# Strategic Grants

**A Rock Art Australia Strategic Grant may be provided to suitable applicants to foster the development of innovative, high impact or pilot-scale research projects that align with the Rock Art Australia priority areas.**

**Rock Art Australia**

ABN 12 084 464 648

Level 6, 41 Exhibition Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Tel: 03 9653 3780

Enquiries: [hello@rockartaustralia.org.au](mailto:hello@rockartaustralia.org.au)

**rockartaustralia.org.au**



About the Funding

The Rock Art Australia Strategic Grant is provided for research projects that would normally be undertaken over a 12-month period; however smaller multi-year projects will also be considered. Typically, funds available for each project will be around $20,000, and up to a maximum of $40,000 in special cases.   
All requests for funding are to be made through the Rock Art Australia Strategic Grant Application Form and follow the process set out in these Guidelines.

RAA provides grants to enable researchers to conduct the research as submitted in their application and according to the budget provided within the application.   
**Funds cannot be used for any other purpose, including payment of overheads or other fees to the university.**

All research projects must adopt and meet the standards of conduct outlined in the RAA Research and Engagement protocols attached to these guidelines.

Purpose

A Strategic Grant may be provided by Rock Art Australia to suitable applicants to foster the development of innovative, high impact or pilot-scale research projects that align with the RAA priority areas.

**RAA will consider applications for projects that effectively address relevant aspects of the following priority areas:**

* Interpret and understand Australia’s rock art and the people and cultures that produced it.
* Reconstruct past climate and environments.
* Understand the production and composition of Australia’s rock art.
* Understand the durability and resilience of the rock art and how to conserve it.
* Establish methodologies and treatments to protect and conserve rock art.
* Establish the antiquity of engraved and pigment art in Australia and understand its variability across space and time.
* Establish the chronology of human occupation in Australia in the context of archaeological and genetic data.
* Establish educational approaches to share and promote the research and cultural stories of rock art.

Eligibility

**Chief Investigators (CIs):**

* Each project must have a nominated Lead CI who is associated with a recognised research institution or registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation (e.g., a university or other tertiary education provider)
* The CI will be responsible for the conduct of the project and for submitting a final report.
* If a CI leaves their position during the project, the team will be responsible for nominating a replacement, which could be an existing or a new team member.
* Individuals can be named as a CI on only one application per year.
* Applicants will be deemed ineligible if their report on a previously RAA funded project has not been received.

**If you are not linked to a major institution/university**

If you would like to apply for funding, you may use the grant application form or contact us: [hello@rockartaustralia.org.au](mailto:hello@rockartaustralia.org.au)

**Replicating/supplementing other funding:**

A RAA Strategic Grant is not intended to supplement other, current grants held by members of the research team, but may be used as support to obtain additional funding such as through ARC Linkage Projects.

**Duration:**

Projects must normally be completed within 12 months from the receipt of funds.

Assessment Criteria

**Project Team:**

Projects will be assessed on the quality and composition of the project team including the suitability of the skills or networks of team members. The research track record of CIs and other members of the team will also be examined, although the inclusion of an ECR or PhD student will be looked upon favourably. Here, an ECR or “early career researcher” is defined as a person who has completed their PhD within the last 5 years at the application submission date.

**Impact:**

Projects with demonstrable impact beyond the academic community will have priority; for example, demonstrating how the outputs of the project will be communicated to the broader community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, or how stakeholders and traditional owners outside of the academic community will be engaged with the project.

The project will also be assessed to determine the potential for the work to lead to future funding proposals, domestic or international, to grant funding bodies or industrial organisations. Is there scope for further development or expansion by means of coordinated activity by the team?

**Project Relevance:**

A key criterion is how relevant the proposed project is to the objectives of RAA.

Included in this is the identification of and engagement with the relevant key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations and stakeholders as per RAA’s Research and Engagement protocols (attached to these guidelines).

**Project Quality:**

The novelty of the topic, the conceptual framework and the method, or design of the proposed research and the track record of the investigators are all important criteria. Is there a single project purpose or unified set of purposes, with outcomes stated accordingly?

**Feasibility:**

Have the applicants put together a realistic project schedule and with a realistic and reasonable costing?

**Use of funds**

All RAA Strategic Grants will be administered by the host organisation of the CI. RAA does not wish to unnecessarily restrict what can be applied for, but budgets must be fully justified to serve the project objectives. Typical examples of supported budget requests might include:

* Community engagement to develop a research project
* Employing casual or fixed-term staff to perform a scholarly, operational, or other support roles in the project, including grant development and writing.
* Costs of staging facilitation workshops or similar events (catering, venue hire, equipment hire, facilitator fees, etc.)
* Travel costs (flights and accommodation): modest travel expenses for the CIs and/or project team members where essential to the conduct of the research.
* Fieldwork support costs, including logistics, field equipment and subsistence.
* Purchase of minor equipment (hardware, software, consumables) if specifically required for the project.
* Analytical costs if specifically required for the project.
* Honours/Masters/PhD student scholarships of up to $10,000 to support their project.
* Materials for public engagement and dissemination of the research outputs beyond academia (for example, creating a website, a small travelling exhibition, digital outputs such as animations, short films and documentaries, running workshops for the general public or school children).

Assessment Process

* Applications will be assessed by the RAA Science Advisory Council, who will then provide recommendations to the Board. The Board will make the final decision and applicants notified of the outcome through the RAA Office.
* The SAC reserves the right to seek other expert opinion about an application if it considers that necessary in its assessment.
* The RAA Science Advisory Committee also reserves the right to seek further information from an applicant prior to making a final recommendation.
* The RAA Science Advisory Committee reserves the right to recommend that applications that have overlapping research objectives be combined into a single project.

Conditions of Grant

* The RAA Strategic Grant should be accepted by responding to the Letter of Offer.
* The CIs must comply with any instructions or conditions in the letter of offer relating to approved items of expenditure.

The CIs will be responsible for all correspondence relating to the project, will liaise with RAA on administrative matters, and will ensure compliance with reporting requirements.

* The CIs will ensure that research is conducted in accordance with their host institution’s policies, including compliance with relevant codes of conduct, policies on human and animal research ethics, health and safety, and intellectual property. The relevant clearances and approvals are required before the project may proceed.
* The CIs are responsible for ensuring all research is performed according to the standards of conduct outlined in the RAA Research and Engagement protocols (attached to these guidelines).
* The CIs are responsible for ensuring that expenditure of project funds are broadly in accord with the indicative budget submitted in the application, and that expenditure is consistent with the nature and aims of the approved project.
* The CIs will be required to provide a Summary Report of one-page on the outcomes of the project within two months of the completion of the project.
* Project teams may also be requested to present their work to the RAA Science Advisory Committee or at other RAA events.
* RAA reserves the right to use project information for its own reporting and promotional purposes and to feature the project on the RAA website.
* Project teams and members will acknowledge the support of RAA in any publications, presentations or media communications and other promotions relating to the RAA-funded project.

Application Submission Process

**Sign-Off:**

All applications should be signed off by the Head of the School and/ or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to ensure that applicants have the time, resources to conduct the research.

**Submission:**

All project applications must be submitted by email using the Strategic Grant Application Form with any necessary attachments. These are to be emailed as a single file (pdf or Word doc) named in this format: [SURNAME]-RAA-20[YEAR]. Applications are to be submitted to the RAA Office [hello@rockartaustralia.org.au](mailto:hello@rockartaustralia.org.au). It is anticipated that this will be replaced by a fully online application process in the near future.

**Key Dates**

Applications can be made to the RAA Office at any time and will be considered at the next available meeting of the Science Advisory Council which occur in February, May, August and November.

**Enquiries & Contact Details**

General Enquiries: hello@rockartaustralia.org.au

or the Chair of the RAA Science Advisory Council, Prof Andrew Gleadow: gleadow@unimelb.edu.au

**Further information:**

The RAA Website <https://rockartaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/apply-for-research-funding>

# **RAA Research and Engagement protocols**

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**The following Research and Engagement protocols must be adopted and met to be eligible for research funding.**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of these protocols is to provide ethical standards of conduct, and desired impact and outcomes, for all RAA funded research projects.

**Principles:**

These protocols are based on the following principles:

1. **A. RAA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of rock art across Australia.**

• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia are recognised as the original inhabitants of this land, sea, and waterways.

• Traditional Owners are the owners of rock art across Australia and the custodians of traditional knowledge, and expression of their cultural sites.

• All rock art research will be performed only after free, prior, and informed consent has been received from Traditional Owners and Aboriginal corporations.

1. **B. RAA funds research and is committed to its ‘Objects’ set out in its constitution.**
2. • To encourage and support bringing together science and Aboriginal cultural knowledge to study rock art in the Kimberley and other rock art provinces of Australia to better understand the ancient history of Australia.
3. • To work in partnership with Aboriginal people to research, record, preserve and promote their cultural story as contained in their art, music, song, crafts, storytelling, and oral histories.
4. • To initiate and support integrated, multi-disciplinary scientific research, including Indigenous knowledge, to interpret and understand Australia’s rock art and the people and cultures that produced it and sharing that knowledge with Aboriginal people.
5. • To organise and promote education or training in Aboriginal culture with to involve wherever possible Aboriginal people of the region.
6. • To promote and disseminate research findings and seek opportunities for rock art knowledge to be included in educational curricular.
7. • To support the conservation, preservation, and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage through the application of science to conserve and protect rock art.

**Protocols:**

**1. Traditional Owners and researchers to discuss any potential projects as a first step**

• Develop relationships based on mutual trust and respect.

• Seek to understand key priorities of traditional owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations.

• Ensure the priorities of the communities are considered in any research and grant applications.

• Make sure any agreements, proposals and updates are in plain language.

• Take account of Healthy Country plans and On Country learning programs.

**2. Traditional Owners to participate on-the-ground during any research project**

• Facilitate traditional owner participation and engagement with research projects.

• Ensure consistency with relevant Healthy Country Plan criteria.

• The services provided by traditional owners or corporations should be paid for on a fee-for-service basis, funded by the research projects.

**3. Research outcomes delivered to communities in a form that is accessible, meaningful, and useful**

•Copies of papers or presentations that result from the research project are to be provided to the traditional owners.

• Produce non-academic collaborative communications for traditional owner communities in parallel with the scientific outputs, such as short films, newsletters, books for a community audience, and other technologies.

**4. Support skills, education outcomes and recognition for Traditional Owners**

• Research projects should build knowledge and skills around rock art research, management, and preservation.

• Where possible, support and facilitate formal educational pathways (TAFE, and Tertiary) for the advancement of cultural heritage knowledge, management, and preservation.

• The potential for shared authorship.

**5. Ensure the Indigenous cultural intellectual property rights (ICIP) of traditional owners are not compromised through research**

• Ensure written agreements and contracts have the required permissions and clearances for intended uses.

• Ensure that intellectual property created from the research project is acknowledged and credited appropriately.

• Ensure appropriate permission is obtained before publication of cultural information.