The Early Childhood Australia National Conference is attended by practitioners, academics, professionals and policy-makers in the field of early childhood education and care. In 2016, the conference attracted almost 2000 delegates from Australia and overseas.
‘Be the difference for children and families’ is the theme for Early Childhood Australia’s (ECA) National Conference to be held in Sydney, 19–22 September 2018. This event brings people together to recognise the impact of high-quality early childhood education on the lives of young children and their families, as well as the importance of investing in ongoing professional development for educators, teachers and sector leaders. The conference will explore current and emerging practice, showcase professional development resources and facilitate deep, reflective thinking. It is also a terrific opportunity to network with peers, meet with leading suppliers and see the latest technology available to support early childhood service delivery.

Conference presentations will be aligned to one or more of the following areas of inquiry:

**LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS**

Everyone can be a leader—leadership can encompass leading yourself, leading others and leading ideas. The most important factor in good leadership is having a strong ethical foundation for making decisions and navigating complex situations. This conference will explore both leadership and ethics in the early childhood profession. You will hear from experts and everyday leaders with opportunities to develop your own identity as an ethical leader. You will be invited to consider how you engage with ECA’s Code of Ethics and how it influences the way that you lead.

**RIGHTS AND RESPECT**

Realising the right of every young child to thrive and to learn is at the heart of ECA’s purpose—it is why we exist. At the conference, we will explore what this means, both on a day-to-day basis in early childhood settings and also for our collaborative work in advocacy, sector development and research. We will also explore our role as a voice for children—how do we give children a voice, particularly very young children? As a professional network, are we respectful towards young children and their families? Do they have agency in our work or could we do more?

**CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Together we will explore the current and emerging trends in early childhood teaching and learning. Find out what the research is telling us about the importance of play, the role of digital technology and the efficacy of intentional teaching practices across developmental stages. There will be new and highly practical content relevant to curriculum areas such as language and literacy, maths and numeracy, science and technology, music, art and creativity—presented by experienced educators with specialist knowledge.

**RISK AND RESILIENCE**

Early childhood is when the foundations for lifelong learning and wellbeing are established. Too many young children are exposed to multiple risk factors and may be experiencing cumulative harm or trauma—it is critical that we continue to develop the skills of early childhood professionals to recognise this and know how to respond effectively to complex individual needs. We also need to work together with other professional disciplines to deliver programs that build protective factors against long-term issues such as mental health problems, family violence, abuse and bullying. This conference will showcase professional development resources and inter-disciplinary collaboration working to reduce risk and build resilience.

There is also space for practitioners directly involved in service delivery to showcase their action research and the impact on the children and families with whom they are working.
ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Applicants wishing to present need to identify which of the four conference themes their presentation contributes to most directly:

- Leadership and ethics
- Rights and respect
- Contemporary practice in teaching and learning
- Risk and resilience.

SESSION TYPES

1. ORAL PRESENTATION

Individual paper presentation of 45 minutes (including discussion). There will be a 10-minute room change opportunity.

2. POSTER

A designated 15-minute time slot will be determined during the conference for authors to present their posters. A template to assist with your preparation of the poster design is available here: www.ecaconference.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Presentation-Poster-Layout.pdf

The criteria for the poster are:

- The maximum size for posters is 1.2 metres (h) x 1.0 metres (w).
- The title and author names need to be clearly indicated at the top of the poster. Large letters are to be used for the title (equivalent to 80-point font or larger).
- All text on the poster is to be legible from a distance of one metre. It is suggested that headings be in a minimum of 30-point font and that the body text be in a minimum of 24-point font.
- Material arranged in columns is easier to read.
- Presenters are encouraged to include visual aids (for example, images, flow charts, graphic representations of data) in their posters.
- Posters are to be printed on poster paper or assembled on light cardboard.
- We suggest that presenters bring a minimum of 20 copies of a one-page handout based on their poster.

3. USE OF A DIGITAL AUGMENTED REALITY APP

Presenters wishing to display a poster using a digital augmented reality app (such as Aurasma), in addition to meeting the above criteria, are required to include a handout or sign providing instructions for conference attendees on how to use their smartphones or devices to interact with the poster.

PRESENTER REGISTRATION

A condition of being able to present is that all presenters must register for the day on which they are presenting at the conference. If presenters wish to stay for the whole conference, payment needs to be made for the full three days. All presenters will receive the ECA member discount rate for full conference registration.

Abstracts will be withdrawn from the conference program if registration and payment are not received by 10 July 2018.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact:
Early Childhood Australia
Conference Office
P: 02 6242 1800
E: conference@earlychildhood.org.au
W: www.ecaconference.com.au
PUBLICATION OF PAPERS

All presentations and abstracts will be published on the conference app and website during the conference. Presentations will be converted to PDF format as they are received. Presentations will not be edited.

Some presentations and papers may also be separately published by ECA in the Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC) or Every Child magazine. These will be independently decided by the ECA Publications Committee.

The ECA Publications team will approach presenters independently regarding potential publication in Every Child magazine. This may involve presenters summarising their paper or presentation for a magazine format. Further instructions will be provided by the ECA Publications team as required.

PROPOSED AUDIO-VISUAL REQUIREMENTS

PowerPoint facilities (data projectors, computers and screens), along with internet access, will be available for presenters. The conference will be networked, which means that your presentation will be available in the workshop room from a central location. You will need to provide us with your full and final electronic presentation by 15 August 2018 to ensure that your presentation is compatible with the system that will be used and loaded onto the Conference USB.

REVIEW PROCESS

All applications to present will be reviewed by a panel including members of the Conference Program Committee. Members of the Conference Program Committee will review applications according to the following procedure:

- applications will be reviewed with identities of the applicants known
- applications will be assessed to ensure the quality and relevance of the presentations
- applications will be assessed in accordance with ECA selection criteria.

Wherever possible, feedback will be given to unsuccessful applicants, depending on the number of applications received.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria are outlined below.

Applications will focus on:

- relevance to the conference themes
- examples of best practice
- action research or extension of existing thinking.

FREE OF COMMERCIAL INTEREST

Any paper that is selling or promoting a particular product or commercial service will not be accepted.

Research papers should include:

- the aims of the project or research questions and/or focus of inquiry where applicable
- research methods and/or analytical and/or theoretical framework in brief
- a strong emphasis on research findings and/or translation to practice and contribution to the field.

If you are selected to present, you agree to the following Terms and Conditions:

- ECA may record your presentation (audio or visual) and this may be used, for example, as a downloadable file on the ECA website.
- Acknowledgement of the Indigenous people in the area and the country on which the conference is held at the start of your presentation/workshop. These words will be provided for you at the conference.
- Availability for some media comment about the conference.
- Presenters must be available to speak at any time during the conference.
- Presenters may be asked to repeat their session if it proves to be popular and if delegates miss out.
- You grant ECA the right to publish your paper on the conference website, and/or publish in various ECA publications.
- A condition of being able to present is that all presenters must register for the day on which they are presenting at the conference. If presenters wish to stay for the whole conference, payment needs to be made for the full three days. All presenters will receive the ECA member discount rate for full conference registration.
- Abstracts will be withdrawn from the conference program if registration and payment are not received by 10 July 2018.
HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACT

In keeping with our drive to improve environmental sustainability, all abstracts must be submitted online using the following link:
https://eca.eventsair.com/2018nationalconference/application-to-present

Instructions for completion of application:

- Applications must be submitted online no later than 7 December 2017.
- Abstracts must be no more than 300 words.
- Biographies must be no more than 50 words.
- Authors must supply a photo (limit file size to a maximum of 1MB)
- All abstracts and biographies received will undergo editing before being printed in the conference program.
- Maximum of three (3) presenters will be allowed to register and present per paper.
- Applications must address the selection criteria.
- Presenters may submit multiple papers, however only one paper can be accepted to present at the conference.

Applications received in any other way, including hard copy, will not be accepted.

Before you submit online, please ensure that you have read and understood this information.
If you have any questions, please contact the Conference Office for more information on:
T: 02 6242 1800
E: conference@earlychildhood.org.au

KEY DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of application to present</td>
<td>7 December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review by program committee and authors notified of acceptance</td>
<td>22 January–15 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker registration deadline</td>
<td>10 July 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the final version of speaker’s PowerPoint/electronic presentation/s and or final paper</td>
<td>15 August 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Bundjalung Sean licensed by Aboriginal Artists Agency Ltd

BUNDJALUNG SEAN DELSIGNORE CABBAGE TREE ISLAND NSW. Sean is known as 'Bundjalung Sean', he paints the land, people and sacred sites related to his country. Sean was born in northern NSW on Cabbage Tree Island. He has been painting since the age of 15 years, when he was first inspired to paint the Dreaming of his mother. 'Ancestral Winds' is the story about Sean's experience as a child sitting around a campfire with his family listening to stories from the old days. During this story telling time, a soft wind began to stir the air and it was said that these winds carry their past ancestors; that these ancestors are here with them, looking after them.