



FACULTY OF ARTS

Adelaide Summer Research Scholarship 2021-2022

Developing a compositional language for contemporary Indigenous Australian composers

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The aim of this research project is to compile and develop composer resources for Indigenous composers through the revitalisation of traditional song and language. The key outcome of the project will be a new compositional language that revives and revitalises culture, is meaningful for the composers, allows greater expression, and expands the boundaries of contemporary Australian composition.

Both archival research and field work will be used to inform this project in the long term, but at the ASRS stage of the project no field work will be conducted, only archival research.

The key focus of the project will be to investigate Indigenous tuning systems and determine a number of ways in which they can be incorporated into traditional Western notation systems, and musical ensembles. Various other musical elements will also be considered and incorporated into the new musical language, but tunings systems will be at the centre of the investigation.

The research team will be comprised of two composers, one linguist, an ethnomusicologist, and one conductor. The project will culminate in a set of new compositions by some of Australia's leading Indigenous composers.

The recipient of the ASRS will assist with the preparation of an ARC Indigenous Discovery award. The main tasks associated with this project will be assisting the team with background research into the musical cultures of Kalkadunga, Ngiyampaa, Yuin, Bandjalang, Gumbangirr, Wiradjuri, and Kurna; assisting the research team to develop persuasive substantiated arguments; assisting the research team with referencing primary and secondary research sources; assisting the research team with compiling the necessary documentation for the ARC grant submission.

- Develop music-specific skills in the field of microtonality.
- Develop team-work skills.
- Develop ability to navigate archives and locate resources.
- Develop referencing ability.
- Develop ability to construct persuasive arguments.
- Develop independent critical thinking skills.