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FINDING BENNELONG.COM NAMED FINALIST IN ARTS & CULTURE AWARDS

The City of Ryde's *Finding Bennelong* educational online resource has been named a finalist in the Local Government Arts & Culture Awards Promoting Indigenous Recognition category.

The Awards recognise arts and cultural initiatives of NSW councils, and are presented by Local Government NSW in Partnership with Destination NSW. The winner will be announced at the Vivid Ideas Festival on 27 May.

Finding Bennelong was created jointly by the City of Ryde Council, Art of Multimedia and a working group of interested and committed community members. Based on the commissioned research by Dr Keith Vincent Smith, *Finding Bennelong* uses actual transcripts from the time of the First Fleet, as well as the contemporary thoughts and feelings offered by many Aboriginal people.

It was launched in December 2013 to commemorate the bicentenary of the death of Wollarawarre Bennelong, one of the most significant figures in early Australian history and one of the first Indigenous Australians to reside among members of the British settlers.

City of Ryde Community Life Group Manager, Baharak Sahebekhtiari, said: "*Finding Bennelong* is based upon significant research and draws upon historic artwork, references and links to primary sources.

"The website is accessible and engaging for people of all ages and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive."

Managing Director of Art of Multimedia, Beata Kade, said that developing heritage interpretation projects is always complex, but extremely satisfying. "The *Finding Bennelong* website reflects the cultural identity of the Indigenous community and it was a fascinating project to have been a part of with our team of expert collaborators.

"We are extremely proud of the website and it is rewarding to see that our in-depth development processes of consultation, examining extensive research, engaging stakeholders and the community, and then interpreting our findings to present a creative educational resource has been valued so highly," Beata said.

As part of the judging process *Finding Bennelong* will be presented at the two day Local Government Arts and Culture Summit at the Museum of Contemporary Art on May 26 and 27.