



ORGANISING YOUR INSTALLATION

The Sea of Hands has been at the heart of the reconciliation movement since they first came about in 1997.

Over 25 years, more than a million Australians have participated in community installations of the SoH around the country.

We have all the tips and tricks for your installation right here!

In this guide

1. Suggestions for your Sea of Hands event
2. Creating the installation
3. Taking care with the Hands
4. Reflection Card Template

Reflection Cards

- Participants attach a reflection card (drawings and/or their name) onto their hand before planting.
- We provide the template found at the end of this guide so you can produce special cards for participants to write on.

Please do not apply adhesive labels to the hands!

Other ideas that may incur additional costs

- Invite a local Elder or Traditional Owner to do a Welcome to Country. Visit www.reconciliation.org.au/our-work/narragunnawali for more on Welcome to Country.
- Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Country map in your venue, which maps the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups across Australia. The wall map is available at www.antar.org.au/shop
- Display an Acknowledgment of Country plaque at your venue, available at www.antar.org.au/shop



Creating the Installation

Considerations

- Consider using a soft/watered ground to reduce damage to the hands and metal posts.
- The hands typically need to be pierced into the ground by 5-8cm to be sturdy.
- Using ground spray chalk (available from most hardware stores) mark out the design on a grassed area. Below are some basic ideas and the method for marking out the design on the grassed area, then simply fill with the hands.
- Have a planting station set up and organise the hands by colour to coordinate the hand planting for your chosen design. Participants affix their 'Reflection Card' (if applicable) at this station before planting as directed. It's always a good idea to plant from the inside out.

Design Options

For an installation to appear at its best we suggest 16-20 hands per square metre. Meaning an 800 hand installation would be 40sq metres ie. 6.33 m X 6.33m. Ideally there should be 8-15cm between each hand.



The Aboriginal Flag

Black – Represents the Aboriginal people of Australia.

Yellow circle – Represents the Sun, the giver of life and protector.

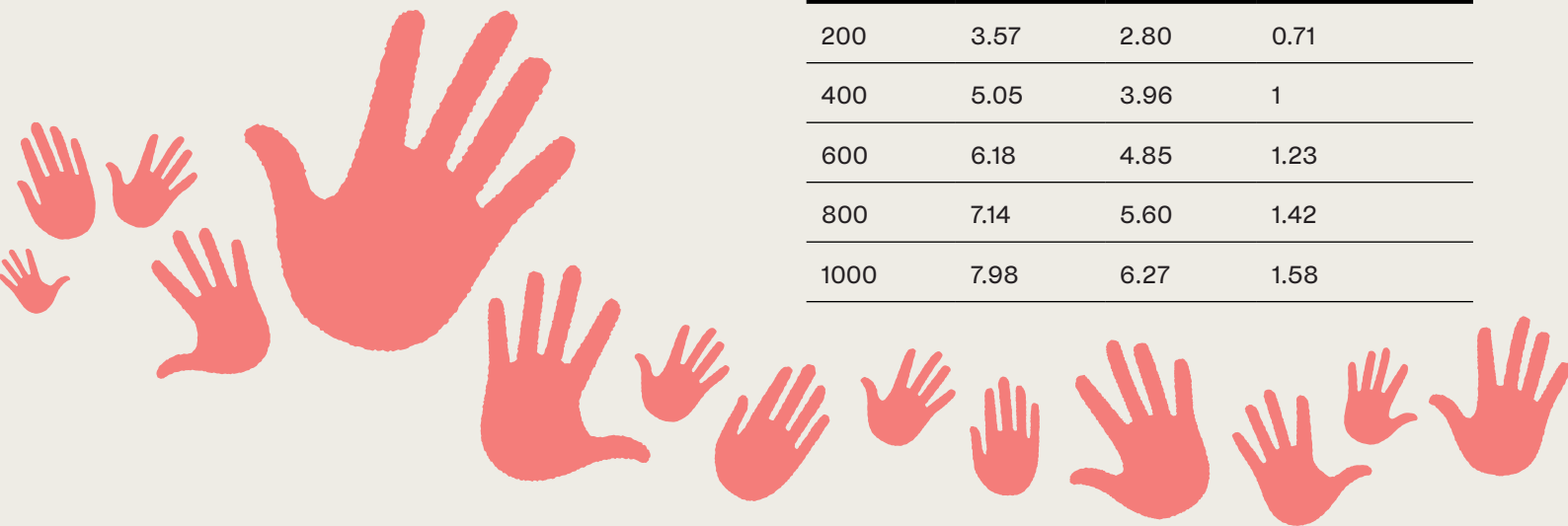
Red – Represents the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and First Nation Peoples' spiritual relation to the land.

Steps:

1. Mark out the rectangle of the correct size (see below) with ground chalk and mark out the center point and center line at the same time.
2. With string or rope held at the center point, measure the radius, then rotate the taut string, spraying the ground chalk as you go.

Dimensions of the Aboriginal Flag

Quantity of Hands	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Radius of Yellow Circle (metres)
200	3.57	2.80	0.71
400	5.05	3.96	1
600	6.18	4.85	1.23
800	7.14	5.60	1.42
1000	7.98	6.27	1.58



Creating the Installation



The Torres Strait Islander Flag

The Dhari - A symbol of Torres Strait Islander people and a traditional headdress used in cultural ceremonies.

The white five-pointed star - Symbolises peace, and the navigational importance of stars to the seafaring people of the Torres Strait. It also represents the five distinct language and cultural groups of the region.

The deep green stripe - Represents the land, the black stripe is for the people

The blue - Is the colour of our seas.

Steps:

1. Mark out the rectangle of the correct size (see below) with the ground chalk.

Quantity of Hands	Length (metres)	Width (metres)
200	3.27	3.18
400	4.63	4.50
600	5.67	5.51
800	6.55	6.37
1000	7.32	7.12

2. Next make identical interval marks along the left and right sides. Use rope or string to get a straight line between the intervals, spray the ground chalk to mark out the various horizontal lines. From top to bottom these are the intervals (width) in metres :

Quantity of Hands	Green height from top	Black height from top	Blue height from base of black	Black height from blue	Green height from black
200	0.63	0.27	1.38	0.27	0.63
400	0.88	0.39	1.96	0.39	0.88
600	1.08	0.48	2.4	0.48	1.08
800	1.25	0.55	2.77	0.55	1.25
1000	1.4	0.61	3.1	0.61	1.4

3. Before continuing, make sure you have marked out the centre point of the rectangle as a reference point.
4. To mark out the Dahri (which is a traditional Torres Strait Islander headdress) and the central FIVE pointed star, you have two options:

OPTION 1:

With a careful hand mark the outline of the shapes, starting with the FIVE pointed star, then the Dahri around it. Tip. Make use of your own further reference marks to help make it look as authentic as possible.



Creating the Installation

OPTION 2:

Using butcher paper, create a real size stencil of the shapes first. Ensure it is as authentic as you can make it, cut out the shapes and spray the ground chalk around it.

Whichever option you choose, the Dahri should fit a centred square of the following dimensions based on the number of Hands you have to work with.

Quantity of Hands	Width
200	155 x 155
400	310 x 310
600	467 x 467
800	620 x 620
1000	351 x 351

Ribbons

Simple rectangles with wavy ribbons of the available colours are simple yet appealing.

1. Start with marking out the rectangle of a suitable size (see below as a guide) with the ground chalk. The rectangle can be whatever dimensions suit the area you have to work with.

Quantity of Hands	Length (cm)	Width (cm)
200	3.27	3.18
400	4.63	447
600	547	547
800	632	632
1000	700	700

The guide shows the approximate total area, if it were square. Alternatively, you could use the dimensions for the Aboriginal flag for an easy rectangle.

2. Next make identical interval marks along the left and right sides. Use rope or string to get a straight line between the intervals, spray the ground chalk along the string, oscillating either side of the string to create a wave in the ribbons of colour.
3. It looks best if the waves match each other, but they can be thin or thick, you can be creative with this design.



Creating the Installation



Sea of Hands installation at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney 2022.

You may wish to consider sourcing an original design from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, their families, communities or local artists.

This can take some time to organise when you factor in identifying your artist and then their individual artistic process.

In our experience the artists may provide an illustration or painting that will need to be interpreted for the Installation. For example, identify key reference points, ratios for scale, dimensions e.t.c. so that you can plan for replicating their artwork authentically on the grassed area.

Safety

We strongly recommend

- Close supervision
- Don't leave the installation unattended, especially overnight.
- Plant from the inside out and advise participants not to enter the hands already planted.
- Consider roping off the installation for the time between completion and de-planting.
- Conduct your own risk assessment, noting and mitigating identified risks.

Further information

Reflection Card Template

Cut out templates on the following page and allow participants to write their name/decorate the card.

To affix to a hand:

- Start with the hand and spikes separated (at an assembly station works best).
- Participants then fold the card backwards along the dotted line. Pierce the short flap with the short / top end of the spike, ensuring the card is above the kink in the wire. The plastic hand is then slotted over the spike and holds the card in place.



