Race Reporting Handbook

An in-depth report by Media Diversity Australia

Media Diversity Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present. This Booklet was written on Yuggera and Turrbal Country.

Advisory Statement

This booklet may contain images and stories of deceased persons, so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised to approach it with caution.

Other negatively racialised people and people with lived experience of racism should also exercise caution due to potentially triggering content. We encourage all readers to engage with the content with care and seek support if needed. Community resources and support networks can provide comfort and assistance in navigating sensitive topics.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or mental health concerns related to racism, discrimination, or trauma, please refer to the following resources:

- Lifeline Australia: 13 11 14
- 1800 Respect
- 1800 Yarn
- Settlement Council of Australia, national settlement services: https://scoa.org.au (National)
- ACON, LGBTQI+ health: https://www.acon.org.au (National)
- Welcoming Australia, settlement support: https://welcoming.org.au (National)
- Healing Foundation, First Nations intergenerational healing: https://healingfoundation.org.au (National)

- Well Mob, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing online resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: https://wellmob.org.au (National)\
- Yarning Safe 'n' Strong, free and confidential phone support by the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service: https://www.vahs.org.au/yarning-safenstrong (National)
- Embrace Multicultural Mental Health, multilingual mental health information and community services: https://embracementalhealth.org.au/community (National)

For more resources tailored to various communities and concerns, please visit:
https://itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au/take-action/support-services

Message from the Authors

01.
Where am I situated in the media landscape regarding roles and responsibilites?

CONSIDER YOUR IMPACT

02.
How am I reducing harm to First Nation and other negatively racialised communities/staff?

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which this report was prepared, the Yuggera and Turrbal people.

We recognise the enduring connection to this land, the rich cultural heritage, and the ongoing contributions to the community. We extend our respect to Elders past and present, and commit to fostering a future of mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration.

We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the narrative around responsible reporting on race and racism in Australia. Our collaboration is fueled by a shared commitment to fostering inclusivity and raising racial literacy in media through cultural consultation, education, connection, lived experience storytelling, and meaningful engagement.

Through these avenues of education, connection, and engagement, we hope to contribute towards a media landscape that authentically mirrors the richness and diversity of the communities it seeks to serve. We firmly believe that by amplifying inclusivity and diversity, we can catalyse meaningful change within the media industry and believe in the crucial role journalists and editorial leaders play in shaping narratives and are committed to protecting it.

We extend our appreciation to the collaborators, whose insights have been pivotal in shaping this handbook. We express gratitude to the Australian

As you progress through this guide, we encourage you to consider the ethical imprint you leave on the media industry each day. Reflect on these questions and take pride in shaping a responsible and impactful media footprint.

03.
What positive impact am I making or can I be making, through responsible reporting on race?

04.
Am I challenging my bias and continuously educating myself for better reporting outcomes?

05.
What level of lived experience do I have, to understand all levels of racism; the historical context and the narrative and content implications on First Nation and other negatively racialised communities/staff?

Human Rights Commission, Media Diversity Australia, focus group participants and all other contributors whose diverse perspectives have enriched this resource. Together, bolstered by the backing of these organisations and individuals, we are confident this handbook will serve as an important tool for journalists in Australia, empowering them to navigate the intricate terrain of race reporting and diversity with sensitivity, integrity, and responsibility.

Jenae Tien Jenkins - Expand Your Mind Consulting and Multimedia Producer

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Why Should You Read This?
An Address from MDA's CEO Mariam Veiszadeh

Journalists play a crucial role in shaping public perception and societal attitudes. The stories told in the media and the way they are framed—through language, imagery, and tone—play a significant role in how negatively racialised communities are perceived.

As Todd Gitlin observed, journalism doesn't merely reflect reality; it shapes different interpretations of it. Every decision about which voices, images, perspectives, and words to include or exclude impacts audience interpretation and subsequent actions.

Furthermore, Australia has a complex history of race relations, marred by instances of racism in its structural, institutional, and interpersonal forms. Racism is perpetuated through policies, practices, media representations, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. The way you write about race—whether consciously or not—matters significantly.

Improving the racial literacy of journalists and all who work across the media is one way of tackling the issue.

This is particularly important when the vast majority of those who may be tasked with writing on issues related to race do not necessarily have lived experience of

racism and marginalisation, and those who do often face a cultural burden of becoming the go-to person on all race related questions and issues.

While there is no Australian based research examining the levels of racial literacy among journalists, our own MDA's Who Gets To Tell Australian Stories (WGTAS) research highlights that a significant percentage of journalists in Australia do not come from First Nations or negatively racialised backgrounds. Our research also highlights that there are differences in trust levels among non-European respondents, with a notable proportion choosing to stop consuming news due to perceived bias.

Historically, racial diversity was absent from Australia's television news, where minorities were often depicted as social problems. Recent research from All Together Now shows that media coverage of race continues to be inflammatory at times.

For many, the media may be their only interaction with people from other racial backgrounds. This makes responsible reporting on race and racism all the more vital.

Deciding when to include or exclude racial background may seem like a micro decision but can have significant

macro consequences. If a person were of an Anglo background, would you, for example, reference their race?

When the media gets it wrong, it can amplify cultural divides, entrench racial stereotypes, and alienate diverse audiences leading to polarising public perceptions and ultimately a weakening democracy. Conversely, when the media gets it right, it fosters a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Enhancing racial literacy of a sector that informs and shapes the health of our democracy leads to more nuanced and inclusive reporting, greater audience reach, and a stronger, more resilient democracy.

That's a future we should all strive towards.

—

Mariam Veiszadeh, CEO, MDA

Why We Need to Talk About Race
A message from the Race Discrimination Commissioner

How do we tell stories that involve race and racism, in a society that finds it very difficult to talk about race?

Even though all our institutions are affected structurally by racism in some form, as a society we have limited racial literacy to talk about how this occurs, or even understand how it impacts us.

It can be particularly difficult to talk about racism when so often the person who calls out racism is criticised more than the racism itself. That's because racism isn't about race, it's about power and privilege.

Calling out racism attacks power and takes away privilege.

In the media, it's the power to decide who tells stories, whose stories are told, and how they are told. In the media it's the privilege, if you are white, to be centred in nearly every aspect of the media and to rarely, if ever, need to be concerned about the way in which the media represents your race.

You are represented as an individual, your race is never used as an adjective and your actions are yours alone, unburdened by the weight of representation where your deeds, good or bad, represent an entire community or group of people.

It is the privilege of being the voice of news and stories, of being portrayed as the unbiased authoritative source of knowledge, and as what is good or normal.

The power of the media shouldn't be underestimated. It doesn't just tell stories. It shapes narratives, keeps institutions accountable and is vital in a functioning democracy. To keep power in a society accountable we need a strong and successful media to shine a light on that power.

However, equally, media needs to be able to shine a light on itself and see whether it can do better to counter racism within its own institution.

The MDA reporting on race handbook is a great resource for media institutions, owners, directors and employees on how to be anti-racist when writing stories, in hiring practices and in leadership.

It throws down the challenge to the media to take the anti-racist path. It's a path that can be difficult to walk down with many obstacles. Sensationalist headlines and reductive approaches to race might on their face fuel commercial interests but what they actually do is damage the interests of the public and ultimately media organisations. They reduce trust in the media as an institution, particularly within negatively racialised communities.

Following the path laid down in this handbook will ultimately benefit media organisations and their audiences and society more broadly.

An anti-racist approach will prove to be of benefit to busy media professionals. It's taking the effort to reflect the true face of this country. This continent is home to the oldest continuous culture in the world, that of this land's First Peoples. Diversity is an enduring feature of the Australian nation from Africans on the First Fleet to migration from Asia, and from many parts of the world over our history. I can't put it better than it is stated in this handbook.

"Storytelling is an art that, when practiced with a commitment to anti - racism, celebrates the rich tapestry of communities that constitute modern Australia."

I thank MDA for their work and recommend this resource to anyone wishing to improve their understanding of race and the media.

—

Giridharan Sivaraman - Race Discrimination Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission.

This resource has been put together in collaboration with Media Diversity Australia as part of community consultations and submissions in the scoping work of the National Anti-Racism Framework. The Framework identifies the need for more cultural safety, regulation and representation in Australia's media landscape and launches in 2024.

For more information visit www.humanrights.gov.au

How to Approach This Guide

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

— **James Baldwin, American Writer and Civil Rights Activist.**

This Reporting on Race Handbook is designed to be inclusive and mindful, through an anti-racism lens, for the media industry.

We understand that race intersects with other dimensions of a person's experience, including class and organisational hierarchy, which influences decision-making power and experiences. This intersectionality means that your ability to enact change varies based on your position within an organisation.

If you're in a leadership role, you have a different set of responsibilities compared to those in more junior positions. However, everyone has a role in fostering an anti-racist environment.

UNDERSTANDING RACE AND RACIALISATION

The definitions used in this handbook have been adapted from **Key Concepts and Definitions for Building Racial Literacy (2024)** written by **Alana Lentin and Debbie Bargallie** and *The Australian Human Rights Commission Resources.*

Race

Race is a mechanism of power based on the idea that people have shared heritable physiological and/or cultural characteristics. These are assumed to be fixed and unchangeable. Groups, conceived of as races, are located closer to or further away from an ideal vision of humanity constructed by Europeans.

Race should be understood as an active, dynamic force (Sivanandan, 1990). It weaves together ideas from biology, culture, nationalism, and religion to make inferences about whole populations. It is, first and foremost, a technique for the management of human differences for the purpose of exploitation and domination.

It is used by states, governments, and institutions, such as the police, education, healthcare and welfare, to organise and demarcate between people. Race is mobile and ever changing. But ultimately, it serves to maintain white supremacy, at both a local and global level (Lentin, 2018).

Systemic Racism

Systemic racism is the way that cultural norms, laws, ideologies, policies, and practices of a particular society,

organisation, or institution result in inequitable treatment, opportunities, and outcomes. Systemic racism relates to entire systems e.g. legal, health, and criminal justice, including the structures that uphold racism. Institutional and structural racism are both forms of systemic racism. **Extend your learning.**

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism is used to draw attention to the systemic conditions that produce individual racist actions and attitudes (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1969). It counters the 'few bad apples' thesis, the idea of racism as the actions or beliefs of ignorant or pathological individuals. Instead, the institution is shown to produce and abet these attitudes and behaviours.

Nevertheless, the call for institutions to admit to institutional racism can lead to situations in which racism is defined in a top-down manner rather than by those experiencing it (Ahmed, 2012).

Racialisation

Racialisation refers to the processes through which a person, a group of people, or a context, situation or issue is made to be 'about race' (Murji & Solomos, 2005). Racialisation infers a relationship between, for example, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, white and non-white, coloniser and colonised (Fanon & Markmann, 1967). Groups can be either positively or negatively racialised.

CHAPTER 1: The Language of Anti-Racist Journalism

CHAPTER 2: Navigating Intersectionality in Australian Journalism and Media

CHAPTER 3: Fact-Checking and Protocols in Journalism

CHAPTER 4: Centering Lived Experience: The Art of Inclusive Storytelling

CHAPTER 5: Community Connection: Fostering Engagement and Collaboration

CHAPTER 6: Towards Inclusion - Editorial Policies and Leadership

CHAPTER 7: Resourceful Partnerships: Collaborations for Media Excellence

FOUNDATIONS OF ANTI-RACISM ORGANISATION CULTURE

● THE IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTATION IN MEDIA

It is important to note that First Nations journalists and journalists from other negatively racialised communities bring unique perspectives and valuable insights to the media industry.

While they may navigate challenges such as underrepresentation and systemic barriers, their voices are crucial in enriching the media landscape with authentic, diverse viewpoints and stories that reflect modern Australia.

Their contributions help address gaps and biases in media coverage, offering a more comprehensive and inclusive portrayal of various communities.

It is equally important to note that when the media has a workforce that is reflective of modern Australia and understands the nuances when reporting on race as a whole industry, it drastically benefits all communities, including consumers from First Nations and other negatively racialised backgrounds, reinforcing trust, connection, and accurate and ethical reporting.

CHAPTER 01
The language of Anti - Racist Journalism

"Effective reporting on race requires journalists to challenge entrenched stereotypes, interrogate power structures, and provide platforms for underrepresented voices."

— **Dr. Nasya Bahfen, Senior Lecturer in Media and Communications at Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia.**

Language shapes culture, values, and social connections. Reporting responsibly on race is key to fair treatment for everyone, no matter their background, and helps build cultural understanding in society. Prioritising accuracy by using respectful, inclusive language that addresses the ongoing impacts of colonial violence, settler-colonisation and Australia's diverse migration history can help journalists avoid stereotypical and harmful reporting.

Australia's history of colonial violence and settler-colonisation continues to have impacts on First Nations communities with dispossession, cultural suppression, and systemic discrimination being ongoing challenges. Recognising these historical contexts in reporting is essential for accurate reporting, creating a deeper understanding and promoting reconciliation.

Australia is a nation built on migration, with people from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds contributing to its social fabric. Responsible reporting should reflect this diversity, highlighting the rich contributions of all communities.

Learn more on the Racism No Way website – <u>Australian cultural historical timeline.</u>

"Media and communication's role is fundamental to a successful multicultural Australia. Inclusive media and representation has an immense influence on shaping national narratives"
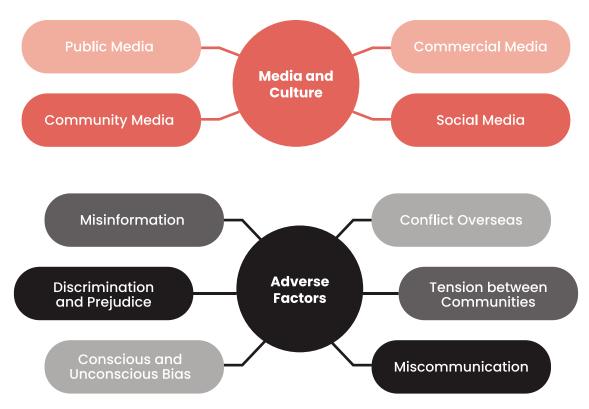
— Towards fairness: A multicultural Australia for all.
<u>Full Report and recommendations Here.</u>

The "Towards Fairness: A Multicultural Australia for All" report highlights that inclusive media helps shape national narratives, representing Australia's multicultural society and promoting accurate portrayals of different cultures to combat stereotypes. When done poorly, the media can spread misinformation, fuel discrimination, and negatively impact belonging.

These guidelines aim to promote integrity and inclusivity in journalism. By acknowledging the historical and contemporary realities of colonialism and migration, journalists can better represent Australia's diverse society.

Public Media

Commercial Media

Media and Culture

Community Media

Social Media

Misinformation

Conflict Overseas

Adverse Factors

Discrimination and Prejudice

Tension between Communities

Conscious and Unconscious Bias

Miscommunication

Graphic credit: 'Towards Fairness: A multicultural Australia Reort'

🔴 GUIDING PRINCIPLES
1. Understand Bias and Language Choices:

Bias can be a favourable attitude, where we form positive impressions based on for example, someone's skin colour, surname, or ancestry. Or it can be unfavourable, with negative impressions. We all hold biases of some kind and our brains are wired to hold biases as a survival mechanism. These cognitive shortcuts helped our ancestors quickly identify threats and make fast decisions. Today, however, these shortcuts can lead to biases that misguide our perceptions and actions. Because we know this, it's important that we commit to identifying our own biases, but more importantly, to address them through anti-racist action:

- Be mindful of your own biases and their influence on reporting, especially on race-related issues. Recognise these biases to make conscious language choices that avoid stereotypes and instead centre the perspectives and

promote an authentic portrayal of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities.
<u>Extend your learning here.</u>

- Implicit bias in the media reflects structural racism, often through subtle, overlooked details. Journalists' views on race can influence their work, sometimes reinforcing stereotypes, especially in societies with a history of racial tension, like Australia. Dr. Khayambashi, while focusing on Canadian media, notes similar patterns in other nations. She stresses that addressing these biases requires **open dialogue, diverse teams, and confronting racism's roots**

2. Diverse Representation and Staff Involvement:

- Actively seek out and include a multitude of voices and perspectives from people with lived experience of racism in reporting.
- Prioritise, facilitate, and remunerate the involvement of staff with lived experience in covering or reviewing stories related to race.
- Recognise and address the cultural and colonial load carried by individuals from First Nations and other negatively racialised backgrounds, ensuring that their contributions are valued and supported in a manner that acknowledges and respects their experiences.
- Involve staff with lived experiences of racism in leading editorial decisions on authentic and appropriate ways to report on race. Establish a system that allows these staff members to choose which stories they want to report on or review.

- Ensure a range of comprehensive options for ethically reporting on race, including consultation with resident Elders, cultural leadership teams, and consultants, as well as providing guidelines and training to staff without lived experience.

3. Strengthening Newsroom Practices Through Lived Experience:

- Consulting and compensating staff with lived experiences or external experts for their input.
- Re-examining reporting practices to ensure accuracy and inclusivity, recognising that most stories, directly or indirectly, touch on racism, demonstrating the importance of taking an anti-racist approach to all reporting, beyond stories that explicitly discuss racism.
- Distributing responsibility for anti-racist reporting across all staff, avoiding reliance solely on those with lived experience, to reduce the colonial and emotional and cultural burden they face.

4. Context and Language Use:

- Provide historical context to race-related issues, considering broader social, cultural, and political factors.
- Question the necessity of mentioning race: **"Is it appropriate and relevant?"**
- Use language that respects historical realities and avoids perpetuating stereotypes.
- Follow community guidance on using appropriate terms and descriptions.
- Examine your default perspective in storytelling to ensure fairness and balance. Are you questioning and examining this usual way of formulating a story?

1. News Values and Their Colonial Implications:

- Reflect on how news values like prominence and proximity are shaped by colonial biases (e.g., unequal coverage of Indigenous vs. Anglo women especially in relation to domestic violence or death).
- Acknowledge that stories often cater to an Anglo-Australian audience, influencing which communities receive coverage.
- Strive to include diverse perspectives to reflect Australia's true demographic and build trust with marginalised groups.

Media organisations can build or regain trust with First Nations and other negatively racialised groups by adopting this inclusive approach to strengthen relationships with marginalised communities and potentially shift the dominant audience demographics.

2. Respectful Representation of the languages of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities:

- Be aware of various international Indigenous Nations and other negatively racialised communities, who might consume your content. Ensure that while creating content you engage with communities to ensure that you do not exclude or erase their respective histories and languages. See Chapter 5.
- Include and avoid discriminating against talent with English as their second language.

WHEN REPORTING ON ISSUES RELATED TO FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES:

- Educate yourself on local First Nations language groups, Elders, and the history of the land where you are creating and delivering content.
- Acknowledge and, with consent, incorporate the unique cultural perspectives and experiences into your work.
- Ensure that First Nations peoples are actively involved in the creation and review of content to respect their traditions and knowledge.

  Extend your learning here with the [MDA Reporting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Issues.](#)

WHEN REPORTING ON ISSUES RELATED TO NON-INDIGENOUS NEGATIVELY RACIALISED COMMUNITIES:

- Learn about the language groups, cultural contexts, and histories of other negatively racialised communities where relevant.
- Engage with community representatives and experts to ensure accurate and respectful representation.
- Understand the migration or refugee experience by considering the socio-political context, reasons for displacement, resettlement challenges, and relevant policies. Find opportunities to focus on celebrating their achievements, strengths, and contributions to the community, rather than solely highlighting struggles.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PHOTOJOURNALISTS, VIDEOGRAPHERS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA PROFESSIONALS:

Photojournalists

COMPOSITION AND REPRESENTATION:

- Ensure composition of photos respects the dignity and humanity of the talent, avoiding sensationalism or stereotypes.
- Include diverse talent to reflect the true demographic makeup of communities.
- Be mindful of cultural sensitivities, protocols and permissions.
- Aim for authenticity by capturing everyday life, challenges, and achievements of various communities, rather than only their struggles.
- Avoid framing that reinforces negative stereotypes (e.g., depicting certain races only in crime or poverty).
- Do not edit images to distort or misrepresent talent, including altering skin tone or features.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Obtain informed consent and consult talent on photo use.
- Be transparent about the purpose and potential use of images, and co-design agreement with the talent.
- Remunerate talent when appropriate, particularly if their image is used in a way that generates profit.
- Respect cultural protocols, such as the restriction on photographing sacred sites or ceremonies without permission.

Videographers

STORYTELLING THROUGH VIDEO:

- Use video to tell stories that include multiple perspectives from within a community.
- Ensure that videos reflect the complexity and diversity of experiences, avoiding one-dimensional portrayals.
- Use interviews and voice-overs from community members to provide context and depth.
- Be mindful of what B-roll or alternative footage you align with voiceovers. Ensure that visuals paired with narration do not reinforce harmful stereotypes or perpetuate biased assumptions about certain communities or topics.

B-roll can have a powerful impact, and misaligned footage can unintentionally shape viewers' perceptions in negative ways.

For example, when discussing crime rates in general, avoid using B-roll that shows only First Nation or other negatively racialised communities, as this can unfairly suggest a correlation between race or poverty and crime.

TECHNICAL AND ETHICAL PRACTICES:

- Pay attention to how lighting, angles, and framing can impact the perception of subjects.
- Avoid using footage that may misrepresent or exploit the subjects, or are sensationalised
- Include context within the video to help audiences understand the broader social, cultural, and historical

- background of the story.
- Provide opportunities for community feedback on video projects before they are published.

Social Media Professionals ———

CONTENT CREATION AND CURATION:

- Use social media to amplify diverse voices and stories, ensuring equitable representation from First Nations and other negatively racialised communities.
- Curate content that challenges stereotypes and promotes positive narratives about all communities.
- Engage with communities to source content directly from them, providing a platform for self-representation.

ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTION:

- Monitor and moderate comments to prevent the spread of racism, hate speech, and misinformation. Proactively remove harmful or discriminatory comments and ensure strategies are in place to mitigate risks like defamation or discrimination against the communities you represent.
- Use social media analytics to understand the reach and impact of content on different communities.
- Engage in active listening by responding to feedback from followers, especially from First Nation and other negatively racialised communities, and making necessary adjustments to content strategies.

VISUAL AND WRITTEN CONTENT:

- Ensure that images, videos, and written content posted on social media are culturally sensitive and respectful.

- Avoid clickbait titles and images that sensationalise or misrepresent stories about race and diversity.
- Promote educational content that informs audiences about the historical and contemporary issues faced by First Nations and other negatively racialised communities and find opportunities for light hearted stories with positive outcomes or storylines.

⬤ GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR REFERENCING RACE IN REPORTING: Avoiding Stereotypes and Ensuring Respectful Representation

Avoid generalisations; it's important to focus on issues without attributing them to specific negatively racialised groups.

- When appropriate, ask interview subjects how they would like to be identified in reporting and accommodate their preferences.

> **FOR EXAMPLE,** an individual may choose to be identified in reporting as "Chinese-Australian" or in another way.

- When reporting on issues relating to systemic or structural problems, such as youth crime, avoid blaming specific communities through sensationalist headlines like 'African Gangs.' Instead, emphasise the issue itself and any contributing factors to safeguard against racist narratives

that portray criminal activity as an ethnic trait and prevent moral panic and the stigmatisation of certain racialised groups.

- Highlight solutions and positive actions being taken within the affected communities to provide a broader perspective and counteract negative stereotypes. This approach fosters a more balanced and accurate narrative, avoids reinforcing harmful perceptions, and supports more meaningful and solution-focused public discussions.
- Use neutral language, such as "Community Initiatives Aim to Combat Alcoholism," to platform existing

community efforts and highlight actions being taken, rather than attributing blame to particular communities affected by systemic inequity.

- Avoid reproducing or giving salience to phrases spoken by politicians or other figures that encourage stigmatisation without providing significant context.

EXAMPLE: Authorities referring to people seeking asylum and refugees as criminals will perpetuate harmful stereotypes and overlook the complexities of individual cases.

Passive and Active Language in Reporting

- **Be aware of how passive and active language choices can shape narratives and influence public perception.** For example, passive language often avoids placing accountability on specific persons, which can obscure the causes and implications of an event.

Example of passive headline: "Shots Fired in Protests" (obscures who fired the shots).

Example of active headline: "Police Fire Shots in Protests" (clearly states who fired the shots).

Active language *creates transparency* and *accountability* **in reporting,** and helps to prevent the perpetuation of inaccurate or harmful narratives.

◕ WHAT'S YOUR BIAS?

While there are some limitations to the Implicit Association Test, it can be a useful tool, when used in conjunction with other practical measures to proactively consider your own bias.

Take this test to find out: Harvard University Implicit Association Test

● ANTI-RACIST REPORTING CHECKLIST:

Background

QUESTION: Does the report provide enough context for readers to understand the issue?

☐ **ACTION:** Include and clearly explain historical, cultural, or situational contexts.

Cultural and Religious Beliefs

QUESTION: Are religious and cultural beliefs respected, avoiding stereotypes?

☐ **ACTION:** Avoid generalisations and reflect on potential long-term impacts of the language used.

Critical Thinking

QUESTION: Does the report encourage readers to think critically?

☐ **ACTION:** Add questions or prompts for deeper engagement.

QUESTION: Does the language meet ethical journalism standards?

☐ **ACTION:** Review the story against established journalism ethics.

Viewpoints

QUESTION: Are diverse community viewpoints represented?

☐ **ACTION:** Ensure at least three different community perspectives are included.

Language

QUESTION: Is the language neutral and respectful?

☐ **ACTION:** Remove biased or inflammatory words; ensure race is mentioned only when relevant.

QUESTION: Have the potential impacts on negatively racialised communities been considered?

☐ **ACTION:** Reflect on the effect of language on marginalised or vulnerable groups.

QUESTION: Are subjects able to express their own perspectives?

☐ **ACTION:** Include direct quotes and verify source reliability.

CHAPTER 02
Navigating Intersectionality in Australian Journalism and Media

"The way we imagine discrimination or disempowerment often is more complicated for people who are subjected to multiple forms of exclusion. The good news is that intersectionality provides us a way to see it."

— **Professor Kimberle Williams Crenshaw**

Intersectionality, a term originated by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, acknowledges the complex, overlapping, and interconnected nature of systems of oppression that rely on socially constructed categorisations like race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, and beyond. These categories intertwine, influencing each person's distinct experiences and position within society.

The idea is intersectionality gets us to critically think about who is left behind or not included, why and in what context. Embracing intersectionality requires a different practical approach depending on the role you play in a media organisation. It also involves self-reflection on the power and privilege you may wield over others in your organisation, dependent on your identity and role.

◗ DIVERSITY DIMENSION DEFINITIONS:

RACE
Race is a mechanism of power based on the idea that people have shared heritable physiological and/or cultural characteristics. These are assumed to be fixed and unchangeable. **Refer to the 'How to Use this guide' page for extended definition.**

GENDER
Socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and identities that a given society considers appropriate for men, women, and other gender identities.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION
A person's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to others.

ABILITY
The range of physical, cognitive, and mental capacities that individuals possess.

ETHNICITY
Shared cultural characteristics such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs. Race is often constructed socially using aspects of ethnicity.

RELIGION
A set of beliefs, practices, and systems that relate to the existence of a higher power, spirituality, or moral values.

NATIONALITY
The country to which a person belongs by birth or naturalisation.

IDENTITY
How individuals perceive and define themselves, which can include multiple aspects such as personal beliefs, experiences, and social affiliations.

AGE
The number of years a person has lived.

LGBTQIA+
An inclusive term for people who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and other sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.

LANGUAGE
A system of communication used by a particular community.

VISA/CITIZENSHIP STATUS
The legal status that determines an individual's rights and obligations within a country, including their ability to reside, work, and access services.

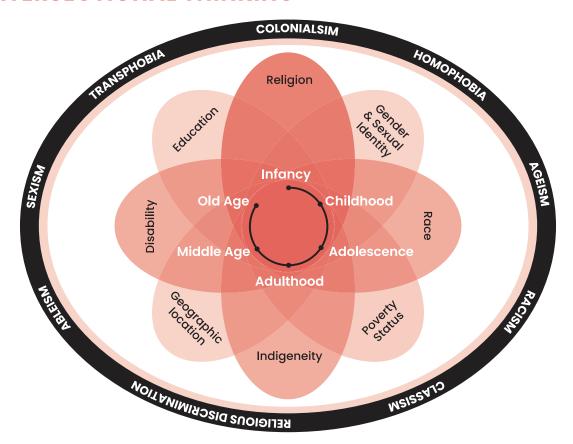**CLASS**
Socio-economic status determined by a combination of factors, including income, occupation, education, and wealth.

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● INTERSECTIONAL THINKING

Graphic Credit: UN Women, https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Intersectionality-resource-guide-and-toolkit-en.pdf

Role-specific approaches:
The below requires care and experience to execute.

1. Journalists
- Seek diverse sources and perspectives and centre individuals' and communities' own voices where possible.
- Avoid biases and stereotypes in reporting.
- Be mindful of the intersectionality of identities when reporting on individuals and communities and refer to individuals through terms that they self-identify with.

EXAMPLE: When reporting on an issue affecting First Nations women, consider their experiences as both women and as First Nations people.

2. Editors
- Ensure content represents diverse viewpoints.
- Provide feedback for inclusive and anti-racist reporting.
- Encourage journalists to consider intersectionality in their stories.

EXAMPLE: When editing a piece about healthcare disparities, ensure that it addresses how race, gender, and socioeconomic status intersect to impact access to care.

3. Media Executives
- Implement policies promoting First Nations cultural safety, anti-racism,

diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Support diverse content creation, inclusive and anti-racist workplace culture.
- Allocate resources for training on intersectionality and its importance in media.

> **EXAMPLE:** Establish mentorship programs for established and new journalists from First Nations and other negatively racialised backgrounds, respectively, to support their career development and progression for leadership opportunities.

The Role of Intersectionality in Anti-Racist Journalism:

Understanding intersectionality is crucial for anti-racist journalism as it helps us recognise the multiple, intersecting aspects of identity—such as race, gender, age, sexuality, and disability—that shape individuals' experiences. By acknowledging these complexities, journalism can offer more accurate, empathetic, and comprehensive representations of people and communities, avoiding reductive portrayals.

◐ STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN NEWSROOMS

Strengthening First Nations Cultural Safety:

- Establish processes to consult with staff with lived experiences or experts with remuneration.
- Reexamine ways of reporting to ensure accuracy and inclusivity.
- Ensure staff with lived experience are remunerated for any extra review or consultation work.

- Recognise that many stories will directly or indirectly touch on issues of racism, and therefore the importance of taking an anti-racist approach to all reporting, beyond stories that are explicitly related to race and racism.
- Avoid siloing staff with lived experience and mitigate the colonial burden they bear by distributing the responsibility for accurate and inclusive reporting across all staff members.

◐ GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF INTERSECTIONALITY IN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALISM

Diverse Perspectives:
Embrace intersectionality by representing various backgrounds to enrich journalism with diverse viewpoints.

> **FOR INSTANCE:** Cover community events by including voices from different ages, genders, and socioeconomic statuses for a comprehensive view.

Challenging Assumptions:
Question norms and recognise multiple identities for accurate portrayals.

> **FOR EXAMPLE:** When covering stories, such as about a First Nations woman, consider her full identity, including gender, achievements, socioeconomic status or disabilities, not just her heritage.

Avoiding Sterotypes:
Understand the complexity of identities to prevent stereotypes. Recognise individual self-perception and avoid biases.

FOR EXAMPLE: A Chinese Australian's experience might reflect both Australian and Chinese influences, so portray this duality accurately.

Inclusive Storytelling:

Capture the full spectrum of racial issues, moving beyond one-dimensional portrayals. Avoid deficit-based narratives by showcasing strengths and contributions alongside struggles.

FOR EXAMPLE: Highlight a migrant family's community involvement and achievements, extending the narrative beyond challenges or their migration story. Additionally, acknowledge the intersectionality of experiences, including disability for example, and how lived experiences vary across race, gender, and ability.

Lived Experiences in Newsrooms:

Emphasise the role of diverse lived experiences in newsroom voices, content, and leadership to identify and address biases, enhance objectivity, and improve journalism's quality.

IN PRACTICE, THIS MEANS:
Involving journalists with relevant lived experiences in advising on related stories, ensuring fair compensation and adherence to guidelines. Far from undermining objectivity, diversity actually enhances it by broadening perspectives, fostering critical thinking, and promoting inclusivity.

Diverse newsrooms better reflect societal complexity, identify biases, and ensure balanced reporting. Objectivity involves fairness, accuracy, and thoroughness, which diversity strengthens by challenging assumptions and enriching journalism.

Understanding Power Dynamics:

Break down who holds power and how privilege intersects with identity.

FOR EXAMPLE: Consider how a wealthy person may have more opportunities and access due to their financial privilege compared to someone from a lower socio-economic background. This is critical when reporting on systemic racism, discrimination, and social inequality.

Coverage of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities:

Advocate for greater and more authentic coverage and elevate voices that are frequently sidelined in mainstream media, providing a platform for those whose voices are often suppressed.

● INTERSECTIONALITY REPORTING CHECKLIST:

Race, Gender, Class, Sexual Orientation, Ability, Religion, Age, Nationality, Language, Ethnicity, Identity, LGBTQIA+, Visa/Citizenship Status etc.

- ☐ Am I actively seeking stories that reflect intersectional identities?
- ☐ How am I ensuring that my own background and inherent bias do not overshadow the narratives I'm reporting?
- ☐ Have I portrayed the individuals and issues with complexity and depth, avoiding oversimplification?

EXAMPLE: Instead of reporting a story about a marginalised community solely in terms of crime rates, explore the broader context. Contextualise the story by considering their cultural heritage, positive contributions, systemic challenges they face, and ongoing efforts for social justice and community development.

- ☐ Are the editorial and production teams reflective of the diversity I aim to report? If not, what steps can I take to minimise the potential risk this can pose to the final outcome?
- ☐ Do my stories provide the necessary context around potential systemic and individual nuances of power and privilege?
- ☐ Is the coverage of marginalised communities done with respect, depth, and frequency?
- ☐ In what ways am I challenging prevalent narratives and providing a platform for change that elevates First Nations and other negatively racialised voices and stories rather than unconsciously adding to a deficit or patronising tone that often perpetuates harmful stereotypes around First Nations and other negatively racialised communities?

*"The intersectional approach, however, recognises that there are **particular consequences when two or more forms of discrimination interact.** Conceptualising discrimination on the basis of a single attribute in isolation hinders our ability to respond effectively."*
—
Australian Human Rights Commission

By reflecting on these questions, journalists and other media professionals can better navigate the multifaceted landscape of intersectionality within Australian journalism, leading to richer, more impactful storytelling that honours the full spectrum of human experience.

Extend your learning here -
Racism it stops with me
Workplace Gender Equality Agency
The Privilege Walk

CHAPTER 03
Fact-Checking and Protocols in Journalism

"In the race to be first with the news, let us not forget the race to be right and fair."

—Philip Balboni, Journalist

In a world inundated with a constant stream of information, the veracity of news has never been more crucial. The responsibility of the media to disseminate accurate, factual, and respectful information is paramount.

This chapter outlines essential protocols and the importance of fact-checking in journalism, with a special focus on navigating bias. Accurate and nuanced reporting is especially important in race-related coverage, as errors can have wide-ranging, unintended consequences for impacted communities.

Fact-checking and bias training are not mere formalities; they are integral to the credibility of journalism. However, it is crucial to recognise that research indicates that most unconscious bias training is often ineffective and does not lead to significant behavioural change. Focusing solely on unconscious or implicit biases can divert attention from addressing structural and systemic racism within an organisation or the broader sector.

To ensure effectiveness, bias training must be embedded as part of the standard workflow, regularly implemented across all content-making departments and newsrooms, and supplemented with concrete actions that participants can take. Such actions can be regularly assessing the application of anti bias reporting, analysing monthly the headlines and narratives, content decisions, details and 'facts' reported to decipher if in fact the organisation is adhering to and free from bias and harmful stereotypes.

This rigorous approach ensures continuous learning and creates scalable impact, whereas most bias training without it becomes a sunk cost.

By integrating comprehensive protocols that address both individual biases (unconscious and conscious) and systemic issues, journalism can produce content that reflects reality in its most authentic form.

This approach is informed and fair public discourse ensuring journalists and media organisations as a whole continue to play a crucial role in providing the public with reliable information.

A PERSONAL REFLECTION BY KARINA HOGAN: HOW REPORTING CHOICES SHAPE PERCEPTION AND IMPACT

Chroming killed Rosie's cousin. Now she's speaking out about her addiction in the hope of deterring others

Rosie and her partner Jordan have both been devastated by chroming. (Supplied)

'His eyes rolled into the back of his head': Teenager addicted to inhaling DEODORANT says she has continued to 'chrome' despite her cousin's death

- Teenager addicted to inhaling deodorant speaks against it after cousin's death
- The teenager, who stayed anonymous, watched her cousin die after chroming
- Rosie took up chroming when she was 12 and had become addicted by 15
- Despite her situation Rosie said she doesn't want to see others take it up

© Shutterstock / Motortion Films

A teenage girl who is addicted to inhaling deodorant says she will keep 'chroming' despite the death of her cousin (stock image)

"**We prepared the talent thoroughly, making them aware that they might face backlash once their stories were published.** *We were aware of the dangers and provided them with our contacts, support networks, and ensured they had access to local Aboriginal services to assist them.*

This approach supports trauma-informed reporting and reinforces our commitment to protecting both the integrity of the story and the well-being of the community.

Even though we made sure the talent was protected as much as possible from direct audience backlash, we didn't expect how a poorly reported version of the story would hurt them and their community. It had a real impact, and it was something we weren't fully prepared for." **- Karina Hogan**

THE IMAGE ABOVE COMPARES TWO DIFFERENT STORIES ON CHROMING.

In our article, **"Chroming Killed Rosie's Cousin: Now She's Speaking Out to Help Others,"** written by Rebeka Powell, Katherine Feeney, and me, we focused on Rosie's bravery in sharing her story to help prevent others from falling into the same trap.

We took great care to support Rosie and her community like blurring her photo and using an alias, aiming to handle her story with respect and empathy.
In contrast, another media outlet's headline, **"His Eyes Rolled into the Back of**

His Head': Teenager Addicted to Inhaling Deodorant Says She Has Continued 'Chroming' Despite Her Cousin's Death," oversimplifies addiction and portrays the teenager as reckless.

They used a stock image of a person with darker skin, which wasn't related to the actual story, reinforcing harmful stereotypes.

These different approaches highlight how responsible reporting can foster understanding and trust, while sensationalism and misrepresentation only deepen stereotypes and misunderstandings.

It was painful to see the comparison story knowing how much time, care and respect went into this story in hopes to raise awareness and education on chroming and its impacts.

⬤◗ GUIDING PRINCIPLES; RIGOROUS FACT-CHECKING AND PROTOCOLS

Accurate and ethical journalism requires diligent fact-checking and adherence to established protocols.

Best Practices for Fact-Checking:

The foundation of trustworthy journalism is the accuracy of the information provided. Establishing rigorous fact-checking procedures is not just best practice, it is the industry's ethical cornerstone.

THESE PROCEDURES SHOULD INCLUDE:
- **Verification Steps:**
  Outline a clear set of steps for verification, which every piece of information must pass through before publication.

- **Contextualise Data:**
  Provide context for statistics and data to prevent misinterpretation. Include historical or situational background where relevant.

- **Consult Experts:**
  When dealing with complex issues, consult experts in the field to ensure accurate representation of facts and interpretations.

- **Cross-Reference Checks :**
  Ensure cross-referencing of information with multiple sources to ensure reliability and accuracy.

- **Community Consultations:**
  Engage with communities and community organisations as subject matter experts to validate information.

- **Transparency in Corrections:**
  Maintain a transparent corrections policy, acknowledging errors, and correcting them promptly and clearly.

Navigating Statements:

When reporting statements from **anyone**, especially those in positions of power, such as politicians, community leaders, and industry leaders, journalists must exercise caution to prevent misinformation. Fact-check all quotes, regardless of who they are from, and, if they are inaccurate, include the context of their inaccuracy in the story. This approach ensures that readers are not misled by false or misleading statements.

EXAMPLE: If a politician inaccurately claims that "crime rates have doubled," the report should include fact-checked data and clarify the inaccuracies: "Contrary to the politician's statement, crime rates have remained stable over the past five years according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023)."

Avoid reproducing quotes verbatim without additional context, as this can perpetuate harm and spread misinformation. Instead, provide the necessary context to inform the audience accurately and responsibly.

Handling Clickbait Headlines:

Clickbait headlines, designed to generate outrage or attract clicks, undermine journalistic integrity and contribute to the spread of misinformation. Journalists and editors should pause and reconsider the use of sensationalist headlines, striving instead for accuracy and context. Sensational headlines can skew public perception, leading to unfounded fear or anger that can have real life impacts, such as violent attacks, on affected communities along with reducing trust, credibility and consumption.

EXAMPLE: (Not real headlines) A headline such as **"Outrage as Refugees Flood the Border"** should be replaced with a more accurate and balanced headline like **"Increased Refugee Arrivals Prompt Policy Change"**

This approach ensures that the headline reflects the content of the story without inciting unnecessary emotions.

● ● ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bias can influence how information is gathered, interpreted, and presented. Training staff to recognise and address these biases, as well as engaging in active anti-racism training and initiatives, is essential for an editorial process that aspires to fairness and objectivity. This training should start with, and be mandatory for, media executives and editors and involve:

Extend your learning here with the Australian Human Rights Commission - Racial Hatred Act : Checklist for Media.

- **Awareness Workshops:** Conduct regular workshops to educate staff about various unconscious biases and their potential impact on reporting.
- **Diverse Teams:** Create diverse editorial teams who are encouraged and afforded cultural safety to provide a range of perspectives based on lived experiences on content, not as an expectation but when personally desired. This would require broader structural support, including reviews of recruitment, retention, and other institutional policies with the aims of strengthening First Nations cultural safety and anti-racism.

Bias-Check Protocols:

Implement bias-check protocols as part of the editorial process, ensuring that content is reviewed for language and framing that could be biased.

SEVERAL EXISTING RESOURCES CAN SUPPORT THIS WORK:

- **Media Diversity Australia (MDA):** Offers guidelines and training on inclusive reporting and identifying biases in media coverage **– MDA Resources**

- **Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR):** A national media watch group that advocates for more inclusive and unbiased journalism **– FAIR Resources**

- **International Federation of Journalists (IFJ):** Offers resources and training on ethical journalism and avoiding biased reporting **– IFJ Ethics.**

- **Credible Training Content:** Utilise training backed by research and facilitated by industry leaders, as well as community-led and non-traditional research, that prioritise lived experiences and expertise to aid ongoing personal development and fact-checking procedures.

● FACT CHECKING PROTOCOLS AND TRANSPARENT CORRECTIONS CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Are clear steps outlined for verifying information before publication?

- ☐ Have multiple sources been consulted to ensure reliability and accuracy?

- ☐ Have subject matter experts been engaged to validate information?

- ☐ Is there a transparent corrections policy in place?

- ☐ Are staff trained to recognise and address biases?

- ☐ Are errors acknowledged promptly and clearly corrected?

- ☐ Are editorial teams diverse, and afforded cultural safety to ensure they feel safe providing a range of perspectives on content?

- ☐ Have you checked the pronunciation and/or spelling of names?

- ☐ Are there ongoing professional development training in place?

CHAPTER 04
Centering Lived Experience: The Art of Inclusive Storytelling

"Australia is an increasingly multicultural place and issues of race are becoming more nuanced and complex. Newsrooms will become completely irrelevant to these communities if they don't continue to hire and promote people of colour within their organisations to ensure they can adequately cover our changing nation."

— **Elias Clure, Multimedia Journalist**

Inclusive storytelling in Australian journalism is not simply about the sporadic inclusion of First Nations narratives, the occasional focus on the adversities faced by other negatively racialised communities, or the tokenistic annual feature of multicultural holidays and traditions.

True inclusivity in storytelling requires a consistent, daily effort to ensure that the voices and experiences of contemporary Australia are reflected across media platforms.

Advocating for inclusivity also requires acknowledging the power imbalances inherent in storytelling. This underscores the need to handle stories of negatively racialised groups with delicacy and care.

It is important to recognise the significance of these stories, the communities, and the potential impact of their representation.

In journalism, storytelling *informs* and *shapes* perceptions. It has the power to *foster empathy* or, conversely, *prejudice.*

Journalists in Australia are uniquely positioned to harness their craft in service of inclusivity and anti-racism.

Storytelling is an art that, when practiced with a commitment to anti - racism, celebrates the rich tapestry of communities that constitute modern Australia.

Diversity of Thought

Diversity of thought is integral to the human experience, with everyone's perspective shaped by their distinct background and life experiences. Recognising that people from First Nations and other negatively racialised backgrounds do not have monolithic views is critical. Overgeneralisation simplifies the depth of the rich diversity of perspectives and experiences.

Journalists must be aware of the diversity within communities and ensure that no single narrative is positioned as representing a whole group or community. This can cause harm within those communities, and it is the journalist's duty to approach storytelling with an understanding of the varied perspectives within any community.
Extend your learning around the 'Danger of a single story'.

When portraying specific communities, journalists should consult with relevant individuals to ensure alignment between narratives and lived experiences, avoiding misrepresentation.

🔴 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSIVE STORYTELLING

- **Create Diverse Content Teams:** Teams should comprise of staff with lived experience of racism. This can help ensure stories are approached from an inclusive perspective.
- **Consult with Community Leaders and Elders:** Consult with Community Leaders and Elders: Conduct interviews with individuals from various backgrounds to challenge stereotypes

and promote community-driven narratives. Consistently use the correct terminology chosen by First Nations Elders and community leaders, demonstrating respect for their identity and lived experience.
— Refer to the MDA's Indigenous Reporting Handbook for more details.

This process should be integrated into protocols that all journalists are supported in following, recognising the common challenge of balancing time and capacity. To ensure consistent and meaningful engagement, it can be established as a standard part of reporting practices.

- **Consistent Reporting:** Consistent, detailed, and dedicated reporting will naturally improve the quality of storytelling and contribute to a more inclusive media landscape. This commitment aligns with ethical journalistic practices and fosters a deeper appreciation of the nuanced array of perspectives that form modern Australian society.
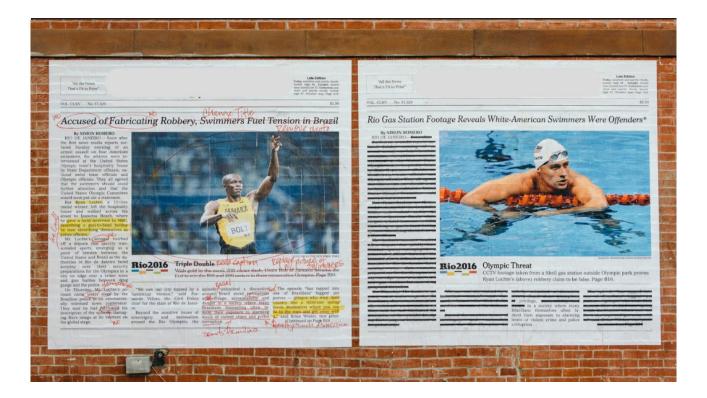
🔴 DIVERSITY IN VISUALS

Inclusive visuals are more than 'good business'; they meet consumer expectations, fostering loyalty and trust by reflecting diverse identities.

Authentic and meaningful portrayal of First Nations people and other negatively racialised communities requires moving beyond tokenistic representations, dismantling stereotypes, and challenging preconceptions.

Case Study

The image above is the work of Alexandra Bell, an interdisciplinary artist and journalist who works to disrupt the racist messaging that comes as a result of misrepresenting stories with visuals.

In 2016, an American news outlet wrote a piece about an American swim team titled 'Accused of Fabricating Robbery, Swimmers Fuel Tension in Brazil'. The accompanying image was Usain Bolt, a Jamaican sprinter.

However, the image of Bolt was actually in relation to a story in another section about winning an Olympic medal. Placing Bolt's photo underneath the headline about the accused fabricated robbery, however, might mislead readers to conflate Bolt's Olympic Victory with involvement in the controversy.

In the piece above, Bell's art highlights the editorial decisions made in the original

article that may reinforce racist narratives. On the right, Bell replaces the image and edits the headline to highlight the misleading content in the original.

● INCLUSION IN NEWSROOMS AND CONTENT TEAMS

It is imperative for newsrooms and content teams to mirror the country's diversity. With half of Australia's population being first or second-generation migrants, representative newsrooms are key to fostering inclusive storytelling and ensuring the longevity of media organisations.

KEY FINDINGS FROM MDA'S "WHO GETS TO TELL AUSTRALIAN STORIES? 2.0" REPORT

1. **Perceived Representation Trends:** Between 2020 and 2022, there has been a more positive response among staff regarding the perceived representation of Indigeneity and cultural diversity in the media industry overall.

2. **Persistent Barriers to Representation:** Despite some positive trends, a significant portion of respondents (77%) still believe that Indigenous and culturally diverse presenters and reporters face greater barriers to representation in front of the camera. There has also been an increase in perceived barriers to career progression for Indigenous and culturally diverse staff behind the camera.

3. **Leadership and Board Diversity:** Concerns remain regarding leadership diversity. Indigenous representation and cultural diversity among senior television news leaders are even worse than board profiles in some networks.

> **Extend your learning with The MDA's – "Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories? 2.0" Full Report.**

GETTING IT RIGHT: ELIAS CLURE'S COVERAGE OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST CASE STUDY

Image Credit: ABC News

News journalist Elias Clure's coverage of the Black Lives Matter protest in Melbourne, 2020, showcased the significance of inclusive storytelling and cultural inclusion in newsrooms.

Clure's personal experiences as a Black reporter navigating racism in Australia informed his reporting, providing a unique and valuable perspective. Initially hesitant to cover the protest due to personal distress about the issue, Clure's perspective shifted after witnessing a Black CNN reporter contribute to news coverage, highlighting the importance of diverse voices in the media. His observation that "constantly seeing white people report on nuanced issues of race can be exhausting," along with his acknowledgment that "It's not that white journalists can't do a great job, they can, I just don't think they can bring as comprehensive an understanding," underscores the necessity of diversity in news coverage. "Australia's best court reporter could probably write an excellent sports story if they had to, but that wouldn't be a news director's first choice to cover an AFL grand final", Clure said.

Clure's coverage served as a compelling example of how inclusive storytelling and diversity in newsrooms contribute to more authentic and comprehensive reporting.

Image Credit: CJ Cannon Photography https://www.cjcannonphoto.com/

ELIAS' PERSONAL TAKEAWAYS FOR JOURNALISTS

1. **Lead with Sensitivity:** Approach stories in First Nations and other negatively racialised communities with a heightened awareness of cultural nuances and customs. This sensitivity helps build trust and ensures respectful and accurate representation.

2. **Develop Trust:** Allow ample time for individuals to become comfortable sharing their stories and lived experience. Engage thoughtfully, respecting their pace and willingness to communicate.respecting their pace and willingness to communicate.

3. **Cultivate Empathy:** Take the time to learn about and understand the experiences and perspectives of marginalised communities. Seek insights from knowledgeable sources like community members, colleagues, or respected academics to foster more comprehensive and respectful reporting.

Additional Considerations:
Harm Minimisation and
Trauma-Informed Support.

Implement harm minimisation measures and provide trauma-informed support for journalists with lived experience who are reporting on topics related to racism. Recognise the potential distress and trauma that can arise from covering issues linked to their own experiences of racism.

THIS INCLUDES:

- **Providing Access to Support Services:** Ensure that journalists have access to counselling and mental health services that are culturally sensitive and appropriate, such as prioritising service providers who have lived experience and/or an intimate understanding of experiences of racism.
- **Creating Safe Work Environments:** Foster a supportive workplace culture where journalists feel safe to express their concerns and seek help.
- **Allowing Flexibility:** Offer flexibility in assignments and deadlines to accommodate the emotional impact of covering traumatic stories. For example, after significant events like the Black Lives Matter movement or the outcome of the Voice to Parliament decision, it is important to allow journalists to take mental health days and manage their workload as needed.
- **Regular Debriefing Sessions:** Conduct regular debriefing sessions to help journalists process their experiences and mitigate the emotional toll that their work at times can bring. Additionally, educate staff without lived experience, if appropriate, on the impacts that their colleagues may be experiencing, especially in culturally sensitive contexts such as deaths in custody, community sorry business, or conflicts. **Refer to the MDA Reporting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Issues handbook for more guidance on handling these topics respectfully.**

Addressing these concerns help reduce the colonial and cultural load borne by journalists with lived experiences of racism, ensuring their wellbeing while maintaining the quality and integrity of their reporting.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

1. Are we choosing the best person for the story, or are we opting for convenience over lived experience?
2. Is there an opportunity to connect with someone new from a First Nations background or other negatively racialised background to genuinely and responsibly diversify the narrative and talent pool?
3. Do we have effective methods for engaging with First Nations and other negatively racialised communities to understand their perspectives to equitably represent them within the media?

By asking these questions and prioritising lived experiences in our journalistic practices, we can work towards ensuring that our storytelling is as rich and varied as the society we aim to depict.

● INCLUSIVE STORYTELLING CHECKLIST:

☐ Always check with individuals directly on how they would like to self-identify in reporting and use those terms accordingly, and if that is not possible, see if they have self-identified in other occasions, and ensure that terms or titles used are culturally appropriate. **For example, "Aunty Sara" or "President of the Pakistan Australian Cultural Association".**

☐ Engage respectfully, with care and sensitivity with individuals at all times and especially when discussing issues relating to race and racism.

☐ Collaborate with the talent to determine the appropriateness of including their ethnicity or race in the story.

☐ Consistently use the correct terminology chosen by First Nations Elders. **Refer to the MDA's Indigenous Reporting handbook.**

☐ Avoid assumptions about cultural backgrounds based on names or appearances.

☐ Investigate and report proactively on the experiences of diverse communities.

☐ Recognise the rich cultural diversity within First Nations communities.

☐ Be balanced and mindful of historical or other contexts when reporting on issues related to race, with consideration of all perspectives and attention to centring lived experiences.

☐ Maintain editorial responsibility by refraining from publishing content containing racist hate speech, or with critical context if the racist speech is to be published.

☐ Consider whether you're framing risks having a pity, deficit-based, or paternalistic tone and ensure that stories respect the dignity and autonomy of all subjects.

☐ Address the saviour trope by ensuring that stories highlight the agency, strength, resilience, and capabilities of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

☐ Foster diverse editorial teams and culturally safe and anti-racist working environments, so staff can feel empowered to offer varied and critical perspectives on content.

CHAPTER 05
Community Connection: Fostering Engagement and Collaboration

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."

— Coretta Scott King

In the media industry, editorial leaders, journalists and content creators play a significant role in informing and representing their audience. Integral to this is community engagement — a partnership that informs and enriches journalism.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Community engagement and outreach are critical for journalists as they build stories that are equitable and resonant. **Engagement** is a sustained process of collaborating with the community for collective decision-making, particularly when working with First Nations and other negatively racialised communities, and addressing both community and organisational needs.

In contrast, outreach involves reaching out to obtain or provide information, resources, or support and should be done only when the engagement process has taken place and a relationship is formed.

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY

It is crucial to understand that First Nations people and other negatively racialised groups might not always report or file complaints about offensive reporting or media engagements. This can be due to various reasons including:

- Barriers to challenging established media outlets that hold more power and influence over public discourses.
- They may also choose to utilise community resources and time more efficiently rather than advocating for change within media outlets or institutions. This is often due to the perceived lack of effort by the media to collaborate meaningfully with communities for change and anti-racism.

It is therefore important to be aware that official complaints about offensive reporting or media engagements, do not show the full picture of the media experience of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities, which often involve harm and resistance against harmful media portrayals, including through platforming stories in communities' own voices in community and independent media outlets.

Without action to remedy these relationships, communities can be pushed to disengage from media interactions, affecting how they interact with the media in the future.

It is important to note that community experiences with the media, whether positive or negative, are often shared widely within and across communities, showing how these interactions can influence broader community and public views and engagements.

Pre-existing media representation and reporting styles can also affect communities' willingness and trust in collaborating with the media on initiatives to work towards inclusive and anti-racist storytelling, so it is vital to understand how historical interactions play into current dynamics and allow time to address these concerns and repair relationships.

To keep these communities engaged and willing to share their stories, always approach them and cover their stories with respect and engage with communities early to build relationships, partnerships, and trust.

THE CORE OF ENGAGEMENT

Effective community engagement and outreach initiatives should aim for multifaceted outcomes that contribute to informed, collaborative journalism.

- **Mutual Learning:**
  Foster an environment of two-way learning where journalists listen and communities articulate their perspectives. This enhances the authenticity of stories.
- **Assign Resources:**
  Resources and funding should be dedicated to enabling journalists to build relationships and engage with various communities well in advance of deadlines or specific needs. This proactive approach is an integral part of a journalist's everyday responsibilities, regardless of the community. It fosters confidence, deepens understanding, and ensures that journalists accurately and authentically represent all voices.
- **Diversifying Talent:**
  Establish relationships with communities and expand the talent pool to avoid monolithic or stereotypical narratives and enrich storytelling.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Creating lasting connections requires trust and pre-existing relationships, emphasising the need for cultural sensitivity, and avoiding the imposition of 'cultural load' (or 'colonial load')
—the burden on community members to educate others.

● PREPARING FOR ENGAGEMENT

According to the 2020 & 2022 MDA Research Report "Who Gets to Tell Australian Stories?", non-European Australians tend to have lower levels of trust in news sources and are more concerned about representation. While many agree that Australia's cultural diversity is adequately represented in news, a significant majority of non-European respondents express a desire for greater diversity among presenters and the stories covered.

Additionally, there are differences in trust levels among non-European respondents, with a notable proportion choosing to stop consuming news due to perceived bias.

1. **Assess Community Needs:**
   Understand how the community accesses news and identify key socioeconomic factors and community leaders.
   - How do people obtain their news?
   - What socioeconomic factors come into play for this community?
   - Who are the community leaders and experts? Consider MDA's Expert Diversity Directory list as a starting point and ensure to obtain an array of perspectives from within the community you are reporting on or working within.

2. **Set Clear Goals for Engagement:**
   Define what you hope to achieve and ensure the timing is right for meaningful engagement, avoiding last minute or rushed approaches.
   - Who can help tell the story?
   - What are the ideal outcomes for engaging and building relationships with this community?
   - What timeframe do you have, and if it is short, is now the appropriate time to delve into community engagement which we know takes time and a lot of care?
   - Are you creating safe and accessible ways for the community to engage with you and the team? Can you increase resources and go to the community instead of having them come to you?

3. **Benefit Both Parties:**
   Plan for a mutually beneficial relationship, maintaining trust while respecting professional boundaries.
   - Have you planned out how you will maintain the relationship?
   - How will the community benefit? How will you benefit?
   - Have you diversified your voices or are you hearing from people who already have a platform?
   - How will you gain and maintain trust while keeping professional and editorial boundaries?

4. **Implement a Talent Care Plan:**
   Create a robust support system for talent who have lived experiences of racism and other intersecting forms of discrimination. This might include providing access to mental health resources, peer support groups, and regular debriefing sessions.
   - Conduct training for reporters on how to engage sensitively with individuals who have experienced discrimination, trauma, and/or abuse. This training should cover trauma-informed reporting, anti-racism, and effective communication strategies.
   - Are you committed to long-term engagement rather than one-

off interactions? How will you build trust and rapport with the community and talent over time?
- Have you created mechanisms for regular feedback from the

community and talent? How will you use this feedback to continuously adapt and improve your engagement strategies?

● SHARING THE LOAD

While working with First Nations and other negatively racialised communities enriches the diversity and depth of stories, it is **crucial to be mindful** of the dangers of burnout caused by expecting individuals to be experts on all aspects of their cultures, customs, and beliefs.

Diverse communities are inherently varied in their cultural practices and beliefs; for instance, it is unreasonable to expect First Nations people to have knowledge about all language groups and nations.

First Nations and other negatively racialised employees should not be confined to writing or reporting solely about race or engaging with their own communities.

2011
Lynette Daley, an Aboriginal woman, died after a violent sexual assault.

2014
Despite coronial findings which strongly recommended charges be laid, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) did not prosecute the man.

Engagement with communities can encompass any topic; for example, a health story might involve interviewing a doctor of African descent without needing to discuss their cultural background or link it to race.

Cultural engagement and inclusive storytelling should be the responsibility of all journalists and staff, as it is essential for accurately reflecting and representing contemporary Australia. Consider collaborating with community-led organisations and agencies to enhance your inclusive storytelling and genuine connection to communities.

Organisations such as **Reconciliation Australia, Our Race, Common Ground, Multicultural Australia,** and **Welcoming Cities Australia** offer valuable support and training for engaging with First Nations and other negatively racialised communities.

Diversity in talent goes *beyond stereotypical cultural stories* to include all facets of modern Australia.

Lynette Daley Timeline

In 2016, an investigative TV report on Lynette Daley, an Aboriginal woman who died following sexual assault, reignited public outrage.

The segment prompted authorities to reopen the investigation, ultimately leading to the conviction of the two men responsible for her death.

For communities constantly fighting for justice, the media's role in amplifying such stories is vital. This case shows how powerful media can be in addressing racial injustice when stories are told with authenticity, community engagement, and an understanding of how marginalised communities are often overlooked — even in death.

2016
A program titled "Callous Disregard", aired and as a result the case received significant public attention.

2017
Adrian Attwater, who was Ms Daley's boyfriend, and Paul Maris are found guilty of Daley's murder. The jury took only 32 minutes to come to this conclusion. . .

● POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT CHECKLIST:

- **Avoid imposing cultural load or colonial load:** Ensure the burden of education is not borne by people with lived experience of racism.

- **Build connections:** Cultivate relationships with communities not only in times of crisis but as an ongoing relationship, ensuring representation extends beyond negative stereotypes.

- **Approach discussions on race with an understanding that racism is not a debate but a reality affecting lives:** Educate yourself and your team on the origins and impacts of systemic racism; use the MDA Reporting of Race guide, to contribute positively to the discourse and be mindful of how racist speech and actions are represented in reporting.

- **Take Racism Seriously:** Prioritise the voices of communities with lived experience of racism and anti-racism practitioners in discussions about race.

- **Understand Intersectionality:** Recognise how race intersects with other social categories (Refer to Chapter 2).

- **Focus on Structural Solutions:** Dismantling racism requires systemic change, not just individual actions (Refer to Chapter 1 and Definitions).

- **Support Community Voices:** Amplify the voices and action of everyday individuals with lived experience of racism in the fight against racism.

- **Maintain a Talent Care Plan:** Maintain a plan and revise it regularly based on feedback from the community.

Australian journalists and editorial leaders should critically consider which stories are highlighted and regularly consult with audiences and communities for a truly representative narrative. **This not only strengthens reporting but also supports a media landscape that values every community member's contribution.**

CHAPTER 06
Towards Inclusion - Editorial Policies and Leadership

"Transparency in journalism is a beacon of integrity, guiding us toward accountability and truth."

— Dr. Anthea Cheung, Lecturer in Media and Communication, University of Sydney

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: WHAT IS INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP?

Inclusive leadership within journalism fundamentally involves fostering an environment where diversity is valued, equity is sought, and inclusivity is practised.
It means leading in a way that respects and appreciates differences in identity, background, and viewpoint among members of an editorial team and the broader community.

Such leaders prioritise transparency and accountability, ensuring that these values permeate all levels of the organisation, and commit to cultivating an anti-racist workplace and media environment.

1. **Empathy and Awareness:**
   Leaders should demonstrate a deep understanding of cultural nuances and personal histories, including through continuous professional development training, and commit to promoting an anti-racist and inclusive workplace culture where every team member feels understood and valued.

2. **Cultural Liaison Team:**
   Leaders can enhance inclusivity by inviting current and former journalists and content creators to serve as cultural liaisons, offering confidential channels to address content-related issues and industry concerns.

   These roles could foster remunerated cultural support, provide valuable insights to management, and help bridge gaps between staff and community, thereby nurturing culturally safe work environments and driving impactful content and community engagement initiatives.

3. **Centre First Nations Perspectives:**
   Leaders should recognise and commit resources to centre First Nation perspectives not as a tokenistic inclusion but as an integral part of all narrative constructions. This would require leadership commitment to structurally strengthen First Nations cultural safety and anti-racism in the work environment.

4. **Commitment to Diversifying and Centring Community Voices:** This involves not only diversity in staffing, but also diversity in the voices and stories platformed, and how they are represented, in the media to ensure that a broad spectrum of society is represented. As discussed earlier in chapter 5, this would require centring the diverse perspectives of communities in collaborative ways.

If you don't have lived experience of racism yourself, also consider your own potential biases and take the initiative to self-educate. First Nations and other negatively racialised staff members who voluntarily contribute their knowledge and expertise from their lived experiences should be remunerated. Within the workplace, also showcase First Nations and other negatively racialised employees fully, beyond their diversity alone.

5. **Encouraging Diversity of Thought:** This involves more than just having a diverse team; it requires active solicitation of input and ideas from all team members, especially those whose voices are traditionally underrepresented. This would require structural support and transparent mechanisms to enable staff with lived experience to contribute safely and with knowledge of how the feedback will be used or incorporated.

6. **Accountability to Diverse Audiences:** Inclusive leaders hold their teams and themselves accountable to

their audiences, ensuring that media representation is fair, accurate, and respectful of diversity.

⬤ CREATE INCLUSIVE EDITORIAL POLICIES

To create truly inclusive editorial policies, media organisations must undertake deliberate and thoughtful actions:

1. **Conduct Regular Bias, First Nations Cultural Safety, and Anti-Racism Trainings:** Implement continuous education and training for all editorial staff on bias, First Nations cultural safety, and anti-racism. These programs should be developed and delivered in collaboration with experts and community organisations with lived experience. Training should include specific modules focused on the experiences, strengths, barriers, histories, and current affairs of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities.

2. **Diverse Hiring Practices:** Commit to diverse hiring that reflects the communities the media serves, which can help to bring a variety of perspectives to editorial decisions and coverage. This would need to be supported by institution-wide initiatives to strengthen First Nations cultural safety, and anti-racism, within the organisation, such as through a review of recruitment policies and procedures.

3. **Inclusive Story Selection:** Develop guidelines that ensure diverse viewpoints are considered and represented in the storytelling process.

4. **Culturally Sensitive Story Selection:** Editorial guidelines must ensure that story selection processes respect cultural sensitivities and include Indigenous viewpoints authentically and respectfully.

5. **Source Diversity and Lived Experience:** Encourage the inclusion of sources from diverse backgrounds, particularly First Nations and other negatively racialised sources, to enrich reporting and provide a more accurate portrayal of all community segments.

⬤ QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

For Organisations:

• Are our leadership and editorial teams reflective of the diversity in the audience we seek to serve, including First Nations and other negatively racialised representation?

• How do our policies support the fair representation of all groups, especially those who are systemically marginalised?

• What mechanisms do we have in place to address grievances related to discrimination or misrepresentation within our content, particularly concerning Indigenous issues?

• How often do we review our inclusivity policies and practices, and do we have an anti-racism policy?

• Are you prioritising a culturally safe working environment where your staff feel well-supported?

• How are you encouraging your staff to aspire to senior positions, and are clear pathways provided for them?

• How can you ensure you are genuinely supporting the career development of diverse talent beyond just diversity representation, avoiding tokenism?

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Consider MDA's research on barriers for First Nations and other negatively racialised individuals and avoid tokenising diverse talent by genuinely supporting their career development beyond diversity representation.

For Leaders:
• **Reflective Leadership:** How effective are my efforts to embed perspectives and considerations of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities and staff into our editorial policies? What further steps can I take?

• **Representation Accuracy:** Am I ensuring that our content accurately and respectfully represents First Nations communities and other negatively racialised groups? How frequently do I engage with these communities to validate our approaches?

• **Policy Effectiveness:** How effective are our current inclusivity and anti-discrimination policies in promoting real change within the organisation and in editorial policies?

What feedback mechanisms are in place to assess policy effectiveness from the perspectives of First Nations communities and other negatively racialised communities respectively?

- **Bias and Stereotypes:**
In what ways might my own biases influence editorial decisions, and how can I actively work to minimise this impact?

- **Leadership Development:**
What am I doing to develop future leaders from First Nations and other negatively racialised backgrounds? How am I supporting their growth and visibility in the media landscape, including working with community-led organisations like the MDA?

- **First Nations Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism:**
How frequently do I participate in training about First Nations cultural safety, and anti-racism, and how do these trainings influence my leadership practices?

⬤ INCLUSIVE POLICIES AND LEADERSHIP CHECKLIST:

Review and Adjust Recruitment Practices ————————————

☐ Actively seek to include participation of First Nations and other negatively racialised voices in recruitment efforts for journalists and staff positions within the newsroom, content teams, and leadership. Consider working with current staff with lived experience as a remunerated leadership opportunity and or cultural consultants.

☐ Implement strategies such as targeted engagement and outreach, partnerships with community organisations, and proactive networking to attract diverse talent.

Cultural and Psychological Safety ————————————

☐ Create support networks or affinity groups (Employee Resource Groups) where First Nations employees, as well as other negatively racialised employees, can share experiences and offer mutual support. Staff leading Employee Resource Groups should have their time and efforts recognised by capturing these in their formalised KPIs and adequately compensated.

☐ Establish trust within the organisation to ensure authentic cultural safety that then creates an opportunity for an authentic open-door policy and robust and transparent grievances mechanisms, through which First Nations and other negatively racialised staff can feel safe to voice concerns or report incidents without fear of retaliation.

☐ Strive for diversity of thought and lived experience within leadership positions to ensure that decision-making reflects a range of perspectives and experiences.

☐ Establish mentorship programs pairing First Nations and other negatively racialised staff with senior employees, preferably with lived experience of racism and/or high racial literacy, to provide guidance. Consider working with the MDA team for further assistance.

☐ Include First Nations and other negatively racialised staff in key decision-making processes and ensure their voices are heard and valued in shaping newsroom policies and practices.

☐ Conduct comprehensive Bias and Anti-Racism Training for all staff, beginning with the organisational leadership team. This should be an ongoing measure and not one-off actions only implemented in response to specific incidents.

☐ Ensure that training materials and facilitators are culturally sensitive and representative of diverse perspectives.

□   Ensure your Employee Assistance Programs are culturally appropriate by conducting a culturally responsive assessment of the suppliers used within the organisation. It is essential that services are delivered by qualified professionals with lived experience of racism, which will encourage staff experiencing racism and other intersecting forms of discrimination in the workplace to seek out their services which aids in staff retention and cultural safety within the organisation.

Regular Content Reviews

□   Conduct regular audits of how First Nations and other negatively racialised community issues are reported by your teams to ensure respectful, accurate, and nuanced representation.

□   Establish clear criteria for evaluating content, including consideration of language usage, framing, and portrayal of First Nations and other negatively racialised communities.

Feedback Systems for First Nations and Other Negatively Racialised Communities

□   Establish reciprocal relationships and maintain direct lines of communication with First Nations and other negatively racialised communities to gather feedback on media representation and address concerns promptly and effectively.

□   Utilise multiple channels for feedback, including community forums, surveys, external independent organisations, such as MDA, and dedicated liaison roles within the organisation.

Leadership Accountability

□   Hold leadership accountable for advancing inclusivity and anti-racism by setting specific goals and targets related to First Nations and other negatively racialised communities representation.

□   Incorporate metrics for evaluating progress, such as diversity in hiring, representation in leadership positions, and outcomes of community engagement initiatives.

□   Foster a culture of accountability and transparency, where leaders actively demonstrate their commitment to promoting anti-racism and diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of the organisation.

By following these principles and practices, media organisations can create a more inclusive, equitable, and representative journalism landscape that serves the entire community.

CHAPTER 07
Resourceful Partnerships: Collaborations for Media Excellence

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better."

— Maya Angelou, Poet, Storyteller & Activist

The journey towards systemic change and equitable race reporting thrives on collaboration and connection, leveraging collective wisdom and resources. Joining forces with other media organisations, including partnerships with community-led entities like Media Diversity Australia (MDA), underscores a commitment to excellence and diversity in media.

Participation in industry-wide initiatives advocating for responsible race reporting is crucial, such as engaging in MDA's annual industry roundtable events and attending their industry working group meetings. These collaborations enable media organisations to share best practices, resources, and insights, fostering a unified approach to anti-racism and improving diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Working together establishes and upholds ethical standards, promotes diversity, and ensures a more inclusive and accurate representation of diverse communities in reporting.

BENEFITS OF COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS:

- **Shared Learning:**
  Collaborations provide opportunities for media organisations to learn from each other, adopting strategies that have been successful elsewhere.

- **Unified Standards:**
  By working together, media entities can establish and maintain higher ethical standards, setting industry benchmarks for responsible reporting.

- **Promotion of Diversity of Views:**
  Collective efforts help in advocating for and implementing policies that enhance diversity within the media landscape, ensuring a broad spectrum of voices and stories is represented.

- **Inclusive Representation:**
  Partnerships can drive more accurate, equitable, and inclusive representation of diverse communities, moving beyond tokenism to authentic portrayal.

● MEDIA ORGANISATIONS CHECKLIST:

☐ **Join Media Diversity Networks:**
Become a member of networks such as Media Diversity Australia. MDA membership signals a commitment to diversity and provides access to resources and support for implementing best practices.

☐ **Participate in Diversity and Anti-Racist Initiatives:**
Engage actively in initiatives aimed at promoting anti-racism and diversity, equity, and inclusion within the industry. This can range from attending workshops and seminars to contributing to diversity audits.

☐ **Collaborate on Content Creation:**
Work with other organisations, particularly community-led organisations and media outlets, to co-create content that reflects a commitment to diversity and inclusion, pooling resources to tackle complex issues with depth and sensitivity.

☐ **Share Successes and Challenges:**
Openly discuss what works and what doesn't in diversity initiatives. This transparency can help the industry evolve and adapt more effectively.

☐ **Advocate for Industry Change:**
Use the collective voice to push for systemic changes within the media industry that support anti-racism, as well as diversity and equitable representation.

☐ **Implementing Collaborative Practices:**
Consider whether you can combine resources to find Employee Assistance Programs that are culturally appropriate.

ENGAGE IN CONTINUOUS LEARNING:

- **Regular Training:** Media organisations should invest in continuous learning and development programs focusing on anti-racism practice.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Foster a culture of knowledge-sharing where organisations share insights and strategies that have been proven successful in promoting an anti-racist workplace.

CREATE INCLUSIVE POLICIES:

- **Develop Guidelines:** Establish comprehensive editorial guidelines that ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives and sources.
- **Policy Review:** Regularly review and update policies to reflect best practices and current research in anti-racism and diversity and inclusion.

BUILD STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:

- **Community Collaboration:** Partner with community organisations to gain insights and build trust within diverse communities.
- **Industry Alliances:** Form alliances with other media organisations to strengthen advocacy efforts and drive industry-wide change.

MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS:

- **Set Benchmarks:** Establish clear benchmarks for anti-racism, as well as diversity and inclusion, efforts and monitor progress regularly.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement robust feedback mechanisms to gather input from First Nations and other negatively racialised communities and stakeholders.

PROMOTE INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP:

- **Leadership Development:** Invest in developing leaders who are committed to anti-racism and diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **Diverse Leadership Teams:** Ensure that leadership teams reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

The path to media excellence in diversity and race reporting is paved with collaborative effort.

By forming strategic partnerships and engaging in industry-wide initiatives, **media organisations can amplify their impact, fostering a media environment that truly reflects the diversity of society** and upholds the highest standards of ethical reporting.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

https://www.mediadiversityaustralia.org/

https://presscouncil.org.au/

https://humanrights.gov.au/

https://www.meaa.org/

https://media.ourwatch.org.au/

Extend Your Learning with Additional Key Terms

Antiracism

Anti-racism involves actively attempting to combat racist policies, practices, culture and ideas. Anti-racism is about more than being 'not racist'. It involves active decisions that seek to combat injustice and promote racial equity. It can be helpful to think of anti-racism as a skill set that we can all develop and use to promote a better, more equitable society. **Learn more.**

Racism

Racism is the process by which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race. Racism is more than just prejudice in thought or action. It occurs when this prejudice –whether individual or institutional– is accompanied by the power to discriminate against, oppress or limit the rights of others. **Learn more.**

We must work towards a society where all people, regardless of their racial identity, enjoy equitable access to rights, freedoms and opportunities.

Colonial Load

A new term which explores the concept of the additional burden imposed on First Nations people by settlers and institutions, both consciously and unconsciously, due to the lingering effects of colonialism.

This burden includes the ongoing need to preserve cultural practices while navigating systemic biases, addressing intergenerational trauma, and constantly advocating for justice. It also encompasses challenges like tokenism (superficial inclusion of First Nations people or communities in societal structures or decision-making without genuine empowerment or change), isolation, and the continued justification of cultural identity.

The concept of colonial load recognises that the structures and policies established during colonisation continue to shape the experiences of First Nations communities today.

Cultural Load

Cultural load is the additional work borne by First Nations people in the workplace. It often goes unseen, with First Nations employees asked to provide cultural education and guidance to non-Indigenous colleagues.

Cultural load also impacts other negatively racialised communities and may manifest

as emotional labour, educational burden and tokenism (often asked to represent the entire community or serve as the "educator" for others, often without formal recognition). **Learn More.**

Cultural Safety

An environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening. **Learn more.**

Colonialism

Colonialism is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial control over another country, occupying it, exploiting it economically, and extracting its material and cultural resources. Colonial rule also had a destructive effect on Indigenous cultures, knowledges, and traditions through the imposition of European social norms and education models.

Settler Colonialism

Settler colonialism is distinguished from colonialism because it aims to create a settler society on Indigenous land and not only to extract from the land for the enrichment of the colonising society.

Settler colonialism seeks the 'elimination of the native' through various means, from genocide to assimilation. Settler colonialism is a 'structure, not an event' because it is a continual practice that transforms over time (Wolfe, 2006).

Indigenous Sovereignty

Indigenous sovereignty is derived from the continued existence of diverse Indigenous peoples on the lands currently known as Australia, who never consented to being 'subsumed within the Australian nation' (Mansell, 1998). Indigenous sovereignty differs from Western models of sovereignty based on the idea of 'a unified supreme authority, territorial integrity, and individual rights' (Moreton-Robinson, 2008, p. 2).

In contrast, Indigenous sovereignty is carried in the body, derived from Indigenous ways of being and knowing, and grounded in the interrelationships between 'ancestral beings, humans and land' (Moreton-Robinson, 2008, p. 2).

Extend Your Learning With Key Terms Here.

References and Associated Literature

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By following the guidelines and anti-racist principles outlined in this handbook, you can contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and representative media landscape in Australia.

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In collaboration with Australian Human Rights Commission