

Pauline Cook Profile



Pauline Cook (formerly Fietz) has been active in campaigning for Aboriginal cultural and legal rights and welfare since her university student years in Adelaide.

She has extensive experience in not-for-profit sector management and is currently the CEO of Monaro Family Support Service (MFSS). Pauline has developed MFSS as a key player in the provision of services to their communities. She has significantly grown MFSS advocacy and capacity to deliver innovative approaches to fostering connections and collaboration to bring best outcomes for communities.

In collaboration with the local Aboriginal community she designed and pioneered the 'Trakz' program, an award-winning cultural education program for young Aboriginal people from the Snowy Mountains and Monaro region. Under Pauline's astute leadership for over seven years, MFSS has become the leading community organisation in the Snowy Monaro region.

Her role at MFSS, built on Pauline's extensive prior experiences living and working in remote Indigenous communities, informing her fierce commitment to driving change through place-based ground-up responses.

With a degree in anthropology and postgraduate research in this field, Pauline has spent several decades focused on inter-cultural relationships-working with Aboriginal people across Central Australia, the Gulf country and the Northern Territory. She has been significantly involved in native title research and native title claim management, working with Aboriginal communities in navigating this space culturally and legally. She was the co-author of the Waanyi Native Title Claim, which is the largest successfully determined claim in Queensland.

Her roles have included Anthropologist within the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, Senior Anthropologist with the Carpentaria Land Council, Reconnect Program Manager with NPY Women's Council in the south of the Northern Territory and as a partner with SoSIA Consulting, undertaking a range of consultancy projects.

Pauline has undertaken major investigations and evaluation of Indigenous programs, looking at the impact of Federal government policies and programs on Aboriginal communities in the area of community wellbeing, education and governance, and positive youth development.

As well as the coordination of large-scale research projects, Pauline's leadership roles have also included advocacy initiatives for locally and culturally relevant programs. Data from her PhD research has been used to lobby for multicomponent youth development programs, leading to \$10 million funding for the Northern Territory's first region-wide youth diversionary program, and coordination of the study of suicide prevention and social emotional learning program for remote Indigenous students.

Pauline's diverse experience at the intersection of research, policy, and program development is often sought for evaluation projects and to develop other strategic program tools. Her understanding of the complexities of issues for Aboriginal young people, families and communities is highly regarded across Australia as is her ability to walk with Aboriginal people as they work to their place-based solutions.

Moving with her family to Tasmania several years ago, Pauline has been working with MFSS in a hybrid model. Now based in Hobart, she is drawn to the reconciliation space because of its pressing imperatives and is well positioned to make a powerful contribution to this agenda.

In her personal life, connecting to the natural world and the bush are Pauline's great loves. Her interests are camping, hiking, trail running, backcountry skiing, paddling and swimming, especially with her family.

Pauline is seen as an excellent match to Reconciliation Tasmania's presenting leadership needs and values with a lifetime of experiences aimed at improving social justice outcomes for Aboriginal people, a deep respect for Aboriginal culture and history, and a passion for developing understanding and awareness of the issues impacting Aboriginal people in our community.