



Acknowledgement of Country in Your Ceremony

What is an Acknowledgement of Country?

An Acknowledgement of Country is a statement that shows awareness and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is a small but meaningful way for us to give First Nation peoples back their place in society.

It is a simple statement that is made at the beginning of a meeting or event and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land that you are standing on (First Nations people have been tending this land for around 60,000 years!)

Why does your celebrant perform an Acknowledgement of Country?

The Australian Government recommends that an Acknowledgement of (or Welcome to) Country be performed at the beginning of any significant meeting or event that is held on Australian soil. As Government registered professionals appointed to deliver meetings and events, it is our duty to acknowledge the recommendations of the Australian Government regarding event protocol and follow them where possible.

Why not a Welcome to Country?

A Welcome to Country can only be performed by an approved Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person of the land on which you are standing. Since it's highly unlikely that your celebrant falls within that category, the correct protocol is to perform an Acknowledgement of Country. It's like the difference between saying "Welcome to my home!" or "Thanks for having me!"

What should be said?

There are many different ways to deliver an Acknowledgement of Country and you can talk about the specifics with your celebrant. Your celebrant will research the correct Traditional Owners of your venue and will collaborate with you to include this simple but important wording into your ceremony. If you have any queries about this process or the significance of an Acknowledgement of Country, feel free to chat with your celebrant about it or go to www.reconciliation.org.au to find out more.