



Australian
National
University

*Australian National University Statement of Apology
To the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, past and present,
on the occasion of the repatriation
of the materials associated with the
Tasmanian Indigenous Ancestral burial from King Island
and
the West Point Ancestral Remains*

The Australian National University expresses sincere regret for the indignity suffered by your Ancestors, whose remains were removed from their resting place by academic staff representing the University.

We recognise that the removal of these ancestral remains and burial materials caused ongoing grief to your communities and we apologise unreservedly for this.

We acknowledge that, while the research undertaken by academic staff from both this University and other institutions has contributed significantly to the understanding of the history of Indigenous Australians, our research in the past has not always been undertaken with your full knowledge and support, as the Traditional Owners.

We reaffirm our respect for your cultural heritage, as the oldest continuing culture in the world, and we acknowledge you as the Traditional Owners of the land from which your Ancestors were removed.

We recognise your rights to cultural autonomy and self-determination. The University reaffirms our commitment to support you, the Traditional Owners, to protect your cultural heritage.

We hope that the return of these Ancestors to you, the Traditional Owners, can in some way redress our past mistakes, and the mistreatment and distress that we have caused you. We sincerely hope that this will be the beginning of a healing process for your communities.

As a university community, we commit to fostering a respectful and ongoing relationship with you and your communities. We undertake to work in partnership with you as Traditional Owners, to ensure that the journey started here today is completed; that your Ancestors are returned to country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. P. Schmidt'.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian P. Schmidt AC
Australian National University
5 December, 2016