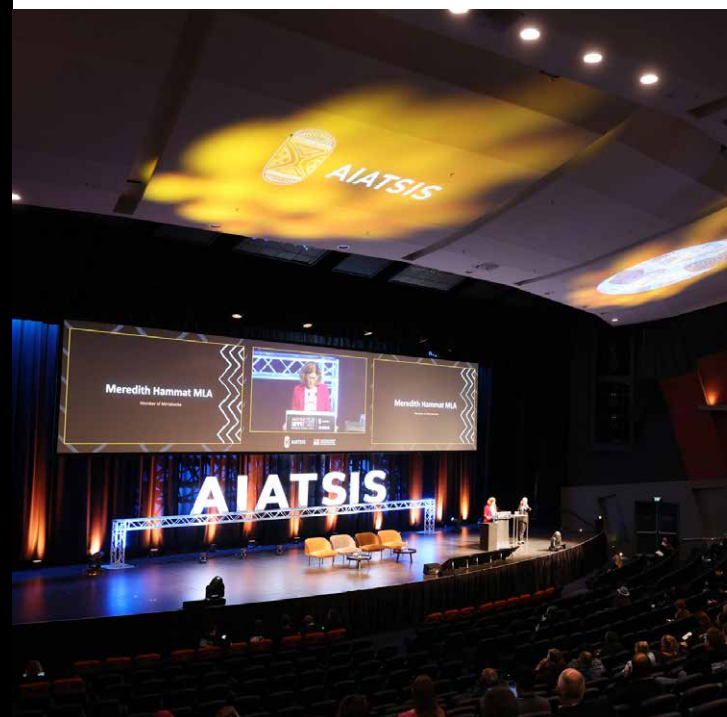
The final plenary of the 2023 AIATSIS Summit opened with a parliamentary address from Meredith Hammat MLA, Member of Mirrabooka speaking on the Western Australian Government's commitment to the aspirations of the Traditional Owners through their policies and processes, and how they can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The plenary concluded with two keynote speakers from the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector. Professor Gaye Sculthorpe from Deakin University giving an engaging presentation on the repatriations of Aboriginal objects to communities and called for 'decolonisation' of museums from around the world.

Zac Roberts from Macquarie University presented on the archives and delved into ways that mob working in the archives can utilise settler repositories to create opportunities for the future where they can highlight intersecting, layered and complex histories, identities, and engagements with the settler colony.

The final program day featured workshops and presentations from the Health, GLAM and Native Title sectors, as well as the Youth Forum facilitated by Nyoongar woman Rickeeta Waller and Nyoongar man Jack Collard.

Meredith Hammat MLA (left) and Professor Gaye Sculthorpe (right) presenting at the morning plenary. Photos: AIATSIS



YOUTH FORUM

The Youth Forum brought together approximately 40 young native title holders, students, community organisers, advocates, and other stakeholders. Through a series of yarning circles, they discussed the experiences of Indigenous youth in native title, governance, and nation-building. Noongar representatives Jack Collard and Rickeeta Walley opened and facilitated the Forum, discussing their views on Noongar youth engagement in nation-building.

Rickeeta began by discussing the loss of culture and traditions caused by colonisation, leading to a conversation about the importance of engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth. The group then split into small yarning circles, where Rickeeta asked each group to discuss and write down the restrictions and opportunities that Indigenous youth face due to colonisation. After a smoking ceremony conducted by Jack Collard, the group formed a larger yarning circle.

Lilly-Rae Jones and Latoya-Sharnae Jones from the Indigenous Country and Governance (ICG) unit spoke about youth perspectives' importance in nation-building and supporting cultural growth and sustainability for future generations. They discussed the barriers restricting youth from participating in discussions about First Nation issues, including the complexities of navigating Native Title.

Jack Collard discussed how youth involvement in nation-building is essential, mainly due to the South West Native Title Settlement, and how it can break harmful stereotypes and stigma surrounding Indigenous people, especially Indigenous youth. He also expressed that young people must put in the work to ensure Indigenous communities become self-sufficient and no longer rely on government support.

At the end of the day several youth forum participants shared their experiences and expressed how empowering it felt to engage with fellow passionate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.



Jack Collard and Rickeeta Walley at the Youth Forum smoking ceremony.
Photo: AIATSI

GALA DINNER

Narelda Jacobs, an esteemed figure in the media industry, took centre stage as the host of the grand gala dinner. Before the dinner, Shannon Kearing Snr and Liz Narkle mesmerised the attendees with their captivating sand art performances.

The night was entertaining, featuring renowned artists such as Boox Kid, DJ Jamilla, and the lively dance band Broken Tides. Each performer left an indelible mark on the audience, captivating them with their unique artistry.

Adding to the allure of the evening, Ash Walker, a distinguished member of the AIATSIS Council and a proud Dharawal/Durga man, held the audience in awe with his thought-provoking and intelligent speech. His words resonated deeply, profoundly impacting every individual present, ensuring a lasting memory of the event.

The pinnacle of the 2023 Summit Gala was the headline act performed by Isaiah Firebrace, the globally acclaimed pop artist of First Nations heritage. With his unparalleled talent and record-breaking streaming numbers, Isaiah's captivating performance marked the official conclusion of the unforgettable 2023 event.

Left: Narelda Jacobs (left), host of the gala dinner and guest.
Photo: AIATSIS

Right: AIATSIS Council member Ash Walker.
Photo: Redhanded





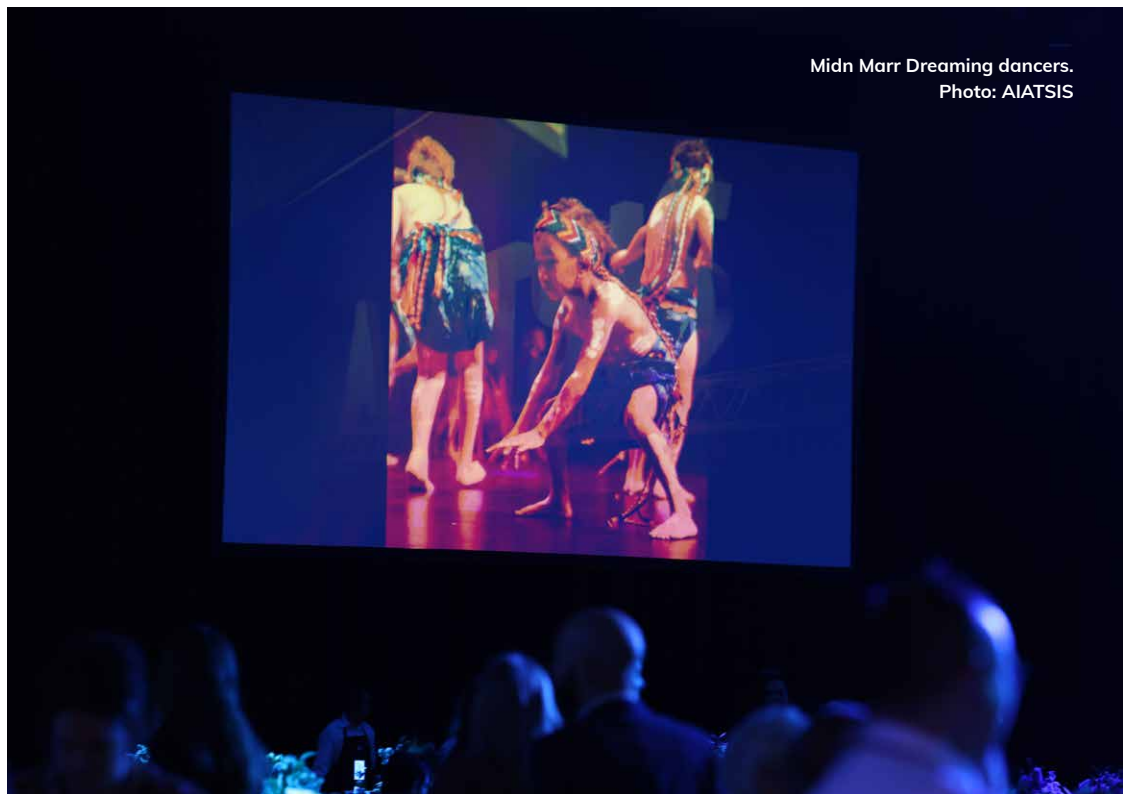
Sand art performance by
Shannon Kearing Snr
and Liz Narkle.
Photo: Redhanded



Isiah Firebrace
performing at
the gala dinner.
Photo: Redhanded



Broken Tides performing
at the gala dinner.
Photo: Redhanded



Midn Marr Dreaming dancers.
Photo: AIATSIS

Social media snapshot

Organic posts

Posts	226
Impressions	462,732
Engagements	37,804
Engagement rate	8.2%
Reactions	10,013
Comments	510
Link clicks	12,284
Audience growth	6,976

Story content

Stories	57
Impressions	24,922
Reach	430
Engagements	170
Reactions	148
Comments	14

Paid ads

Results	22,493
Reach	319,746
Impressions	1,314,153
Cost per result	\$0.32

Our data shows that the most successful content for the summit was announcements of activities and speakers and promotions for local talent, such as Culture Weave. Our paid digital ad campaign on Facebook and Instagram was exceptionally successful, with Summit registration ads outperforming other companies targeting the same audience. Our efforts resulted in achieving high engagement rates at a low cost. We are proud to report that the Summit received a 96% positive sentiment on social media during the week of the event.

Nadine Foley, Whadjuk artist, teacher and owner of Culture Weave with the weaving artwork created by Summit delegates. Photo: AIATSIS



Summit email marketing

Our Summit team executed 23 email campaigns over eight months between November 2022 and June 2023. These campaigns reached an impressive 4,589 subscribers, resulting in a remarkable total of 94,308 emails sent. Notably, our audience responded positively, with an open rate of 28%. The most engaging content revolved around ticket prices, sponsorship and exhibition, merchandise, and announcing the highly anticipated Mabo Lecture. Furthermore, the Summit 2023 was prominently featured in the AIATSIS News monthly newsletter, generating significant buzz and effectively promoting the campaign's key messaging.

Summit merchandise

At the AIATSIS Summit Exhibition, the AIATSIS Shop returned for its second year. The store sold various products from the Aboriginal Studies Press (ASP) and a new range of AIATSIS Summit 2023 merchandise, including hoodies, umbrellas, and water bottles, all featuring the Summit 2023 branding and showcasing the artwork Maali on the Derbal Yerrigan by Julianne Wade. This artwork was specifically chosen for the Summit and we were pleased to welcome Julianne to the event.

The AIATSIS Shop was a popular stall at the Summit, processing a total of 366 orders and generating \$23,660 in sales. The Summit merchandise was also available for purchase online via the AIATSIS Shop. This proved to be a great success, generating \$21,375 in pre Summit sales across 305 orders. The most popular product was the 2023 AIATSIS Summit Zippered Hoodie.



Top: Whadjuk artist Julianne Wade with her artwork Maali on the Derbal Yerrigan displayed on the Summit umbrella.

Bottom: AIATSIS Summit delegates at the Wednesday night social event contributing to a communal artwork. Photos: AIATSIS

Summit media

The AIATSIS Summit garnered considerable media attention from esteemed outlets. Notable attendees who received formal media accreditation included NITV, SBS, Koori Mail Newspaper, and National Indigenous Radio Services, all present on-site to capture and report on the event.

The summit's impact extended beyond national borders, as the international press covered the proceedings. Throughout the week, the AIATSIS website documented the media coverage received, allowing a broader audience to access the discussions, insights, and initiatives shared during the event.

This comprehensive media coverage emphasised the summit's importance and facilitated broader engagement and the understanding of the issues and concerns addressed by participants.

There were 12 media news articles generated from external media organisations across various media types, including radio and online methods. Media involved included articles from National Indigenous Times, World News, Koori Mail, National Indigenous Radio Service, Ngaarda Media, Croakey and Mirage News.



Summit delegates at various events throughout the week. Photos: AIATSIS

Whadjuk Noongar artists

Julianne Wade

This year AIATSIS selected the artwork *Maali on the Derbal Yerrigan* by Whadjuk artist Julianne Wade to feature on the Summit merchandise and supporting marketing material including the Summit satchel and notebook. Julianne's artwork is inspired by her Country (boodja) and ancestors. She aims to share her knowledge and culture through her art.

"The black swan, known as Maali in the Nyungar language, is a prominent feature of the Derbal Yerrigan, also known as the Swan River. When walking on Country alongside the Derbal Yerrigan, you can see Maali wading in the water, often in groups of two or more. This artwork is inspired by the strong connection between Aboriginal people and Maali and their connection to Derbal Yerrigan. Maali is one of my Nyungar totems that I have adopted." – Julianne Wade.

Yondee Shane Hansen

As part of the Summit, AIATSIS also acquired an artwork, which has been added to the AIATSIS Collection, that was highlighted throughout the Gala dinner. The work is the painting, 'Six Seasons' (AIAS14294), by Noongar artist Yondee Shane Hansen. Yondee is a Whadjuk Ballardong artist who uses natural pigment and vibrant acrylics to tell stories of Noongar peoples' culture and Country.

Yondee Shane Hansen's 'Six Seasons' is a culturally significant work incorporating major elements of his understanding and deep knowledge of the six Noongar Seasons. Each of the six paintings represents a distinct season, displaying aspects and associated colours of each season. The artworks contain physical elements unique to each season, and each panel was ceremonially smoked in accordance with the corresponding traditions of the season.

Yondee Shane Hansen is a Whadjuk Ballardong artist. Yondee was nurtured by his relatives who used Melaleuca paperbark trees to do their artwork along the Swan River, around the Guilford and Midland areas of Perth. The artist's bush name, 'Yondee', which means Black Goanna, reflects his deep connections to Noongar boodja – Noongar Country.



Top: Whadjuk artist Julianne Wade with her artwork *Maali on the Derbal Yerrigan* displayed on the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre steps. Photo: AIATSIS

Bottom: Yondee Shane Hansen, *Six Seasons*, 2022, acrylic on canvas, AIAS14294

SPONSORSHIP

AIATSIS would like to thank all its sponsors whose contributions made this Summit successful. With 21 sponsors, we raised \$739,000 in support, the most raised for an AIATSIS Summit. We would like to mention Business Events Perth, whose support was pivotal in bringing the Summit to Noongar boodja country (Perth).

Sponsors were acknowledged throughout the five-day program, including the plenary sessions, welcomes, the social evening, and the conference dinner. Sponsors were promoted before, during, and after the conference through the delegate app, signage, and online materials.

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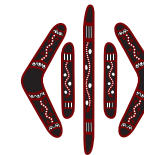


Australian Government
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation



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Smoking ceremony on Day 4 of the 2023 AIATSIS Summit on Noongar Boodja.
Front cover image: Dr Richard Walley OAM presenting the keynote address on Day 4. Photos: AIATSIS