

SeDNAS Purpose Goal 1 Mission Statement

Mission Statement:

The Southern eDNA Society (SeDNAS) Purpose Goal 1 (PG1) Working Group is committed to meaningful and ethical environmental DNA (eDNA) practice in partnership with Indigenous, Māori, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and First Nations communities (hereafter: Indigenous peoples) of Australasia. We acknowledge Indigenous peoples' enduring connections to and guardianship of lands, waters, and treasured species (i.e. taonga species, totem animals). We aim to support Indigenous-led and community-informed research that upholds Indigenous sovereignty, knowledge systems, governance, and self-determined priorities. Through supporting connection-building, fostering trusted relationships, and promoting ethical scientific practice, we aim to create a safe and inclusive environment where Indigenous and First Nations knowledge systems are valued, integrated, and celebrated together with eDNA methodologies. We seek to promote approaches that are culturally respectful, scientifically rigorous, and grounded in reciprocity, responsibility, and long-term trust. In doing so, we aim to contribute to holistic, impactful, and equitable environmental futures. We strive to demonstrate leading practices, such as integrating the CARE principles for Indigenous Data Governance (Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility, Ethics) wherever possible (<https://www.gida-global.org/care>).

Short-term Goals (starting 2025-2028):

1. Consolidate resources and guidelines around best practices in Indigenous engagement for eDNA researchers and add these into the SeDNAS knowledge hub as a resource.
2. Write-up two+ case studies of previously successful eDNA-based indigenous/researcher partnerships and promote them as examples of current good practice.
3. Explore a pilot matchmaking webinar between Indigenous peoples and eDNA researchers.

Medium-term Goals (proposed starting 2028-2035):

1. Build Indigenous peoples' capacity and leadership
 - a. Encourage Indigenous leaders to join SeDNAS at all levels of governance, including the Board and PG1 Group.

- b. Aim to enable scholarships/fellowships (sponsored) for Indigenous peoples in the eDNA space.
- 2. Foster the generation of a living document focused on Indigenous-led eDNA-specific guidelines and best practice.
- 3. Aim to enable the development of accessible communication and educational resources to support eDNA implementation by First Nations groups.
- 4. Develop long-term goals.

Please contact Clare I. M. Adams at [clare\[dot\]im\[dot\]adams\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:clare[dot]im[dot]adams[at]gmail[dot]com) to join the PGI working group, we meet quarterly throughout the year to advance this mission. All welcome, those with Indigenous backgrounds are especially encouraged to join.