



2021 - 2026 Strategic Plan

GUGAN GULWAN

YOUTH ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Gugan Gulwan
Youth Aboriginal
Corporation





Who we are

Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation (Gugan Gulwan) is an established and trusted Aboriginal organisation supporting the First Nations children, young people, their families and community within the ACT and surrounds and has been successful for 30 years. Gugan Gulwan provides prevention and early intervention supports and programs that are culturally safe. These supports and programs are community driven through truly listening to the narratives of the First Nations peoples to meet the specific needs, so all can thrive.

From small and humble beginnings Gugan Gulwan has continued to expand its culturally safe services and respond to the current and emerging needs of the ACT First Nations community. Gugan Gulwan walks the talk and makes the commitment to reflect internally for what is seeking to be built externally for the First Nations community of the ACT.



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Our Journey so far

Cultural Integrity

Our cultural integrity at Gugan Gulwan will not be broken in any of our relationships and service delivery, all we do is underpinned by First Nations cultural values. We will not be undermined by western ways and approaches that aim to diminish the knowledge and control we have about ourselves. We will maintain our cultural integrity at all times.

Cultural Safety

We ensure all of our work from the Board through to our grass roots work is underpinned by cultural safety which involves the child, young person or adult experiencing an environment that is positive, safe and nurturing. This environment supports all to be who they are, be comfortable and confident with who they are, express themselves through their culture where their spiritual and belief systems are respected and valued. We embrace the diversity of each person to build upon their identity through an environment and interactions that holds culture as the foundation, this is a right of our people to be proud and express their culture in their own way.

Table 1: Key Moments

Stage	Years	Summary	Services
1	1992	From Gugan Gulwan's creation it flourished and grew; this was due to the ongoing dedication co-founder Greg Chatfield which then seen Gugan Gulwan become independent of the AECG.	On 17 August 1992 Gugan Gulwan was incorporated under the Registrar of Aboriginal Corporations. Gugan Gulwan had 3 staff.
2	1992-1996	The Gugan Gulwan office moved to Boomanulla Oval and the three staff worked tirelessly in the most challenging circumstances to ensure the needs of the Aboriginal community including children, young people and their families were met.	Gugan Gulwan provided 3 services to the First Nations community which included Sport and Recreation, Youth Work and Advocacy and Support.
3	1996-2001	After many years at Boomanulla Oval, Gugan Gulwan relocated the office to a premises in Quiros Street Red Hill which was a small unused preschool building. This building had much more to offer than the previous as it had running water, toilets, heating, and carpet.	Gugan Gulwan continued its Sport and Recreation, Youth Work and Advocacy and Support services to the First Nations community with 3 staff.
4	2001	In 2001 Gugan Gulwan relocated to its current building in Erindale, this was to ensure that the growth of the service and funding received was able to be used to meet the needs of community. At this time, the Gugan Gulwan team grew from three to nine team members.	From here Gugan Gulwan grew and the team size increased.
5	2001-2020	Gugan Gulwan currently has 14 staff who are dedicated to support and meet the specific needs of the community.	Gugan Gulwan's service delivery to the First Nations community grew throughout this period with Youth Work, Family Support, Drug and Alcohol Support, Reconnect Program, Counselling and Therapy Services, Group Programs, Early Childhood and Events.
6	2021 onwards	A new purpose-built building is a part of this new Strategic Plan and will become the history of Gugan.	In the October 2020 ACT Elections, Labour announced the support of a purpose-built facility.

Gugan Gulwan's Key Achievements: 2016 – 2020



Gugan Gulwan has always been committed to being a culturally safe, diverse and inclusive organisation where staff are committed and passionate to improving outcomes and life experiences of the First Nations community of the ACT.

Through this ongoing commitment and passion, Gugan Gulwan has established a legacy platform for the future through the implementation of the 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan.

Gugan Gulwan are committed to ensuring that all First Nation's children, young people and their families who access the services go on to lead successful lives. Gugan Gulwan focus on innovation and creativity and rethinking how community and government can work together in a complex and operational environment to meet the diverse and unique needs of the ACT First Nations community.

It is imperative to shine the light on the success of Gugan Gulwan's operations through the COVID-19 pandemic where they were innovative and flexible to meeting the needs of First Nation's children, youth, their families and community in a culturally safe and responsive way through such a challenging time.

Table 2: Key Achievements 2016-2020

Objective: Growing the Gugan Gulwan team with healthy, skilled and inspired employees

Achievement: This has been achieved through employee care planning, ongoing support including continuing communication and a mentor/buddy system, clear policies and procedures, personal growth plans and adult education and effective and strong leadership.

Objective: Ensuring that knowledge and information management meets the needs of the organisation.

Achievement: This has been achieved through utilising research and developing evidence-based programs, managing and protecting information and data, collecting and collating input from clients and stakeholders and implementing up to date organisational systems.

Objective: Ensuring that Stewardship and partnerships is built and maintained.

Achievement: This has been achieved through service delivery where the First Nations community is the primary partner, trust built with both clients and community to meet the unique and specific needs, staff and leadership participation in external groups building key relationships and implementation of community required programs which are robust and evaluated to determine effectiveness.

Objective: Implementing robust internal control and resource oversight.

Achievement: This has been achieved through ongoing and timely implementation and ongoing work of contracting specialist input, implementation of guidelines to support internal organisational requirements and meeting client needs and obtaining full accreditation.

Objective: Being innovative and having strong leadership.

Achievement: This has been achieved by being led by the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Executive Assistant, meeting priorities through regular communication, being flexible to meet the needs of community with a focus on strong leadership through the COVID-19 pandemic and recognition of the rich skills sets within the Gugan Gulwan team where all input is highly valued.

Objective: Establishing an entrepreneurial approach to the services delivered.

Achievement: This has been achieved through developing a partnership with OzChild to deliver evidence-based Functional Family Therapy to First Nations families. This program was initially a pilot program for a period of 12 months and has been extended to be a four-year program.

Purpose of this Plan

This plan sets out how Gugan Gulwan will represent the interests and needs of the First Nations children, young people, families and community over the next five-year strategic cycle. It builds on Gugan Gulwan's strong cultural foundation and uniqueness, it continues the work that has been initiated over the past thirty years to support the First Nations children, young people, families and community of the ACT.

Gugan Gulwan Governance

Gugan Gulwan is led by a committed First Nations Board of Directors along with an Aboriginal Executive Director, Kim Davison. The Board is made up of passionate and knowledgeable First Nations community representatives that bring insight and diversity to guide the strategic direction of the organisation.

Statement from the Board

It is a privilege to be on the Board of Gugan Gulwan and to be able to represent and support the views of the ACT First Nations community and be accountable to the community. The community's contribution has helped shape and determine the ongoing vision of the organisation.

The Gugan Gulwan Board supports diversity and inclusion and encourages employees to develop and apply their skills and knowledge in everyday service delivery. The Board recognises the passion and commitment of all Gugan Gulwan staff, in their efforts to advance outcomes for children, youth, and the families in the region. The Board acknowledges the complex and at times difficult environments that staff often need to navigate.

The Board of Directors will:

- Support our employees to be healthy, mentally well, skilled, inspired and have the flexibility to develop and maintain a positive work-life balance.
- Produce an effective learning and development strategy for the organisation, which enables employees to advance their skills and knowledge to deliver on Gugan Gulwan's strategic priorities.
- Implement strategies that foster the overall professional growth and career progressions.
- Support employees to recognise how their work contributes to the organisation's success.

Gugan Gulwan's mandate and primary responsibility is to stakeholders and the community and it does not seek to deliver programs and services that are not meeting the needs and demands of the local community. Gugan Gulwan actively strives to enable community voices to be front and centre.



Social and Emotional Wellbeing (Holistic)

We understand and promote social and emotional wellbeing through our organisation. We understand the past and ongoing impacts of colonisation and the cultural devastation through the implementation of government policies and practices. We recognise the significant resilience and ongoing work to support healing through building a strong cultural identity that is inclusive of family, community, culture and country. Our supports and programs are all underpinned by the First Nations principles of social and emotional wellbeing.

Self-Determination

We strongly support and promote the right to self-determination for our people as the first peoples of Australia. We ensure that the right to ongoing choice is within all the work we do as this assists healing with the ongoing impacts of dispossession and colonisation.

We will know we have succeeded when our influence and effective engagement along with the culturally safe advice demonstrates and guides government for change to understand the requirements for genuine and sustainable positive outcomes for the First Nations children, young people and their families and community of the ACT.

Child/Young Person's Web



Our Vision

Our vision is to continue to grow and be a place where every First Nations child, young person and adult has the best opportunity to heal, thrive, succeed and reach their full potential through our offerings of culturally safe prevention and early intervention support and programs which are guided by the needs of our ACT First Nations community.

Our Aims

We will have achieved our vision when our First Nations children, young people, their families, and community:

- are able to heal and thrive
- have their voice heard and are able to express their narrative
- recognise their cultural strengths and resilience and have increased skills and opportunities to shape their future
- experience a high-quality, inclusive and culturally responsive service

Our Purpose

We will enable our organisational purpose through working with the community, government and entrepreneurial stakeholders to:

- Be respected, heard and share the narrative of the needs of the ACT First Nations community
- Develop and implement policies, programs and a service system that provide the First Nations children, young people, family and community of the ACT with supports to strengthen cultural identity, heal from trauma and be culturally supported for positive futures
- Provide children and young people with opportunities to become culturally strong and thriving adults
- Enable family's easy access to services needed across all stages of a child and young person's life through prevention and early intervention programs

Our Values and Principles that Guide Us

All of our work has a foundation of the principles of self-determination where the rights of the First Nations peoples to make decisions is the focus, we align to the following values and principles:

- **Culturally, community and child safe:** Culture, community and safety are the soul of our business where our team will not compromise cultural integrity in any way. We will ensure we deliver a holistic and safe approach in all of our work.
- **Respect and Acknowledgement:** We treat people with respect and dignity and value every person's worth. We acknowledge the diversities of the First Nations peoples, cultures and histories and our work is inclusive and respectfully guided by the voice of our community.
- **Honesty:** We are truthful and fair in all our work. We will deliver our services with the highest of professionalism underpinned by truth telling where we will advocate for the specific and unique needs of our community.
- **Committed and Transparent:** We are committed to making a difference for our community and provide support to ensure that we serve the interests of the First Nations community of the ACT and promote this at every opportunity.
- **Accountable:** We are reliable and work with integrity to do what we say we will do. We will continue to build upon of relationships with community, Aboriginal organisations and government with accountability being at the forefront of these relationships.



Our Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities for the next five years have a strong focus on continuing and strengthening Gugan Gulwan's leadership and governance to deliver a culturally safe and professional service to ensure our people have a service that is community owned and led. This is to ensure that our voice is authorised and empowered in every aspect of their lives. It is fundamental that the First Nations peoples need to be part of the decision-making process and be supported to lead and guide the implementation of solutions for challenges that are about them.

We will maintain prevention and early intervention focus with the provision of support for and resourcing of good practice First Nations led prevention approaches. We will continue to strengthen our community leadership and cultural authority to engage, advise, and influence government policy makers, funding bodies, other stakeholders and partners to consider how child, youth and family challenges and services are developed, addressed, and provided to the ACT First Nations community.

To achieve our strategic priorities, we will strive for a fit for purpose facility to be able to better meet the needs of the First Nations community and allow for growth.

Our Strategic Priorities for 2021 – 2026 are:

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Community Voice and Decision Making
3. First Nations Approaches to Prevention and Early Intervention
4. Cultural Authority and Community Leadership
5. Purposeful Building

1. Governance and Leadership

Objective	Strong governance and leadership.
Key Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and Management team planning and monitoring • Strategic Plan embedded in Operating Strategy • Community Engagement Strategy
Outcome desired	A community owned and led, holistic, culturally safe, and professional service.
Success Measure	Children, young people, their families and community feedback broadly agrees the desired outcome is met.

2. Community Voice and Decision Making

Objective	Strong community voice and integrated decision making.
Key Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating Strategy • Community Engagement Strategy
Outcome desired	Our children, young people, their families, and community voices are authorised and empowered in every aspect of their lives.
Success Measure	First Nations people interacting with the service broadly agree that they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • part of the decision-making process • supported to lead and guide the implementation of solutions for issues that are about them.

3. First Nations Approaches to Prevention and Early Intervention	
Objective	First Nations designed and led operating focus is supported and resourced.
Key Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Management Strategy • Workforce Strategy • Political Engagement Strategy
Outcome desired	Prevention and early intervention practices are First Nations designed and led.
Success Measure	Prevention and early intervention focus is supported, resourced and maintained.



4. Cultural Authority and Community Leadership	
Objective	Community leadership and cultural authority continues to engage, advise, and influence government policy makers, funding bodies and other stakeholders and partners.
Key Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Engagement Strategy • Community Engagement Strategy
Outcome desired	Our community leadership and cultural authority is strongly recognised by government policy makers, funding bodies and other stakeholders.
Success Measure	Our voice is recognised in any policy changes that consider how child, youth and family issues and services are developed, addressed, and provided to the ACT First Nations community.

5. Purposeful Building	
Objective	Provision of a fit for purpose facility.
Key Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Business Case • Community Engagement Strategy • Political Engagement Strategy
Outcome desired	A place to meet the needs of ACT First Nations community and allow for growth for holistic services and support.
Success Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case is approved and funded. • Facility is operational.

What our community says about us...

The voices of our people and key stakeholder are valued. Our First Nations children, young people and families guide our work as they are the experts in their own lives.



“ We feel that the kids leave all their worries at the door, the kids are taught culture, respect, discipline and increased positivity. ”

“ We like the holiday programs, reconnecting with community, excursions and movies, food and making new friends. ”

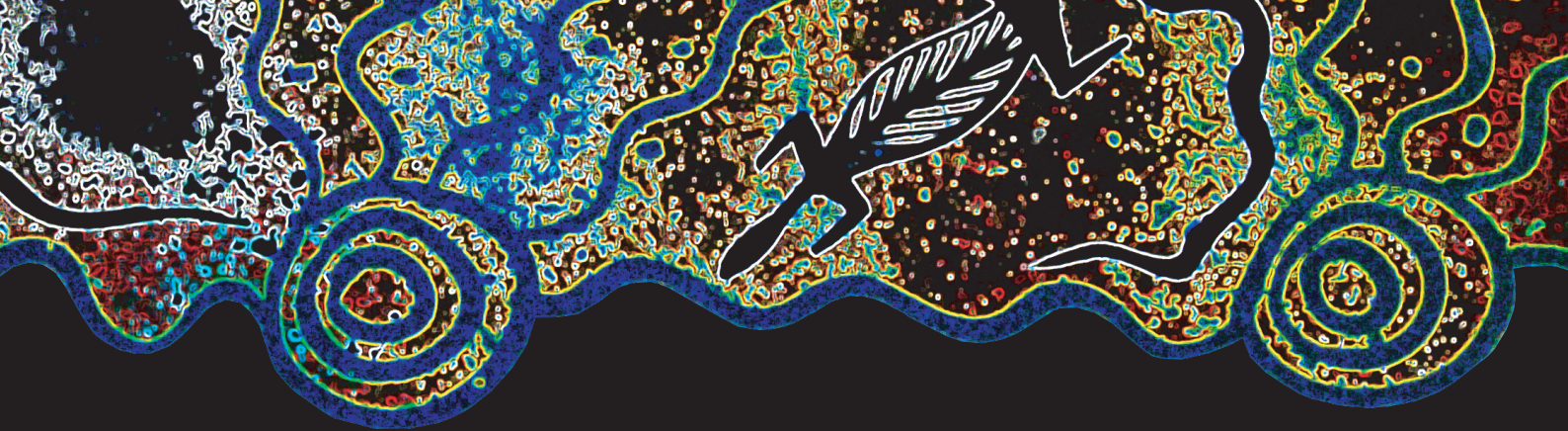
“ Gugan Gulwan is a holistic service which provides wrap around and flexible support to families, that their supports are child and family centred, are accessible and provides a sense of connection. ”

“ Gugan Gulwan staff go above and beyond, we feel that Gugan Gulwan cares for the children, young people and family members and keeps kids connected to culture and community. ”

“ Gugan Gulwan is deadly, outstanding, safe, fun, amazing, interesting, cool, fantastic and excellent. ”



“ Gugan Gulwan has a wholesome, non-judgemental, inclusive, chill, warm vibes, supportive and loving in a safe and welcoming environment where we feel we are listened to. ”



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