

Welcome to Country is an important traditional Aboriginal cultural practice. It is conducted prior to official meetings, events or activities, where an Aboriginal person welcomes the community to their country. Each community (Aboriginal Tribal Area) has their own way of performing this practice. A welcome to country is a way of reminding visitors to the area that Indigenous people are part of Australia's past and present.

Welcome to Country can only be conducted by an approved Aboriginal representative of the country in which the event is being held. For example if there was an event being held in the Gandangara boundaries (see map below), a representative must be sourced from that tribal group or from the traditional custodians (Darug Nation or Dhurawal Nation).

If an Aboriginal representative is not available, an Acknowledgement to Country should be conducted. This can be performed by a senior person from the organisation hosting the event. It is protocol that if an Welcome or Acknowledgement to Country is already performed, the senior person from the organisation should also conduct an Acknowledgement to Country. This demonstrates respect to the traditional custodians of the land in which the activity is being held.

The suggested text and dialogue to conduct an Acknowledgement to Country is:

“Before we begin proceedings, I / we would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and their ancestors past and present; the Cabrogal Clan of the Darug Nation”
Optional add on: We acknowledge that this land was also accessed by peoples of the Dhurawal and Dharuk Nations.



Traditional areas within Sydney
(Source: Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council website).