

2025

# Preschool Loans Pilot Impact Report





**The Australian Museum  
acknowledges the Gadigal  
people as the First Peoples  
and Custodians of the land  
and waterways on which  
the Museum stands.**

**We pay our respect  
to Gadigal Elders,  
Ancestors and Country.**

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# Education at the Australian Museum

The Australian Museum (AM) develops world-class education offerings in science and culture through unique curriculum-based programs, outreach initiatives, learning resources, and teacher professional development. These aim to ignite cultural and environmental awareness across generations of learners, with programs grounded in best-practice, object-based pedagogy and enhanced by collections and exhibitions.

# About the Impact Report

The AM engaged social enterprise For-Purpose Evaluations (FPE) to develop an impact framework, study, and report for a new prototype preschool loans program designed to be accessible to regional communities.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Understand if and to what extent the program is achieving its intended outcomes.
- Identify what factors contributed to or detracted from achieving the intended outcomes.
- Identify areas for improvement and opportunities to increase the impact of the program.

As children are the direct beneficiaries of the program and can share valuable insights,<sup>1</sup> their voices have been centred throughout the assessment process. The impact report uses an outcomes evaluation approach to examine priority outcomes. Learnings will inform future iterations and improvements of the loans program, and this preliminary work will help us establish an impactful program informed by evidence.

## What is the issue at hand?

There is limited availability for object-based learning resources tailored for early years students across NSW. There are approximately 104,000 enrolled preschool students in NSW, 26% regionally based. Preschools in regional and lower socio-economic areas face inequitable access to resources from, and connection to cultural institutions. As a result, preschool students and their educators lack equal opportunities to meaningfully engage with concepts related to Climate Change, the environment, wildlife conservation, and First Nations peoples and cultures. This gap perpetuates cycles of educational disadvantage and diminishes opportunities for children to grow into environmentally and culturally conscious, engaged and proactive citizens.

## How can we help solve this?

The AM has a long history of sharing its collections and knowledges through outreach to communities. Given the importance of setting a good foundation in the early years, education resource kits have been developed which aim to increase scientific literacy, ignite a deeper understanding of and respect for First Nations peoples and cultures, and a care and responsibility for the natural world. The kits are designed to be accessible, providing an authentic and tactile object-based learning experience for preschool aged students and their educators.

The intention is for the program to expand across regional NSW and reach preschools through establishing community hubs, who will hold the kits for loan to their own communities.

<sup>1</sup> Bonati, G (2006) Monitoring and Evaluation with Children: A short guide. Plan International Togo.



## Snapshot of the Preschool Loans Pilot

The pilot aims to foster deep engagement in learning and address equity issues concerning access to resources.

The AM created a prototype *Caring for our Coast* kit that includes touchable objects; an exhibition-quality diorama; a sound box with audio cards; and an accompanying resource document designed to support educators with information, links and teaching ideas.

The kits were tested with three preschools in the Sydney metropolitan region through existing AM relationships. Each preschool was loaned the kit for two weeks and sent an accompanying resource.



3 Preschools



163 Students



3-5 years old





# Methodology

Data collection to inform this report included:



23 interviews/  
observations  
with preschool  
students



6 interviews  
and surveys  
with educators



4 parent  
reflection  
surveys

Refer to Appendix A for detailed methodology, data analysis approach and sample interview guides.





# Priority outcomes

A Program Logic Model (PLM) was co-created with the Australian Museum Experience and Engagement team. The short-term and medium-term outcomes outlined below were the key focus for this impact report.

| Outcome domain | Short-term outcomes                                                                                                                   | Medium-term outcomes                                                                         |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Curiosity      | Preschool students have access to authentic and tactile object-based learning resources.                                              | Preschool students enjoy learning; and are increasingly curious about the world around them. |
| Environment    | Preschool students have access to information about nature and changes in the environment.                                            | Preschool students are more aware of their role in caring for the natural world.             |
| First Nations  | Preschool students have access to First Nations led content and perspectives.                                                         | Preschool students have a greater awareness of First Nations peoples and cultures.           |
| Resources      | Preschool educators have access to quality resources about nature, changes in the environment and First Nations peoples and cultures. |                                                                                              |

Refer to Appendix B for the PLM and additional outcomes.





# Our impact so far: Curiosity

Educators valued the local, authentic and tactile learning resources in the kit whilst students demonstrated their engagement through verbal descriptions, mimicking animals, body language and drawings. Student curiosity grew, and educators supported students’ interest by undertaking additional research. Additionally, the impact extended into the home where students enthusiastically shared their learning with parents and caregivers.

Research tells us that when children enjoy learning they are more likely to stay curious and explore topics further. Their confidence may be boosted by their ability to understand or interact with the item they are learning about, and they can form deeper connections with the content.<sup>2</sup>



Indicators

Students were actively engaged with the kits.

Students displayed an increased curiosity about the world around them.

“There’s lots of sand and water. There are some sea turtles, crabs, star fish. What about sea snake. Oh, there’s jelly fish! And shark and fish. Oh, I forgot dolphins.” – Student (shared in a parent/caregiver reflection)

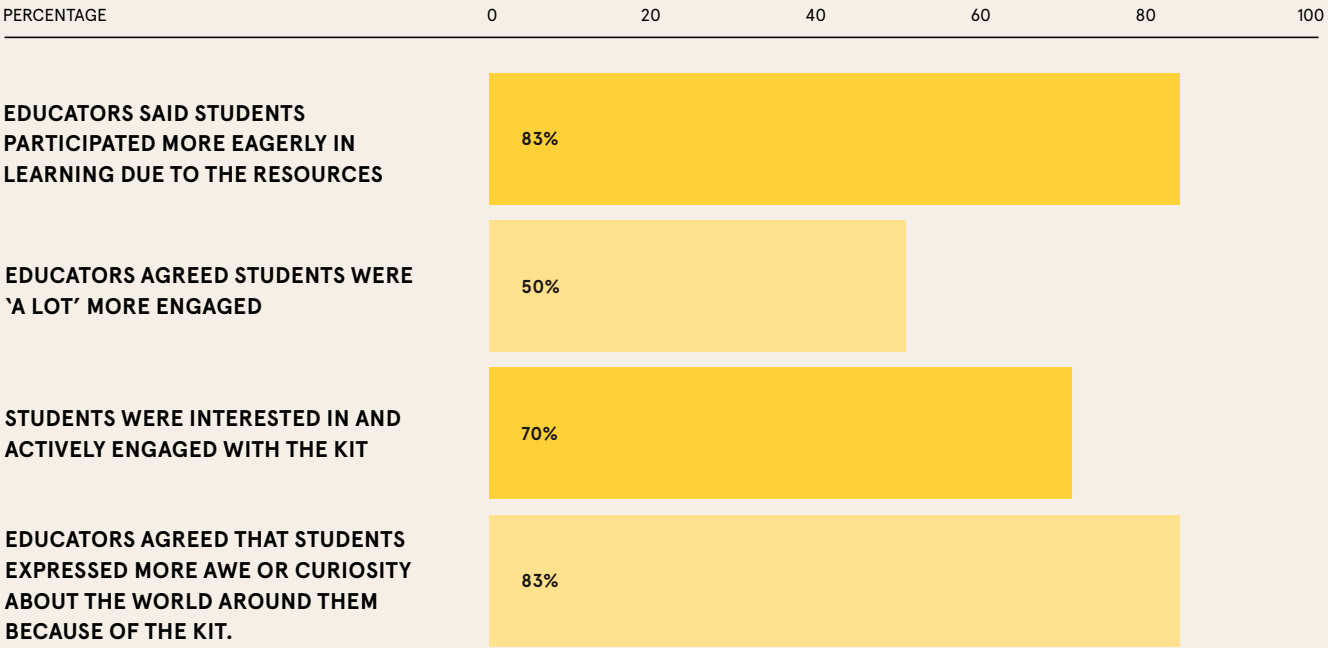
“[The dolphin flipper] is a skeleton. It has 5 bones. It is like a hand.” – Student

“The visual and sensory components made the students question. It gave them more curiosity, stimulated their thinking.” – Educator

Learning Points

Explore the length of time the kit is loaned to preschools to ensure there is sufficient access.

There was more engagement with highly sensory objects and less in objects encased in resin. Take this into account when finalising objects in the kit.



2 The Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) (2023), Early Years Learning Framework, viewed in October 2024, [www.acecqa.gov.au/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework/eylf-introduction](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework/eylf-introduction)



# Our impact so far: Environment

Some students instigated conversation about the topic, sharing what they had learnt and how it applied to their daily life. Students were particularly interested in plastic waste within waterways and their role in proper waste disposal. At one preschool, educators used the kit to engage students in practical actions, such as analysing plastic waste in their lunchboxes.

Access to the kit and hands on observations gave the opportunity for students to learn about coastal animals. Students identified ways to look after the natural world and undertook collaborative research about animals of interest.



**Indicator**  
Students were more aware of the natural world and their role in caring for it.

“Look after the animals and their homes. Take the rubbish from the sea to make it not dirty” – Student (shared by a parent/caregiver)

“I feel sad when I hear the story about the plastic.” – Student

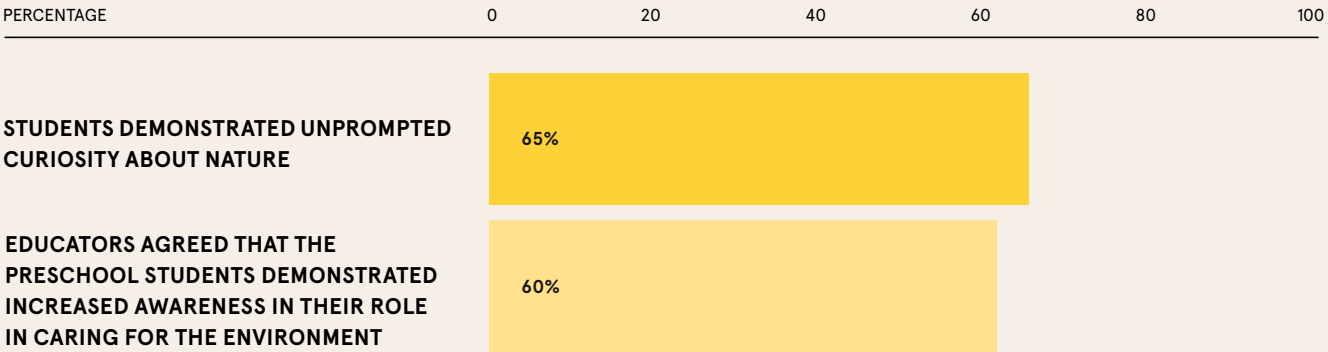
“After experiencing the kit, the kids kept telling us what they did to care for the environment e.g. collecting rubbish from the beach.” – Educator

“Talking about plastic came about because of the box [kit]- being more interested in that when they went for walks, taking rubbish home to recycle. We started to think about not using the plastic.” – Educator

**Learning Points**

The practical actions some preschool students are taking to care for the environment is inspirational. This gives opportunity to develop additional resources that support student engagement in practical actions they could take; eg. rubbish free lunch days, a waste tallying resource, observation of natural resources during nature walks, or activities that support an understanding of water pollution.

Explore opportunities for a digital platform that allows learning resource sharing and collaboration between preschools, the Museum and regional hubs.





# Our impact so far: First Nations

Engagement varied across the preschools from utilising First Nations staff already working with the preschools to non-participation. Limited resources and support alongside inconsistent engagement affected opportunities for students to build their cultural awareness.

Some students made unprompted statements that indicated that they had engaged with and retained content about First Nations peoples and cultures however overall, students were not forthcoming with new knowledges.

Previous research conducted by the AM indicates that some teachers find it challenging to teach First Nations content effectively. This can be due to lack of support, confidence, and reliable resources and is consistent with findings for this pilot.

It is acknowledged that limited resourcing/investment has been applied to the First Nations content for the kits in this pilot.

**Indicator**

There was limited access to resources and support for teachers and students to engage in First Nations peoples and cultures. As a result, students did not display a significant increase in their knowledge or awareness of First Nations peoples and cultures specific to the kit.

“They made fishhooks to get the animals out.” – Student

“We didn’t actively talk about it- we didn’t think it was relevant to the material [at the time].” – Educator

“For me I didn’t recognise First Nations in there, we focused on the research we did.” – Educator

**Learning Points**

Embedding authentic First Nations perspectives is a strategic initiative for all education programs at the Australian Museum. At this stage in the Preschool Loans Pilot, there has been minimal investment in additional First Nations resourcing and consultation as the short timeframe is not conducive to meaningful engagement in this space. As the project develops, First Nations staffing, consultation and service providers will be prioritised. Additionally, to ensure this work is undertaken with sensitivity and authenticity, it will take time. To ensure First Nations outcomes are met, the Australian Museum is planning greater investment in First Nations led perspectives.

Plans include:

- Investment in a First Nations Cultural Advisor role for the program to ensure cultural authenticity.
- Investment in First Nations consultancy to support program development. Examples include working with NSW coastal communities such as the Giingana Gumbaynggirr Freedom School, and/or the Gujaga community.
- Development and delivery of early childhood professional development opportunities eg. Waranara Teacher Professional Development for preschool educators.
- Development of additional age-appropriate resources and methods to engage students in First Nations perspectives and content. Examples include First Nations led audio and footage, digital engagement, and additional items for the kits (eg. Kurrajong ropes).





# Our impact so far: Educator resources

Educators’ use of the resource was not consistent across preschools. Some conducted extensive research while others were not aware of the additional resources available to support teachings. Educator responses varied due to confidence levels, interests, and experience in the subject matters.

To support educators in using the kits, an accompanying digital resource was provided. This included images, background information, links to videos and articles, and teaching ideas.



## Indicator

Some educators felt confident using the accompanying resource, while others struggled to translate into engaging student experiences.

“I asked the First Nations educator to add to the tools she was already using and talk about it in [her] own way. I didn’t tell her the facts from the museum, I let her explain. Some things were the same, some different.”  
– Educator

“[The project] made me [decide to] get a book to read about coastal areas [myself].” – Educator

“[Provide] more information.. physical information... a book to show them.”  
– Educator

## Learning Points

Design resources in a user-friendly digital format that can be used both when planning, and in real time with the students.

Develop digital resources that ensure content is more accessible; and find ways to connect preschools with each other to share ideas and experiences inspired by the kit.

## Highlight: Educators at one preschool used the kit to engage in practical action

The practical action taken at one preschool included monitoring how much plastic students use and engaging in local advocacy. This demonstrates progress toward achieving the program’s ultimate goal, that “students have the foundation to be environmentally and culturally aware citizens, with a shared responsibility of the world around them.”

“[We are] putting together a letter to the local government and the children helped to make banners [about local environmental issues].”  
– Educator

“We collected all the plastic [from our lunchboxes] in one week. The next week there was half as much, then the next week only a third.”  
– Educator







## Acknowledgements

The Preschool Loans Pilot is made possible through the generous funding of the Australian Museum Foundation and the Neilson Foundation.

## Our Ambitions

- Pilot the program in partnership with two regional hubs in 2025.
- Align the data collection process with learning resources for improved evaluation methods.
- Develop a digital strategy and digital learning resources for preschool students and educators in aim of extending engagement and learning outcomes.
- Explore opportunities with regional hubs and preschools for a platform that allows learning resource sharing and collaboration between preschools, the Museum and regional hubs.
- Develop First Nations perspectives and content for the program through building community relationships.



Appendix A

Methodology

For-Purpose Evaluations approach to data collection aligned with the principles outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework ACECQA (2023). The Framework emphasises play-based learning and the role that both educators and students play in extending and enriching learning. This approach empowers students to take an active role in their learning through engaging in play experiences, allowing them to explore and discover based on their interests and curiosities with assistance from educators.

The evaluation team implemented a flexible and student-centred method of data collection that was both child-appropriate and reflective of a play-based learning environment. By integrating these elements, we not only aligned the data collection process within the learning environment but also created a child-friendly and dynamic experience that valued the contributions of every child.

Data collection tools included:

- Structured interviews with the preschool educators, including quantitative survey questions to capture educator observations on a 5 point Likert scale.
- Play-based semi-structured interviews and evaluator observations with the preschool students. A rubric was used to record and analyse the evaluator observations to increase the reliability.
- A parent and caregiver reflection survey.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was undertaken as follows:

- Qualitative interview/survey data from educators, students and parents was coded deductively against the outcomes in the program logic model, using thematic analysis.
- Quantitative survey data from educators was triangulated against the qualitative interview data and yielded the educator observation findings included in this report.
- Evaluator observation data was recorded using a rubric to ensure consistency and reliability, this process yielded a portion of the quantitative observation insights available in this report.
- Disaggregation of the data by demographic or location was not appropriate to include in this report as sample sizes did not allow for this to be done without identifying individual educators.
- The use of multiple methods and stakeholders allowed for evaluators to triangulate the data to determine the strongest areas of impact.

Recognising students’ perspectives are vital as they are the direct beneficiaries of the program, this report centered their voices throughout the analysis process. Preschool students can provide valuable insights into what works well and what needs enhancement and inclusion of their experiences in our analysis ensured that the findings reflect a comprehensive understanding of the program’s impact.

| Interview Number | Child’s preschool | Gender | Child’s age |
|------------------|-------------------|--------|-------------|
|                  |                   |        |             |

Interview with preschool student

Introduction

Thank you for talking to me today. I want to hear about playing with these kits. It is ok not to talk to me if you don’t want to. We can stop or have a break whenever you want to. I will write down what you tell me as we talk, I can tell you what I have written down if you like. Do you have any questions?

Observation Rubric

Tick the box that indicates the level of engagement, for each topic.

|                                 | No evidence                                                                               | Some evidence                                                                                                        | Moderate evidence                                                                                                                            | Significant evidence                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                 | Showed no knowledge, curiosity, or awareness, E.g., changed the topic and was distracted. | Showed some knowledge, curiosity, or awareness, E.g., could share things they learned about the topic when prompted. | Showed moderate knowledge, curiosity, or awareness, E.g., engaged in conversation about the topic, shared their own ideas without prompting. | Showed significant knowledge, curiosity, or awareness, E.g., instigated conversation about the topic, could share how what they learned applied to their life. |
| General interest and engagement |                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                |
| Environmental Curiosity         |                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                |
| First Nations Awareness         |                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                |

| Topic                           | Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Initial interest and engagement | Have you played with this before? Do you remember playing with it or seeing it?<br>What is your favourite thing about playing with the kit? Why?<br><i>*Identify an object they like*</i> What did you like about/not like about it?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Environmental Awareness         | <b>Now let’s talk about nature. Things like the bush and the sea.</b><br><br>Can you tell me about/show me some ways we can look after the environment?<br>Some people think [specific actions] are important. What do you think? Why?<br><br><i>Specific actions for the ‘Caring for our Coast’ kit could be:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- If you leave rubbish on the beach is this a good or bad thing? Why?</li><li>- Do you perhaps help by taking rubbish with you if you visit a park or a beach?</li><li>- Can you think of any other ways?</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| First Nations Awareness         | <b>Now let’s talk about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.</b><br><br>Can you tell me what you know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for example [specific examples] from the kit? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Specific examples for the ‘Caring for our Coast’ kit could be shell middens, banksias, the mat rush.</i></li></ul> What did you find out about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through some of the objects in the kit? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>*Prompts for the ‘Caring for our Coast’ kit could be: how they might use the animal parts? (Oysters, periwinkles, abalone – shells, food etc.</i></li></ul> What is your favourite thing about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures / stories / people? What do you like about it? |
| Audio                           | Did you like any of the things they said in the recording? Why/ why not?<br>What did you learn?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Overall                         | What is your favourite thing about playing with the kit? Why?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



| Interview Number | Date | Name | Preschool |
|------------------|------|------|-----------|
|                  |      |      |           |

## Interview with preschool teacher

### Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The Australian Museum wants to make sure they are delivering resources that make a meaningful difference in children’s education. They have asked us (FPE) to evaluate the impact the resource kits have had on your students’ education. By answering these questions, you are helping them to improve their resources.

- The conversation is completely voluntary. It is your choice if you want to do it.
- It should take about 30 minutes. We can stop or pause at any time if you would like to.
- I will take notes during the interview. We will use these notes for analysis, quotes may be used in the final report, but data will be de-identified before it is shared outside of the FPE team.

These questions ask you about what you have observed in the preschool students while using the resource kits and whether you have noticed any changes since the resource kits were introduced. Trust your professional instincts.

### Questions

1. How are the resource kits typically used? How often are they used?

On a scale of 1 – 5, 1 being ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 being ‘strongly agree’, to what extent do you agree the resources are effective to engage preschool students in learning about the following:

2. a. **The Environment:**

|                   |          |                           |       |                |     |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------|----------------|-----|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree or disagree | Agree | Strongly agree | N/A |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------|----------------|-----|

2. b. Why/why not?

3. a. **First Nations People:**

|                   |          |                           |       |                |     |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------|----------------|-----|
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree or disagree | Agree | Strongly agree | N/A |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|-------|----------------|-----|

3. b. Why/why not?

| Interview Number | Date | Name | Preschool |
|------------------|------|------|-----------|
|                  |      |      |           |

4. Are these resources different to others you use in your work? How so?

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being ‘Not at all’ and 5 being ‘A lot’, how much would you say the preschool students are demonstrating the following behaviours because of the kit:

5. a. **Participating more eagerly in learning activities?**

|            |              |          |             |       |     |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Not at all | A little bit | Somewhat | Quite a bit | A lot | N/A |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|

5. b. If so, what does this change mean for your students? Does this change impact your work? How so?

6. a. **Expressing more awe or curiosity about the natural world?**

|            |              |          |             |       |     |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Not at all | A little bit | Somewhat | Quite a bit | A lot | N/A |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|

6. b. How do you know this change is occurring, what kinds of things do you see and hear?

7. a. **Demonstrating increased awareness of their role in caring for the environment?**

|            |              |          |             |       |     |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Not at all | A little bit | Somewhat | Quite a bit | A lot | N/A |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|

7. b. Can you give an example?

8. a. **Demonstrating more enthusiasm in learning about First Nations peoples and cultures?**

|            |              |          |             |       |     |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|
| Not at all | A little bit | Somewhat | Quite a bit | A lot | N/A |
|------------|--------------|----------|-------------|-------|-----|

8. b. Can you give an example?



| Interview Number | Date | Name | Preschool |
|------------------|------|------|-----------|
|                  |      |      |           |

9. Are there any other changes have you noticed in the preschool students? What are they? What have you noticed / seen / heard / felt?

10. What has been the most impactful thing about the resources, for you or your students?

11. What is one thing that you would suggest to improve the resources?

12. What could the museum do / provide to make this kit more useable or effective?

Appendix A: Preschool Loans Pilot: Interview with preschool teacher

| Interview Number | Date | Preschool |
|------------------|------|-----------|
|                  |      |           |

## Reflection guide with parent, guardian or carer

### Introduction

The Australian Museum has loaned an object-based kit to your child’s preschool. Kits are themed and include touchable objects such as the inside of a dolphin’s flipper, a Port Jackson shark jaw, a missen, a hairpin Banksia, and an Oyster. The aim of the kits is to increase scientific literacy, ignite a deeper understanding of and respect for First Nations people and cultures, and inspire care for the natural world.

This reflection guide is an opportunity for you to discuss with your child what they learnt and to share that with the Australian Museum so they can improve the kits adn make them available to more preschools.

You responses will remain confidential, and no individual responses will be published. The reflection is completely voluntary.

### Section 1: About your child

1. What preschool / centre does your child attend?

2. How old is your child?

|           |           |           |              |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| 0-2 years | 2-4 years | 4-6 years | Over 6 years |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|

3. What is your child’s gender?

|      |     |            |                   |
|------|-----|------------|-------------------|
| Girl | Boy | Non-binary | Prefer not to say |
|------|-----|------------|-------------------|

### Section 2: Reflections on the Environment and the Natural World

4. **Ask your child** what new things they have learned at preschool about the ocean/beach/coastal areas and the animals or plants that live in these areas? Ask about what people can do to care for or look after the beach/ocean animals and other places where animals live.

5. **Based on your observations**, to what extent has your child’s curiosity about the natural world increased as a result of what they learned at preschool? *E.g. are they asking questions they haven’t asked before, or expressing interest in learning more about the topic, telling you things they have learned, showing enthusiasm or excitement about the natural world?*

|            |          |            |      |           |     |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|-----|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely | N/A |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|-----|

Appendix A: Preschool Loans Pilot: Reflection guide with parent, guardian or carer



| Interview Number | Date | Preschool |
|------------------|------|-----------|
|                  |      |           |

Section 3: Reflections on First Nations people

6. Ask your child about new things they have learned at preschool about Aboriginal People and Cultures.  
Example prompts: What do you find most interesting, what do you know about Aboriginal food or how they use plants and animals?

7. Based on your observations, to what extent has your child’s curiosity about First Nations/Aboriginal people and cultures increased? E.g. are they asking questions they haven’t asked before, or expressing interest in learning more about the topic, telling you things they have learned, showing enthusiasm or excitement about First Nations/Aboriginal peoples and cultures?

|            |          |            |      |           |     |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|-----|
| Not at all | Slightly | Moderately | Very | Extremely | N/A |
|------------|----------|------------|------|-----------|-----|

Section 4: Other reflections

8. Prior to this conversation, had your child spoken to you about the kit they have played with at preschool?

|     |    |        |
|-----|----|--------|
| Yes | No | Unsure |
|-----|----|--------|

9. During the conversation, has your child mentioned any specific objects or toys they liked the most?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add about what you have noticed in your child during this conversation or about these topics? What are they? What have you noticed/seen/heard/felt?





# Appendix B

## Program Logic Model

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PROGRAM OBJECTIVE | The Australian Museum (AM) Preschool Loans Program Pilot loans out educational resource kits that aim to increase scientific literacy, ignite a deeper understanding of and respect for First Nations peoples and cultures, and inspire care for the natural world. The kits are designed to be accessible for a range of learning abilities providing authentic and tactile object-based learning experiences for students and their teachers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| CONTEXT           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The AM is a trusted source of specialised knowledge for the community.</li><li>- NSW has a geographically dispersed population. Cultural institutions are scarcer in regional and remote areas than in metropolitan Sydney.</li><li>- The education sector is experiencing significant staffing and resource shortages. These shortages can negatively impact the quality of learning for preschool students.</li><li>- Conversations relating to climate change, the environment, wildlife conservation and First Nations peoples and cultures are complex in nature and require an informed and considered approach.</li></ul> |
| ULTIMATE GOAL     | Preschool students have the foundation to be environmentally and culturally aware citizens, with a shared responsibility of the world around them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

| PROBLEM STATEMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | INPUTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ACTIVITIES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | OUTPUTS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>There is limited learning resources tailored for early years education currently available across NSW. In particular, preschools in regional and lower socio-economic areas face inequitable access to resources from cultural institutions.</p> <p>As a result, preschoolers and their teachers lack equal opportunities to meaningfully engage with concepts related to climate change, the environment, wildlife conservation, and First Nations peoples and cultures.</p> <p>This gap perpetuates cycles of educational disadvantage and diminishes the opportunities children have to grow into environmentally conscious, engaged and proactive citizens.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Funding</li><li>- Staff time and resources to develop and deliver resource kits</li><li>- Expert input to inform the development of the resource kits</li><li>- Material and equipment to develop the resource kits</li><li>- Instructional material and guidance for preschools</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Creating the kits in physical form</li><li>- Collaborating with preschools, libraries, First Nations communities and other education institutions to develop kits</li><li>- Delivering the kits to preschools</li><li>- Providing kits and resources for use by preschool teachers in their classes</li><li>- Organising the return of the kits to the AM</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- # kits developed</li><li>- # kits distributed</li><li>- # preschools reached</li><li>- # learning experiences arranged</li><li>- # students who engaged with the kit</li><li>- # regional libraries/ preschools engaged</li></ul> |

| IMMEDIATE (SHORT-TERM)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | PROLONGED (MEDIUM-TERM)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | SUSTAINED (LONG-TERM)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Preschool students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Have access to authentic and tactile object-based learning resources.</li><li>- Have increased access to information about nature and changes in the environment.</li><li>- Have access to First Nations led content and perspectives.</li></ul> <p><b>Preschool teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Have increased access to quality resources and knowledges about nature and changes in the environment; and First Nations peoples and cultures.</li></ul> | <p><b>Preschool students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Enjoy learning.</li><li>- Are increasingly curious about the world around them.</li><li>- Have a greater appreciation for the natural world.</li><li>- Are more aware of their role in caring for the natural world.</li><li>- Have a greater awareness of First Nations peoples and cultures.</li><li>- Have increased empathy for others.</li></ul> <p><b>Preschool teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide dynamic and unique learning experiences for preschool students.</li><li>- Have enhanced sense of purpose in teaching content that is accurate and inclusive in relation to climate change, the environment, wildlife conservation, and to First Nations peoples and cultures.</li></ul> | <p><b>Preschool students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are poised for meaningful learning in the future.</li><li>- Have a solid foundation for engaging in environmental and cultural concepts in the future.</li></ul> <p><b>Preschool teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are more equipped to nurture their students' curiosity, promote lifelong learning and foster a shared responsibility for the world around them.</li></ul> |

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ASSUMPTIONS             | <p>Object-Based Learning is an appropriate method for educating preschool students about the environment and First Nations peoples and cultures.</p> <p>Early education is a formative period for a child's development and their experience in preschool can influence how they engage in learning in the future.</p> <p>Preschools are willing to engage in the teaching of these concepts to preschool students.</p>                             |
| UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES | <p>AM resources are used in place of other local resource offerings developed within communities.</p> <p>Other cultural institutions are inspired to expand their regional outreach.</p> <p>Increased visitation to the AM.</p> <p>Increased use of libraries and other community hubs in regional communities. Increased giving to outreach programs.</p> <p>Improved collaboration between early education centres and cultural institutions.</p> |



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