



**ROCK ART
AUSTRALIA**

Formerly Kimberley Foundation Australia

A photograph of a rocky cliff face with sparse vegetation. In the foreground, there are several thin, bare tree trunks and a large, thick tree trunk on the right. The cliff face is composed of layered, reddish-brown rock. There are some green plants and grasses growing on the cliff. The sky is blue and clear.

**Our vision is to understand
through scientific research
and Aboriginal knowledge
the history of human
habitation in Australia.**



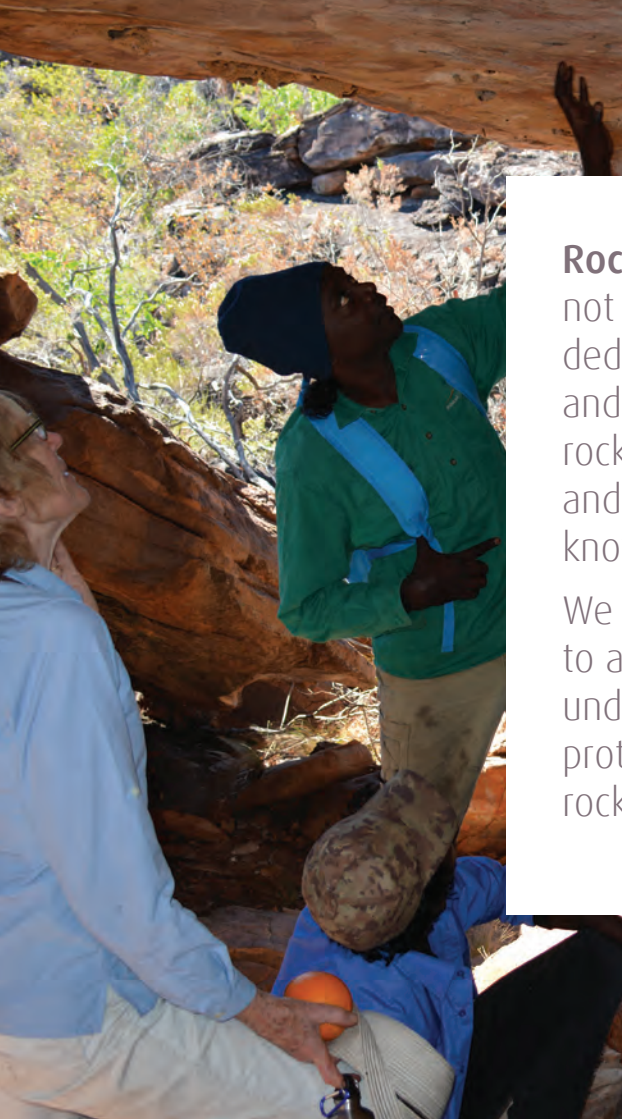
Australian rock art is part of an ongoing culture and widely accepted as the world's most enduring cultural tradition.

The images in the rock art are amplified in the songs and stories and with the petroglyphs and spirit ancestors are part of the sophisticated complex world of Aboriginal knowledge.

When the paintings and oral histories and climate shifts are aligned with scientific research, the whole story emerges.

Cover: Carson River Station. Photo: Damien Finch.

Left: Kangaroo motif, Drysdale River National Park. Photo: John Ware.



Rock Art Australia is a not for profit organisation dedicated to researching and protecting Australian rock art by bringing science and Aboriginal cultural knowledge together.

We are committed to advancing the understanding of and protection of Australian rock art.

We research to uncover our past.

- We work in partnership with Aboriginal people
- RAA continues to focus on the Kimberley
- We initiate and support integrated, multi-disciplinary scientific research, as well as Indigenous knowledge, to interpret and understand Australia's rock art in its context
- We promote and disseminate research findings
- We support conservation, preservation, and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage

Our Story

Our origins lie in the Bush University of the 1990s where on informal field trips non-Aboriginal people were introduced to Aboriginal culture by Traditional Owners. What they were shown excited their interest and they wanted a deeper understanding of Indigenous culture and traditions. A foundation to fund research was born. We eventually became the research organisation that is today

Rock Art Australia.

Our evolution to Rock Art Australia came with the realisation that rock art research can make a unique and significant contribution to the history of Australia and the region in which we live.

It reflects the importance of Australia's Indigenous cultural heritage and the increasing awareness of the impact of this research to all Australians.

We recognise that the cultural perspective and knowledge of Aboriginal people is fundamental to our work. **We believe:**

- The study of Australian rock art is essential to understanding Australia's history and the global narrative of human origins
- It is an Aboriginal story for all Australians
- In the honest reporting of scientific findings
- In the significance of the ancient connection between Aboriginal people and country
- Australian rock art should be protected

“Our country is living, breathing life. Our land is reflected in us, and we are reflected in the land. Our past, present and future is all in the land, from creation time to future time – all at once.”

David Bungul Mowaljarlai OAM (c.1926-1997)



Our Research

Rock art research is central to answering some of the big questions about human migration.

Our scientific research program centres on understanding Australia's rock art and the people and cultures that produced it.

We conduct research to date the rock art, to reconstruct past climate and environments, to understand the context in which human beings have occupied and maintained their cultural traditions, and to map Australia's earliest human footfall across the northern landscape.

Through such work we support conservation and protection of this precious heritage.

Our Impact

Rock Art Australia has established two fully endowed Chairs – one in Rock Art at The University of WA, and one in Archaeological Science at The University of Melbourne. These two pillars of research will help establish the importance of Australia's archaeological record and its place in the global narrative of human origins, culture, and development.

The Chairs have been made possible by two of Australia's leading foundations – The Ian Potter Foundation for the one in the west, and Minderoo Foundation (through RAA Patrons Andrew and Nicola Forrest), for the one in the east. The UWA Chair was also funded by INPEX and UWA. The UoM Chair was also funded through gifts from Allan Myers AC QC, Rock Art Australia supporters, and UoM.

Rock Art Australia has initiated and co-funded six major research projects with the Australian Research Council of which three are completed and three are current.

We currently support two ARC projects in partnership with Balanggarra Aboriginal Corporation in the Kimberley:

Kimberley Visions: Rock art dynamics of northern Australia – a 5-year study mapping the rock art, chronological and occupational history of the Northern Kimberley.

Dating the Aboriginal rock art sequence of the Kimberley in NW Australia – a world-leading project using an innovative combination of four scientific dating methods.

A third ARC-RAA project will commence fieldwork in 2021.

Unlocking the Environmental Archives of the Kimberley will provide a paleoenvironmental framework for the region to give context to the archaeological and rock art record.

We are an Associate Organisation of the Centre of Excellence of Biodiversity and Heritage (CABAH), and collaborate with multiple universities. We work with Indigenous and scientific communities, industry, business, government departments and institutions involved with rock art research.

"I want to congratulate all the Australians for the breathtaking advances that are being made and for the breadth, depth and innovation of all the work you are doing. What is happening in rock art research in the Kimberley is simply astonishing. It is one of the most impressive research teams I have seen assembled anywhere in the world. Australia is leading the world in rock art research."

Renowned Cambridge-based archaeologist Prof Chris Chippendale

Make a donation

Help us to research and protect Australia's rock art

Our job is to fund the research and protect Australia's rock art by bringing science and Aboriginal cultural knowledge together. We're committed to advancing the understanding of and protection of this great national heritage.

Your donation will make a meaningful impact. Donations are tax deductible.

To donate: rockartaustralia.org.au/support-us

If you would like to donate by EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) our bank details are:

Account name:
Rock Art Australia Limited Donation Fund
BSB: 033-364
Account number: 985120
Bank: Westpac

Please send an email to accounts@rockartaustralia.org.au advising us of your donation.

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