



Australian Government

National Statement on **First Nations Trade and Investment**

Empowering Australia's prosperity through
First Nations international business excellence



AUSTRALIA



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community.

We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.



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Trade and Investment Ministers’ Foreword

We are proud to present the Ministerial Council on Trade and Investment’s *National Statement on First Nations Trade and Investment*.

First Nations people are Australia’s first traders – today exporting their unique offerings and business excellence to the world.

Under the Ministerial Council on Trade and Investment, we have committed to collaborating on First Nations economic uplift to support trade and investment opportunities for First Nations businesses and communities.

This National Statement on First Nations Trade and Investment (National Statement) sets out this commitment, and our shared strategic intent, and is consistent with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

It provides a framework to coordinate, collaborate and share best practices to align our trade and investment agendas, and ensures First Nations businesses and communities can participate in, and benefit from international trade and foreign investment opportunities.

As Governments, we have a real opportunity to work in new ways with the First Nations business sector to better enable different approaches of doing business including to:

- support First Nations-led priorities for economic empowerment;
- identify practical measures to improve First Nations outcomes through trade and investment policy, including through free trade agreements and multilateral economic fora;
- provide a platform to showcase and celebrate the excellence and strength of First Nations business;
- raise the number and value of First Nations exports and exporters; and
- foster partnerships and dialogue that help the next generation of First Nations business leaders to shape the road ahead.

We recognise the importance of greater economic empowerment of our First Nations communities due to historical disadvantage, and that with economic empowerment comes self-determination and a broadening of opportunities for future generations.

This National Statement aims to align our trade and investment priorities across the nation to enhance economic security for a more resilient, productive, and inclusive economy for all Australians.

This is the start, and we look forward to working collaboratively to continue fostering the growth and success of First Nations businesses across our nation.

A strong First Nations business sector has benefits not only for the economy, but also for the community, individual and collective wellbeing.

First Nations businesses have substantially better outcomes for First Nations employment than other businesses. Research from the Australian National University finds First Nations businesses are 40 to 100 times more likely to employ First Nations Australians than their non-First Nations counterparts¹. These businesses provide pathways to financial security and autonomy through employment, strengthen communities and provide connection to culture and healing.

International trade provides opportunities for First Nations people to maintain and share important cultural practices and traditions. International trade and investment also provides new market and business opportunities for First Nations businesses.²

Achievement 3: Council agreed initiative to support First Nations economic uplift

The Council agreed First Nations economic uplift as a standing item, established an official s level ad hoc working group to progress coordination among Jurisdictions and agreed new work with the First Nations business sector to develop a Statement of Intent on how government will work together to improve trade and investment outcomes for First Nations Australians.

2023 Annual Report to National Cabinet Ministerial Council on Trade and Investment

¹ Source: Supply Nation Research and Policy Brief No. 3: Indigenous Employment in the Indigenous Business Sector, 2022. Supply Nation . Available at [Supply Nation Research Policy Brief No.3-250322_64.pdf](#)
² Source: First Nations businesses succeeding internationally: August 2024. Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Trade and Investment Commission. Available at [austrade.gov.au/en/news_and_analysis/publications_and_reports/first_nations_businesses_succeeding_internationally](#).

Signatories



Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Minister for Trade and Tourism and Special Minister of State
Australian Government



Andrew Barr MLA
Chief Minister, Minister for Economic Development,
Minister for Trade and Tourism,
Australian Capital Territory



The Hon Anoulack Chanthivong MP
Minister for Industry and Trade,
Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading,
Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology,
Minister for Building, Minister for Correction,
New South Wales



The Hon Robyn Cahill OAM
Minister for Trade, Business and Asian Relations,
Minister for International Education, Migration and Population,
Minister for Workforce Development, Minister for Advanced Manufacturing,
Minister for Children and Families, Minister for Child Protection,
Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence,
Northern Territory



The Hon Rosslyn (Ros) Bates MP
Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training,
Queensland



The Hon Joe Szakacs MP
Minister for Trade and Investment,
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Veterans Affairs,
South Australia



The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP
Premier, Minister for Trade and Major Investment,
Minister for Tourism and Hospitality,
Tasmania



The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs,
Minister for Finance,
Victoria



The Hon Roger Cook MLA
Premier, Minister for State Development,
Trade and Investment, Economic Diversification,
Western Australia

Responsible Agencies

The following agencies are the member agencies of the Senior Officials Trade and Investment Group which reports to the Ministerial Council. As such, they will lead the implementation of the National Statement in their respective Jurisdictions, in collaboration and consultation across government and the First Nations business sector:

Australian Government

- ▶ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- ▶ Australian Trade and Investment Commission

Australian Capital Territory

- ▶ Chief Minister
Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

New South Wales

- ▶ Investment NSW

Northern Territory

- ▶ Department of Trade, Business and Asian Relations

Queensland

- ▶ Trade and Investment Queensland

South Australia

- ▶ Department of State Development (Trade and International)

Tasmania

- ▶ Department of State Growth (Trade and International Relations)

Victoria

- ▶ Global Victoria
Aboriginal Economic Development Branch

Western Australia

- ▶ Department of Energy and Economic Diversification



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Introduction

The Ministerial Council on Trade and Investment (Ministerial Council) National Statement sets out the strategic intent of the Commonwealth and endorsing State and Territory governments (Jurisdictions) to work collaboratively to improve trade and investment opportunities for First Nations peoples.

In 2022, National Cabinet established the Ministerial Council to coordinate efforts and share information across Jurisdictions on international trade and investment, and to focus on the contribution of trade and investment to national priorities. Ministers have:

- reiterated their commitment to inclusive economic growth and ongoing importance of collaborating on First Nations economic uplift; and
- agreed to work with the First Nations business sector to develop the National Statement on how governments will work together to improve trade and investment outcomes for First Nations Australians.

The purpose of this National Statement is to support collaboration across governments to create an inclusive and equitable economic landscape where First Nations businesses can thrive through exporting or foreign investment opportunities.

It is designed to make a positive impact towards advancing the economic empowerment, and self-determination of First Nations peoples and communities, whilst contributing towards achieving the Priority Reforms and outcomes set out in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

This includes Jurisdictions, where appropriate, sharing lessons and coordinating efforts to:

- support First Nations businesses participate in and benefit from trade and investment opportunities; and
- respond to the barriers impeding on the ability for First Nations businesses to participate in international trade and investment opportunities.

The National Statement outlines collaborative shared values and core commitments in the First Nations trade and investment agenda. It is accompanied by joint and differentiated commitment schedules from each Jurisdiction, that detail the commitments and activities undertaken by Jurisdictions to give effect to this National Statement.

Developed in consultation with the First Nations business sector, this National Statement is an agreement between the Commonwealth Government (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Trade and Investment Commission) and endorsing State and Territory Governments (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, and the Australian Capital Territory).

This is the start of a critical collaboration towards advancing First Nations peoples and communities’ economic empowerment and self-determination through international trade and investment. We will continue to engage and build genuine partnerships with the First Nations business sector to review and refine this work over time.



Definitions

Economic empowerment – the ability of First Nations communities to create economic outcomes of their choosing and timing from their legal rights and interests in land, water, sea, cultural and intellectual property, and other assets¹.

Economic self-determination – an ‘ongoing process of choice’ to ensure that Indigenous communities are able to meet their social, cultural and economic needs².

Export-ready – when a business is fully prepared to enter international markets and sell its goods and services to foreign buyers. A company is considered export ready when it has the necessary resources, capabilities and understanding of the foreign markets to successfully navigate the challenges of international trade.

First Nations Business – the Commonwealth identifies a First Nations business as an organisation that is 50 per cent or more First Nations owned (increasing to 51 per cent or more from 1 July 2026). This aligns with the National Indigenous Australians Agency definition of a First Nations business. We aspire to apply this shared understanding consistently. We recognise that Jurisdictions currently do apply other definitions according to specific programs and policies.

Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) – ICIP refers to the rights of Australia’s First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) peoples to their heritage and culture, and all that it encompasses. This includes rights to languages, ancestral remains and genetic material, flora and fauna, significant sites and Indigenous Knowledge. ICIP rights are not recognised under the law and are based in customary law.

Investment-ready – When a business is fully prepared to target and attract investment. This will vary by industry and type of financing but will generally be a function of: managerial strength and capability; commercial viability of the business and growth plan; and quality of the investor pitch.

Jurisdictions – the Commonwealth, and participating State and Territory Governments.

¹ Source: Murru waaruu (On Track) Economic Development Seminar Series Outcomes Report May 2024. Accessible at services.anu.edu.au/files/2024-06/Murru%20waaruu%20Outcomes%20Report.pdf
² Source: Right to self determination, Australian Human Rights Commission website accessible at humanrights.gov.au/our-work/rights-and-freedoms/right-self-determination



Our Shared Values

Cultural Respect

We honour and respect the rich cultural diversity and traditional knowledge embedded in First Nations businesses.

- We acknowledge First Nations traditions and activities to forge trading and diplomatic relations across geographic boundaries.
- We aim to actively promote the preservation, celebration, evolution and protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property, and excellence.
- We understand that the incentives and benefits of international trade and investment for many First Nations businesses extend beyond commercial gain, providing a range of social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits reciprocally. In coordinating our efforts, we commit to account for and respect this.

Collaboration

We are committed to an international trade and investment agenda that drives benefits and economic growth for all Australians including First Nations peoples and communities. We acknowledge the importance of collaboration between governments, First Nations businesses and the broader private sector to deliver on this agenda.

- We are committed to engaging in genuine partnership with the First Nations business sector, respecting the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of any First Nations stakeholders or representatives engaged.
- We recognise the importance of First Nations-led approaches, amplifying the strength of First Nations enterprises, including collaborations that support co-design and co-decide in line with Closing the Gap objectives. This approach will underpin self-determination and cultural authority of First Nations communities where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lived experience is understood and respected.
- We are committed to stronger partnerships that reflect the breadth and diversity of First Nations representation and support strategic and tailored collaboration to deliver First Nations trade and investment outcomes. This approach to genuine partnerships with all relevant parties also seeks to respond to stakeholder fatigue.

Economic Self-Determination

We are dedicated to fostering economic empowerment, and self-determination for First Nations peoples and communities, including women and youth, through the participation in international trade and investment.

- We acknowledge that commercial viability and success of First Nations businesses should be central considerations.
- We recognise that inclusive growth requires supporting market access for the breadth of First Nations businesses including those in remote and regional Australia.
- We recognise that international trade supports economic growth and security, higher paying jobs, and opportunities that contribute to intergenerational wealth of First Nations communities.
- We promote successful engagement between international investors and First Nations communities and businesses.
- We recognise that upgrading free trade agreements to be more inclusive of First Nations interests and perspectives will provide sustained and predictable pathways for participation in international trade and investment.

Sustainability

We recognise and value the inherent connections many First Nations businesses have, as the traditional custodians of the lands, seas, skies and waterways across Australia, to environmentally and socially sustainable practices.

- Sustainability and economic empowerment go hand-in-hand. We acknowledge the competitive advantage this provides many First Nations businesses in aligning with global sustainability goals and leveraging corporate social responsibility opportunities.
- We also acknowledge the unique challenges faced by remote First Nations communities, which can limit their control over economic opportunities.

Continuous Improvement

We recognise the importance of governments continuing to build capabilities to deliver First Nations outcomes, and commit to continued sharing, learning and improvement between all Australian Governments and with the First Nations business sector.

- We aim to review and assess our programs to enhance, where possible, appropriate partnerships or co-design efforts with First Nations businesses.
- We acknowledge our commitment to Priority Reform 3 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, Transforming Government Organisations. We recognise the importance of listening and learning from First Nations people to build trade and investment support structures that are culturally safe and appropriately responds to issues raised. This includes, where possible, enhancing services for businesses interested in trade and international investment attraction but not yet ready.

Intellectual Property Protections

We recognise the unique products and services offered by First Nations businesses, and the importance of protecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property.

- We will support the recognition and protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights, reinforcing their economic sovereignty, and ability to control, maintain, protect and develop genetic resources, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.
- We will advocate for the recognition and protection of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights and promote First Nations products and services towards global competitiveness.
- We acknowledge the importance of protecting First Nations data sovereignty and recognise their right to determine the means of collection, ownership, and dissemination of data pertaining to First Nations peoples.

Shared Commitments

Access to Resources

We acknowledge that better access to resources can assist First Nations people and communities in creating intergenerational wealth.

- We recognise the challenges of regional and remote operating environments and how these impact on many First Nations businesses participating in trade and investment opportunities, including accessing supply chains, logistics, communications, digital skills and connectivity, and markets.
- We aim to actively work towards ensuring First Nations businesses have access to resources, such as funding, training, and mentorship programs that support trade and investment outcomes.
- We aim to bring depth to our business support services to make them culturally safe and deliver First Nations business support that is more accessible, agile, and responsive to opportunities.

Building Capability and Capacity

We recognise the need for more targeted support for First Nations businesses to enhance their capability and capacity to participate in international trade opportunities.

- We recognise the importance of ongoing collaborative effort to improve services and focusing resources, where possible, to better meet the needs of these businesses, ensuring that support is accessible and impactful.
- To achieve this, we will aim to focus on actions such as the following:
 - Providing skills development opportunities to equip First Nations businesses with the necessary tools to compete internationally.
 - Offering advice on market access and research support to assist First Nations businesses in building connections and identifying and understanding target markets.
 - Considering export strategies in collaboration with First Nations businesses to align with their unique needs.
 - Support participation in international opportunities, such as trade and investment delegations (inbound and outbound) to ensure First Nations views and perspectives are represented internationally.

- Consider how existing funding streams may improve accessibility and ensure resources are directed where they are needed the most.
- Embed First Nation businesses into mainstream trade and investment delegations.
- Expand training for policy developers to include not only cultural competency, legal awareness and community engagement protocols but also product and service development tailored to international markets.
- Better coordination of support and sharing of best practices to help First Nations businesses become ready to export or attract international investment, including respect of international intellectual property protection.

Policy Alignment

We acknowledge the need for ongoing policy and program alignment across Jurisdictions. The importance of sharing good practices through agreed schedules and frameworks remains crucial. We also recognise Jurisdictions are at different stages in their journey with First Nations economic empowerment, and we are committed to ensuring continued progress in these effort

- We are committed to incorporating stronger and more deliberate coordination of activities between Jurisdictions.
- We are committed to reviewing and revising existing policies and developing new policy frameworks to ensure they are aligned with the specific needs, and aspirations of First Nations exporting businesses. By doing so, we aim to create a trade environment that empowers First Nations businesses to thrive in both domestic and international markets. Our ongoing policy commitments include engagement with international likeminded partners to identify potential learnings and opportunities from other First Nations trade and investment contexts.

- We are committed to greater transparency and action in the exchange of best practices, market insights and industry expertise and commit to consistency and coordination in our:
 - communications activities;
 - data collection, and sharing improvements;
 - sharing of best practices on initiatives and support;
 - participation at key events and opportunities, such as business delegations, export awards, and trade events; and
 - input and advocacy in free trade agreements, and multilateral economic and trade fora, ensuring that First Nations trade and investment priorities are embedded in international negotiations.
- We are committed to learning from international fora and organisations that focus on inclusive trade policies. By engaging in constructive dialogue with international likeminded partners and drawing on the expertise of First Nations representatives to ensure that First Nations interests and perspectives are represented internationally.

Integrating our Efforts

Incorporating a collaborative approach is important to success.

- We acknowledge the relationship and intersection with parallel government action to drive reform and improvements in related fora on:
 - domestic and foreign investment;
 - climate;
 - critical minerals;
 - environmental, social and governance frameworks;
 - intellectual property;
 - data; and
 - other domestic mechanisms under the National Cabinet architecture including in the context of the transition to net zero.
- We also recognise the importance of facilitating better access to sustainable foreign investment, finance, capital, and markets to support sustainable economic growth for First Nations communities.
- We are committed to working in partnership with First Nations peoples to mainstream First Nations benefits, interests and opportunities across the breadth of related activity. This includes strongly supporting access to resources, export financing, and investment opportunities to enhance First Nations participation in international trade and investment.

Annual Reporting

The National Statement, and accompanying commitment schedules, will be reviewed with regular progress updates through the Senior Officials Trade and Investment Group (SOTIG), which comprises all Jurisdictions and is co-chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade).

An annual implementation report with contributions from all Jurisdictions will be completed by SOTIG and provided by SOTIG to the Ministerial Council.

Key outcomes of the implementation reports will be provided to National Cabinet, and other domestic mechanisms as relevant, including other Ministerial Councils under Australia's Federal Relations Architecture, and the Joint Council on Closing the Gap.

The SOTIG and its consultation processes will support in-year sharing of progress.



List of Initiatives (2025)

The National Statement is intended to coordinate and drive alignment across Jurisdictions on First Nations economic uplift. The following outlines the short-term commitments and activities that will be undertaken by Jurisdictions to give effect to this National Statement.

Joint Initiatives

This list outlines initiatives shared between Jurisdictions:

1. Austrade introduced a **dedicated First Nations award category** at the 63rd Australian Export Awards in 2025, supported by all governments.
2. Support the successful delivery of the **World Indigenous Business Forum 2025** in Australia, including participation by First Nations businesses through implementing a coordinated approach from all states and territories.
3. Support Australian First Nations participation at the **World Expo Osaka 2025** for trade and investment benefits, through implementing a coordinated approach.
4. Develop a **common approach and key messages for investment practitioners on First Nations and Australia’s foreign direct investment attraction**, through the National Investment Forum, to help foreign investors better understand First Nations Experiences and the benefits of meaningful engagement and dialogue with First Nations Peoples.
5. Advance matters of mutual interest at the **National Trade Forum** including supporting the economic advancement of First Nations businesses through engagement with international markets.
6. Promote and showcase the opportunities for First Nations business under Australia’s **Free Trade Agreements** through delivery of coordinated domestic outreach.

Australia (Commonwealth Government)

1. Support First Nations engagement and representation on international trade and foreign investment matters through the role of the **Ambassador for First Nations People** and the Office for First Nations International Engagement.
2. Progress the development of a **First Nations approach to foreign policy strategy**, which includes trade and investment.
3. A **First Nations International Fellowships and Partnerships Grant Program** to provide practical support to First Nations Australians to engage in foreign affairs, as well as foster economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
4. Support an annual **Australia-Aotearoa-New Zealand First Nations Economic Dialogue** to advance economic empowerment priorities, aligned with existing architecture, for First Nations peoples across the Tasman and the Pacific.
5. Through the established **First Nations Trade and Investment Advisory Group**, ensure First Nations interests and perspectives are integrated into trade and investment policy and programs.
6. Through a regular **First Nations Trade and Investment Bulletin**, improve channels for the Commonwealth, state and territory governments to share international trade and investment information and opportunities with the First Nations business sector.
7. Embed First Nations interests and participation across key implementation activities under **Invested: Australia’s Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040**.
8. Support two Australian Indigenous Co-Representatives on the Partnership Council for the **Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Arrangement**.
9. Pursue provisions that support First Nations trade and investment outcomes through all **Australian free trade agreement negotiations**, including upgrades to existing FTAs.
10. Establish ongoing representation of First Nations perspectives in new and existing trade related consultation mechanisms.



11. Advance trade and economic opportunities for First Nations peoples to strengthen the recognition of traditional knowledge, including through discussions and cooperation with the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**.
12. Deliver the **Australia-WIPO Bushfoods Pilot**, aimed at identifying and addressing practical intellectual property challenges faced by First Nations businesses when considering exporting.
13. DFAT to deliver a **First Nations business mission to India in 2025** that will support new partnerships for Australian First Nations businesses looking to engage with India – the fastest growing major economy in the world – and promote the excellence, ideas and unique offerings of First Nations businesses overseas.
14. Support equitable economic ownership and growth for First Nations businesses and communities by increasing and uplifting export opportunities, including through a **Memorandum of Understanding between Austrade and Supply Nation**.
15. Build the partnership established under the **Memorandum of Understanding between Export Finance Australia and Indigenous Business Australia**, focused on enabling cross-referrals of potential First Nations customers, developing relevant financial content for First Nations businesses, and sharing financial insights in support of improved opportunities for First Nations exporters.
16. Support greater First Nations participation and economic opportunities, and respectfully embed First Nations culture within the visitor economy through the establishment of a **National First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership**.
17. Embed **Community Benefit Principles into the Future Made in Australia** legislation. The Principles acknowledge the importance of seeing the benefits of foreign investment flow to local workers, industries and communities, including First Nations people.
18. Deliver a **draft Indigenous Agricultural Product Framework** that will specifically benefit First Nations agriculture businesses and communities by increasing the ability of First Nations people to demonstrate product authenticity, prove world-leading practices, and protect and verify claims about attributes of their Indigenous agricultural products.
19. Support the Noongar Land Enterprise through the **Export Readiness Pilot for First Nations Agriculture** grant by using digital and paper-based traceability systems to meet export requirements and consumer demands. The research and insights from this pilot will assist other First Nations businesses to become viable producers and exporters.
20. **Strengthen AusIndustry’s Regional Manager** support to First Nations businesses to provide them access to market opportunities and provide connections and introductions to networks across the economy.
21. The **Business Grants Hub** will support Commonwealth government agencies to effectively design and implement grants programs that will facilitate increased participation from First Nations businesses.

Australian Capital Territory

1. The government will continue to **deliver the Badji Program** to ensure culturally appropriate engagement with the ACT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business community.
2. Established a **First Nations Export Awards Category at the ACT Chief Minister's Export Awards 2025**. The Office of International Engagement will collaboratively work with Austrade and industry to promote the new category and drive engagement across First Nations exporters across the ACT.
3. Where appropriate include ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander exporters in ACT Government led trade missions.



New South Wales

1. NSW is the only state in Australia that has **Closing the Gap Priority Reform Five**, a dedicated commitment to deliver Aboriginal Economic Prosperity. Creating jobs and economic prosperity can lead to home ownership improving outcomes in all areas of life, including health, justice and leading to independence and mob being empowered through real self-determination.

2. NSW established the **Indigenous Exporter Award category** at the 2024 NSW Premier's Export Awards. The first ever NSW Indigenous Exporter Award was given to Aldridge Railway Signals on 11 October 2024.

3. **The Closing the Gap 2022-24 Implementation Plan** details NSW Government commitments to achieve Aboriginal Economic Prosperity. These include:

▶ Develop a **one-stop-shop Business Support portal**, providing culturally appropriate business support services and addressing gaps identified through previous research, evaluation and consultation with Aboriginal business owners and support providers.

▶ Improving economic wellbeing and **expanding NSW-specific First Nations analysis** through:

» Delivering the NSW First Nations Business Sector Report, which identifies some of the key challenges faced by Aboriginal Businesses.

» Delivering the First Nations Women's Economic Participation Review, which provides a baseline of current First Nations women's participation and identifies key priorities to empower First Nations women to realise their economic potential.

» Embedding First Nations Investment Framework in NSW Government's existing policies and guidance for building evidence across the investment lifecycle.

4. Delivered the **Aboriginal Business Growth Roadmap**, and committed \$10 million to achieving the aims under this Roadmap, including:

▶ Delivering multiple Aboriginal Business Roundtables, providing free expert advice and an opportunity to connect. Topics have included exporting, accessing capital, and economic growth.

▶ Establishing the Aboriginal Business Taskforce, that will provide the voice of Aboriginal people and business leaders to drive the implementation of the Aboriginal Business Growth Roadmap.

▶ Engaging the NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce to deliver:

» A project to reduce black cladding through education.

» A project to engage rural/regional local government authorities to engage Aboriginal Business and create local Aboriginal Business networks.

» Mentoring, with a focus on Aboriginal women.

▶ Engaging Yarpa to deliver on a project to engage metropolitan local government authorities to engage Aboriginal Business and create local Aboriginal Business networks.

▶ Convening an Aboriginal Research and Data Centre to build an evidence-based foundation for the Aboriginal business sector.

▶ Leading a review of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy to provide better government procurement support for Aboriginal businesses.

5. Driving focus on Aboriginal economic development and enterprise through the **Regional Development Trust** which has an initial investment of \$400 million to deliver sustainable and strategic investment in regional and rural communities.

6. Continue to improve social and economic outcomes by assisting Aboriginal businesses in regional locations through the delivery of **NSW Government's Regional Aboriginal Partnerships and Outcomes (RAPO) initiative**.

7. Support through **TradeStart Export Advisory Services** to be export ready and grow internationally through specialised programs and bespoke services.

8. Support Aboriginal participation in new major business investments through **Invest Regional NSW**.

9. Support a **Trade Mission to New Zealand** that aims to build capability and capacity in Aboriginal businesses located in NSW and allow for knowledge transfer between Maori and Aboriginal businesses.

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National Statement on First Nations Trade and Investment

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Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Government is rebuilding our economy, and in doing so has committed to delivering accessible business, trade and investment support to all Territorians.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were our first exporters – from trading goods in the far north with Makassan seafarers in Indonesia for generations, to now exporting native botanicals, art, design, fashion and clean energy solutions to world markets. There are around 1,130 certified Aboriginal businesses operating across the Northern Territory.

As a small Jurisdiction, Northern Territory Government programs and services support all Territory businesses, including Aboriginal businesses, operating across regional centres and remote communities to strengthen business participation and engagement, and deepen partnerships to support capacity building and economic uplift.

This includes targeted grants, licences, migration support and workforce initiatives that enable Territory businesses and the regions they support to thrive, underpinning the sustainable growth, capability, resilience and competitiveness of our business community.

Key Northern Territory Government initiatives and activities include:

1. The **Business Growth Program**, which provides Territory small and medium enterprises with access to up to \$10,000 to engage a consultant to help them to develop, grow, and expand.
2. Working with Territory businesses, including Aboriginal businesses, to **support investor engagement and investment opportunities**.
3. Supporting access to the **Global Trade Scheme**, which assists eligible Northern Territory businesses to establish or expand their exporting capabilities.
4. Delivering a range of business and workforce support programs to support employers and industries, including not-for-profits, to create job and training opportunities for **Aboriginal Territorians, including the Aboriginal Employment Program, Aboriginal Workforce Grants and Aboriginal Responsive Skilling Grants**.

The Northern Territory celebrates the success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, including through the Government's sponsorship of the Blak Business Awards and the Export Awards.





Queensland

Our First Nations people are our First Traders. Trade and Investment Queensland (TIQ) acknowledges their many Nations and many trade routes, their giving of safe passage and their exchange of knowledge, culture, spiritual beliefs, songs and dance, natural resources, food, and goods. We respect their wisdom, resilience, and pursuit of trade in ways that enriched their communities and guarded the beauty and riches of the land.

We embrace this long history and the present and future contributions, from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the prosperity of our State.

In partnership and consultation across government and First Nations business sector, TIQ is delivering the following initiatives:

- Supporting a First Nations category in the Export Awards:** Queensland was the first state to include a First Nations category in its State Export Awards, introduced at the Premier of Queensland's Export Awards in 2023. Mainie won the inaugural award, followed in 2024 by Sobah Beverages. Queensland has since successfully advocated with Austrade for this category to be included in the 2025 National Export Awards. This category elevates First Nations businesses and provides high-level recognition from industry experts around the country.
- Energy for regional and remote communities:** Queensland is committed to ensuring regional and remote communities, including First Nations communities, benefit from reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy.
- Grow First Nations business export capacity:** Queensland agencies are working to build export capacity for First Nations-led businesses. Queensland agencies such as Arts Queensland have a priority focus on promoting First Nations arts across the State.
- First Nations business development officer:** TIQ is working with Indigenous stakeholders to examine traditional trading routes through the State and into the Pacific. This work has already produced a trade-focused acknowledgement of country for use into the future. TIQ has recruited a First Nations business development officer to support and foster First Nations-led exporters across Queensland.
- First Nations engagement and representation at international trade events:** First Nations businesses and representatives participated in the 14th World Indigenous Business Forum in Port Moresby in October 2023. TIQ's new

business development officer will contribute to TIQ's efforts to ensure the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games are inclusive Games that tell the story of First Nations peoples. Queensland also continues to empower First Nations businesses by being a Gold partner at World Expo 2025 Osaka (Expo 2025) where First Nations businesses are a priority theme through the extensive Expo 2025 programming.

- First Nations Trade and Investment Queensland Board Member and a First Nations advisory committee in Trade and Investment Queensland:** Queensland has improved its trade and investment policy development, support, and promotion by giving more prominence to First Nations representation in trade and investment. The TIQ board membership has been expanded to include two First Nations members. A First Nations Advisory Committee has also been established in TIQ to embed First Nations perspectives in TIQ's trade and investment priorities.
- Trade and Investment Queensland's First Nations Strategy:** TIQ has released a First Nations Strategy that will take Queensland's First Nations businesses to the world through leveraging TIQ's Global network, embedding First Nations perspectives across TIQ, while growing, deepening and maturing the export and investment readiness of First Nations exporters in Queensland. TIQ's First Nations Strategy was informed and supported by the development of an individual market strategy for each of the markets that TIQ has a presence in. This will identify the market opportunity for First Nations businesses, where appropriate. The Strategy also supports TIQ in the provisioning of its Grant programmes, to maximise their impact for First Nations business clients across TIQ.
- Trade and Investment Queensland's First Nations Research Project:** The project has provided TIQ and Queensland with deeper insight as to the size and scope of the First Nations business sector in Queensland, and particularly about its export capability. The report has also informed TIQ's First Nations Strategy in providing TIQ with key areas and businesses for engagement and business development into the global marketplace.

TIQ's 'Giz Ged Lo Kopat': "TIQ Bringing Business together" is the AI Scan set up through TIQ's AI capability. This searches the external environment for First Nations-related trade and investment opportunities. This has already supported TIQ in the onboarding of a series of new clients to connect with TIQ's Global Business network.

South Australia

- 1. **First Nations Export Advisory Service:** Provide drop-in export advisory services in partnership with The Circle First Nations Entrepreneur Hub. The purpose of the service is for businesses to explore the opportunities to exports and the steps required to start their export journey.
- 2. **First Nations Export Mentoring:** Provide First Nations Business with a mentor to help their business to prepare, plan and execute their international growth strategy.
- 3. **First Nations Export Readiness Grant:** Grants to support First Nations businesses with business and export capability building covering: business strategy, market research, export planning, marketing and promotion, advice on sales channels, and business connections.
- 4. **First Nations Business Profiling and Export Promotion:** Profiling of First Nations export and business success stories through curated media opportunities and case studies. The stories will help encourage First Nations businesses explore exporting and existing First Nation exporters be nominated for the Export Awards.
- 5. **First Nations Export Awards Category:** The South Australian Government will introduce the First Nations Export Award as part of the Premiers Business and Export Awards. South Australia will work with Austrade to promote the Award to attract First Nations Business and profile the award winner.
- 6. **First Nations Investor Ready Program:** Support to First Nations businesses to become investment-ready and with tailored introductions to potential investors.
- 7. **First Nations Business Mission Participation:** Dedicated support for First Nations businesses to join international business missions, providing tailored connections to importers, links with industry and government stakeholders, and market insights that support business growth.
- 8. **First Nations Tourism and Hospitality Business Support:** Support to position First Nations tourism and hospitality businesses to attract domestic and international visitation delivered through South Australia’s Department of State Development global office network, strengthened links with Tourism Australia and the First Nations Tourism Mentoring Program.



Tasmania

1. **Established a First Nations Export Awards Category at the Tasmanian Export Awards 2025.** Trade Tasmania will collaboratively work with Austrade and industry to promote the new category and drive engagement across First Nations exporters across Tasmania.
2. **Establish an Export Readiness Program** that supports Tasmanian businesses to build export capability and capacity that is inclusive of First Nations businesses to cover: business and export strategies, market research and access to Tasmania's International Business Development Network of Trade Advocates, export planning, marketing and promotion, advice, business connections and targeted business matching.
3. **Review the Accelerating Trade Grant Program (ATGP) 2025** guidelines to support First Nations businesses to increase exports off island in both the domestic mainland and international markets.



Victoria

The Victorian Government is committed to addressing inequality, moving towards self-determination and achieving economic parity within a generation, under the **Yuma Yirramboi (Invest in Tomorrow) Strategy**.

The Victorian Government is working towards a Treaty with Aboriginal Victorians.

This involves working together to create a better future for all Victorians and enable true self-determination for Aboriginal people. Victoria’s jurisdictional commitments will remain flexible and responsive to future Treaty outcomes.

The Victorian Government notes existing commitments announced as part of the State’s Economic Growth Statement that support Aboriginal trade and investment outcomes. These include:

- 1. **Hosting the World Indigenous Business Forum in 2025 and delivering funding to Kinaway Chamber of Commerce and Ngarrimilli** to helping more Aboriginal businesses to compete locally and globally.
- 2. **Creating a First Peoples Leadership Academy** to support the development of the next generation of First Peoples leaders.

Commitment to further engagement with the Aboriginal Business Sector:

- 1. The Victorian Government will develop its substantive jurisdictional commitments via meaningful engagement with the sector over 2025-26. The aim of this engagement is to develop a program logic and more detailed commitments that have been crafted with the Victorian Aboriginal business sector. This updated commitment will be put forward in the next iteration of the National Statement.
- 2. It is envisaged that the development of Victoria’s jurisdictional commitments will align with Yuma Yirramboi (Invest in Tomorrow) Strategy, and the engagement plan will be guided by established governance mechanisms through the Yuma Yirramboi Council and the Koori Caucus. The engagement plan will include steps to ensure it is consistent with Treaty processes that are underway, including appropriate engagement with the First Peoples’ Assembly of Victoria.

Notes

For more information about these commitments, contact the Aboriginal Economic Development branch at aed@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

These Jurisdictional commitments relate to Trade and Investment only and do not reflect the Victorian Government’s broader commitments to Aboriginal Victorians.

We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal people living in Victoria. We use the term ‘Aboriginal Victorians’ to include Victorian Traditional Owners, clans, family groups, and all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descendants living in Victoria. The term ‘Aboriginal community’ includes Traditional Owners, business owners and other community representatives”.





Western Australia

1. **Establishment of a First Nations WA Exports Awards Category:** Western Australia established a First Nations category for the 2025 WA Export Awards Program.
2. **First Nations House at South by South West:** the Department of Energy and Economic Diversification (DEED) is supporting First Nations X in their delivery of First Nations House at South by South West in the United States of America in 2025.
3. **Energy Exchange Australia 2025:** DEED Aboriginal Business Pavilion.
4. **Direct WA Government support and representation at the following industry activations:**
 - Indigenous Emerging Business Forum
 - Indigenous Business Australia
 - Pilbara Summit
 - Supply Nation's Indigenous Business Trade Fair.
5. **Sand Talk Export Ready Program 2025:** A two-day trade workshop for Aboriginal tourism operators either wanting to work or are newly participating within the tourism export market.
6. **Jina Sponsorship - Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) 2025:** Tourism WA sponsors Aboriginal tourism operators who are members of Tourism Australia's 'Discover Aboriginal Experiences' collective (plus other nominated operators) to participate as sellers at ATE 2025.
7. **Blak Tapas Aboriginal Training Program:** Tourism WA funds an Aboriginal-led hospitality and tourism training program, led by Blak Tapas, an Aboriginal owned catering company and cafe in Kununurra.
8. **Gwoonwardu Mia Aboriginal Cultural Centre Training Program:** Tourism WA funds an Aboriginal-led hospitality and tourism training program to encourage more Aboriginal people to gain employment, develop skills and develop tourism experiences in Carnarvon.
9. **Camping with Custodians:** This is a Tourism WA program that focuses on enabling Aboriginal cultural experiences. It allows visitors to camp on traditional lands owned and managed by Aboriginal custodians, providing an opportunity to learn about the culture, history, and stories of the local Aboriginal communities. It is a unique way to connect with the land and gain a deeper appreciation of its cultural significance with all tourism benefits going back into local Aboriginal communities.
10. **Kimberley Art and Cultural International Connections Project:** The Project is being undertaken by a network of six Aboriginal Art Centres in the Kimberley to support international exhibition and market engagement opportunities for their artists:
 - Phase One has been concluded which focused on artist commissioning opportunities.
 - Phase Two is currently being scoped which will focus on exhibition readiness including curatorial and digital content development.
11. **Selling WA to the World:** Aboriginal Art Centre Online Sales Capability Project: Aboriginal Arts Centre Hub of WA (AACHWA) have been supported by the WA Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) to facilitate targeted funding for individual Art Centre websites and their online artwork management system, as well as a suite of training and support to improve their digital presence and ecommerce capacity.
12. **A number of Art and Cultural events showcasing First Nations Arts, Culture and Tourism:**
 - Perth Festival
 - Revealed New and Emerging WA Aboriginal Artists
 - Fremantle Biennale
 - Wardarnji Festival
 - The Karijini Experience
 - A Taste of Broome
 - Cinefest Oz Film Festival Broome
 - Mowanjum Festival
 - Ever Now
 - Hand in Hand Kidogo Irish Aboriginal Festival
 - Jamba Nyinayi festival
 - KAFTA: Kimberley Aboriginal Fashion Textiles Art
 - Corroboree Under the Stars.

13. Aboriginal Visual Arts Industry Feasibility:

The AACHWA in partnership with a collective of Regional Development Commissions, led by the Pilbara Development Commission, will deliver a statewide feasibility study into the Aboriginal visual arts industry:

- ▶ The feasibility study will deliver an industry-led analysis of sector infrastructure and workforce resourcing, in addition to national and international market research.
- ▶ The feasibility study will result in a business case aimed at evidencing the future investment required by government to grow and diversify the commercial capacity of the Aboriginal visual arts industry in Western Australia.

14. State-wide Arts & Business Capacity Building Project:

Our Country Moves is a state-wide, multi-year project uniting WA art centres through artistic and business capacity building. It aims to enhance skills and create employment opportunities for artists and workers while culminating in a landmark exhibition showcasing diverse Aboriginal art collaborations, setting a national benchmark.

15. Make It Real: Product Development Project

- Make it Real is a social impact project led by AACHWA, designed to disrupt the existing fake Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander souvenir and merchandise market, replacing it with an industry that has at its core the participation of WA's remote and regional Aboriginal arts centres in the development of authentic products that reflect the values and stories of communities.

16. Our Business Aboriginal Arts Centre Forum: A professional development program designed to support WA Aboriginal art centres by providing training in effective business management, promoting regional partnerships, and offering networking and market access opportunities:

- ▶ The annual forum aims to support the professional growth and leadership training of art centre managers, artists, and arts workers by providing presentations, activities, and opportunities to connect with others in the sector, thereby strengthening the Western Australian arts and culture workforce. Supported by CITS's Regional Arts and Culture Investment Program.

17. Our Future Aboriginal Arts Worker Training Program:

This program aims to support Aboriginal arts workers in regional and remote Western Australia by providing practical training and real-world on-the-job experience:

- ▶ This training program broadens participants' perspectives in the arts and helps them develop new skills, which they can apply when they return to an art centre context.
 - ▶ It supports emerging arts professionals to develop their knowledge and skills across a broad spectrum of arts and cultural specialisations. It is supported by CITS's Regional Arts and Culture Investment Program.
- 18. Digital Art Project:** The Digital Art Project, commissioned by WA Museum Boola Bardip, showcases the work of over 150 Aboriginal artists over four years on a national level. AACHWA manages the project, providing curatorial recommendations, ongoing support to artists, and an internship program for emerging Aboriginal artists and arts workers.

19. Aboriginal Bushfoods Business Support Service:

A program which includes a series of bushfoods business development workshops for Aboriginal stakeholders across the State.

20. Farm Business Resilience program:

As part of the Farm Resilience program, 5 sub-programs will be run over 2024 – 2026, focused on First Nations industry stakeholders and including workshops and events.





Australian Government