Naming Policy and Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('the University', 'CDU') may honour or recognise individuals, organisations and First Nations places, lands and traditions through naming tangible and intangible assets, including but not limited to buildings, parts of buildings, infrastructure, employee positions, scholarships and collections.

(2) Words or names may be gifted to the University by First Nations language, social or nation groups for respectful and considered use.

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) The policy sets out the principles and framework, and key roles and responsibilities for naming tangible and intangible assets within the University.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This policy and procedure applies to the naming of tangible or intangible property, buildings, units, or activities of the University, including:

a. where a First Nations name or word is gifted to all new buildings to accompany its functional name in honour of significant places, connections to Country, traditions, lands, languages and environments;
b. honouring individuals, places, and traditions via the naming of other significant spaces; and
c. honouring extraordinary distinguished service to the University.

(5) Naming University assets in recognition of substantial philanthropy is primarily managed in accordance with the Donations and Gifts Acceptance Policy. However, the principles and the roles and responsibilities outlined in this policy are also applicable for naming in recognition of substantial philanthropy.

(6) This policy and procedure does not apply to:

a. commercial or contractual agreements that include naming rights, including naming negotiated as part of a sponsorship agreement;
b. functional names for University property, for example Blue 1; or
c. naming recognition conferred for gifts of artwork.

Section 4 - Policy

Principles

(7) Naming to honour or in recognition of individuals, places, and traditions must:

a. be consistent with the University's values, principles and objectives as set out in the Charles Darwin University Strategic Plan;
b. not adversely affect the University's autonomy, reputation, and academic freedom; and
c. be consistent with University policies, in particular the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

(8) Naming may be in the form of a gifted First Nations name in honour and celebration of the ongoing connection to Country and First Nations knowledges.

(9) Naming may also be in honour of extraordinary, distinguished service to the University. This may include, but is not limited to, naming individuals or organisations in honour of:

a. outstanding achievements in academia, research, scientific discovery, academic innovation and traditional knowledges;
b. outstanding or continuous service to the University or the wider community;
c. extraordinary standing in the Australian and/or international academic community; and
d. outstanding achievements in teaching, leadership and management.

(10) Agreement in principle between the Vice-Chancellor and the relevant Senior Executive Team members must be reached prior to discussions with individuals or organisations being nominated, followed by the formal approval process.

(11) The University will not normally confer naming recognition to a current member of the University until after their substantive role with the University is concluded.

(12) Names may be withdrawn if it is likely to damage the University's reputation.

(13) Naming recognition for academic programs, projects, and positions, including scholarships and professorial chairs, will remain for as long as funding is provided to support that asset.

Types of Assets being Named

(14) Naming recognition may be applied to a range of tangible and intangible University assets, including:

a. buildings or features of buildings located on University premises, such as theatres, auditoriums, laboratories and classrooms;
b. administrative or academic divisions such as departments, schools and centres;
c. outdoor areas including gardens, courtyards, ovals, playing fields, roads and walkways;
d. art, library and print collections or other collections of historic or cultural value; and
e. academic positions, scholarships, medals and prizes.

New Buildings

(15) In honour of significant places, connections to Country, traditions, lands, languages and environments, all new buildings will be gifted a First Nations name to accompany its functional name.

(16) The First Nations name will be applied for the life of the building or facility.

(17) The following factors may be considered when collaborating with First Nations peoples for an appropriate name:

a. traditional place names and notable geographic features in the local area;
b. educational themes and concepts relevant to the training and research that will take place in the building or facility;

c. the priorities and goals of First Nations peoples involved; and
d. other relevant factors, as decided by the University and First Nations peoples involved.

(18) Where a new building or facility will exist on land over which multiple First Nations peoples have traditional custodianship, cultural and linguistic authorities from all relevant groups must be consulted. All relevant groups should agree on the final recommendation prior to the committee approval process.

(19) Once the committee approval process has been finalised, the University will communicate the name, its correct pronunciation, and a translation and description of the word or term. The University will display signage at each building or facility with a First Nations name explaining the name and its cultural significance, with acknowledgement of the First Nations custodians of that land.

(20) The style of the recognition must be consistent with the University's identity and brand as specified by the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer.

(21) The University will provide proper acknowledgement, which may include remuneration, to the cultural and linguistic authorities involved in name selection.

Section 5 - Procedure

Consent

(22) Written consent from the individual or organisation being honoured is required for all naming matters. The relevant cultural authority must provide this consent where it relates to First Nations gifted names. Where a proposal involves honouring a deceased person, agreement from the next of kin or other relevant contact must be obtained, where practicable. This is not necessary where consent is provided through a will or similar agreement.

(23) An individual or organisation being honoured may nominate someone else's name to be honoured in place of their own name. In this instance, consent must be obtained from the nominated individual or organisation and the consultation and approval process may need to be re-initiated.

Approval Authority

(24) University Council is the approval authority for naming new or whole buildings. University Council will review submissions via recommendation from the Nominations, Honorary Awards and Legislation Committee.

(25) The Vice-Chancellor is the approval authority for naming of any other tangible and intangible University assets, units or activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

(26) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection is responsible for:

a. reviewing all proposals for naming in recognition of extraordinary, distinguished service to the University to determine if the proposal has merit;
b. ensuring that the appropriate stakeholders as outlined in this policy are consulted for naming in recognition of substantial philanthropy in accordance with the Donations and Gifts Acceptance Policy;
c. jointly consulting with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership where naming is in recognition of extraordinary distinguished service or substantial philanthropy to the University involving First Nations peoples and organisations;
d. managing naming recognition agreements for recognition of extraordinary distinguished service and substantial philanthropy; and

e. preparing the naming proposals for submission to the relevant approval authority.

(27) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership and Engagement is responsible for:

a. Overseeing internal and external consultation relating to the gifting of a First Nations name to accompany a functional name for new buildings, and other naming in recognition of a First Nations person, organisation, place or tradition.
b. Jointly consulting with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection where naming matters are in recognition of extraordinary distinguished service or substantial philanthropy by First Nations peoples or organisations.
c. Jointly consulting with the relevant Associate Vice-Chancellor for First Nations naming matters within the regions or cities.
d. Identifying, engaging and consulting with the relevant First Nations cultural authority or individual for written consent to use First Nations names, and in collaboration with Associate Vice-Chancellors where applicable.
e. Preparing the naming proposals for submission to the relevant approval authority.

(28) The Associate Vice-Chancellors are responsible for:

a. Undertaking consultation and collaboration with the relevant organisational unit(s) for gifting of First Nations names in their regions.
b. Identifying, engaging and consulting with the relevant First Nations cultural authority or individual for written consent to use First Nations names in collaboration with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership.
c. Supporting the Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership and the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant Faculty in preparing naming proposals for submission to the relevent approval authority.

(29) The Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant Faculty a naming proposal relates to is responsible for:

a. Jointly consulting with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership on the educational concepts relevant to the activities that will take place in the building or facility being named for consideration by cultural authorities.
b. Supporting the Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership and the Associate Vice-Chancellor where applicable in preparing naming proposals for submission to the relevent approval authority.

(30) The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for:

a. Approving naming recognition in accordance with this policy, except for the naming of whole or new buildings.
b. Withdrawing naming recognition where it may have a negative impact on the University’s reputation, except for whole buildings.
c. Permitting naming recognition to extend beyond the life of an area, or to be transferred when an area is remodelled or refurbished.

(31) The University Council is responsible for:

a. Considering and approving recommendations by the Nominations, Honorary Awards and Legislation Committee for First Nations naming of whole or new buildings or renaming of whole buildings.
b. Withdrawing naming recognition on whole buildings where it may have a negative impact on the University’s reputation, on recommendation from the Vice-Chancellor.

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Section 6 - Non-Compliance

(32) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(33) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(34) All employees have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

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Responsible Executive	Steve Rogers Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection +61 8 89466890
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"First Nations people" - Means a person who is an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, who identifies as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, and who is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person in the community where they live or have lived.