



# The bridge to work

## Training to work

7. The Victorian Government should work with the Aboriginal community to develop Aboriginal workforce strategies that identify skills shortages in Aboriginal communities and detail actions to address them. This could include a cadetship program across the Government and community sectors where Aboriginal people are offered a range of paid employment and accredited training across a range of organisations.

### **To increase the opportunities to move from training to work, it is recommended that:**

8. Free vocational training be provided to Aboriginal people regardless of their training history where there is a demonstrated pathway to a job (for example through an apprenticeship or traineeship).
9. Pathway Plans be provided to Aboriginal people in TAFE and ACE with little or no employment history to show the clear link between training, local skills needs, and employment prospects in the context of the Koorie State Training Plan.
10. The Koorie State Training Plan clearly show the skill needs of local employers and how the training system will meet those needs.

### **To ensure that Aboriginal people leaving government services are skilled and work ready, it is recommended that:**

11. Education, employment and training pathway plans be developed and supported for all Aboriginal people participating in Victorian Government services such as justice and human services.



## Business is business

***“It is important to develop local enterprises so that Indigenous communities do not become dangerously dependent on the flow of income from governments.”***

*Marcia Langton, Presentation to the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group, 2009.*

Aboriginal people want to own and operate businesses. Many Australians work for themselves and small businesses employ many Australians. Significantly, few of these small businesses are owned by Aboriginal people.

Some Aboriginal businesses can be successful because they offer a unique product such as Indigenous food or an Aboriginal cultural experience which people cannot get anywhere else. Because Aboriginal people have a strong connection with and understanding of the land, Aboriginal businesses that provide land and natural resource management services can do well (particularly in emerging markets such as carbon sequestration and fire management).

However, Aboriginal people, particularly younger Aboriginal people want to own their own business across all industries such as photography, catering and professional services.

### **Independence and self sufficiency**

People want to own a business because it offers independence and self-sufficiency. Many people want to make their own decisions, take their own risks, and succeed their way. It is no different for many Aboriginal people who want to own their own business.

For other Aboriginal people, owning and operating a business to achieve independence and self sufficiency for the whole community is important. The money made from these community enterprises builds infrastructure that is for everyone or pays for a service such as an employment program. In this way, the whole community can benefit from the enterprise. An example of a successful community enterprise is Yarnteen (a case study is provided on page 36).

Community enterprise is generally not well-understood or supported in Australia. Commercial lenders such as banks are not willing to lend money to set them up. Yet it has been shown overseas that these types of enterprises play a key role in economic development.

Economic development is not the only reason why some Aboriginal communities and families in Victoria want to own businesses. For some Aboriginal people, community enterprises support culture, strong family connections and community obligations.

Setting up a business is not easy for anyone. People need an idea or product and be able to demonstrate that there is a good chance of success. Business owners need start up capital, strong networks, and good finance and business skills to be successful. Working in the industry before setting up a business is important to being successful.



# Business is business

## Yarnteen is an example of success

Yarnteen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation became Yarnteen Ltd, a not for profit company, in June 2007. Yarnteen have both social and economic objectives:

- **Improved Social Wellbeing** – to build capacity within Indigenous communities and create valuable partnerships between Indigenous and non Indigenous people.
- **Sustainable Economic Self-Sufficiency** – to encourage greater Indigenous participation in the broader economy through Indigenous owned enterprises and self-employment.

Key achievements over the past 15 years include:

- Small Business Assistance and Incubation
- Yarnteen Cultural Camp
- Yarnteen Creative Enterprise Centre
- Yarnteen College

Yarnteen has established two very successful commercial enterprises:

- **Yarnteen Investments Pty Ltd trading as Port Hunter Commodities PHC** is a modern bulk warehousing and commodity bagging enterprise located within the port of Newcastle area employing 6 full time employees.
- **Yarnteen Investments Pty Ltd trading as Riverside Car and Boat Wash** is a modern eco friendly car and boat wash in the coastal town of Port Macquarie NSW.

Yarnteen is also a partner in the ownership of a 15 storey office complex located in Woden, ACT and has two investment properties in Port Macquarie (NSW) and Mackay (QLD).

Source: [www.yarnteen.com.au](http://www.yarnteen.com.au)

## The financial hurdle

Many Aboriginal Victorians report that they or their communities find it more difficult to get finance than non-Aboriginal people. The reasons for this may include:

- No or poor credit history
- No assets to use to secure a loan
- Lack of individual, family or community wealth and savings
- Caveats attached to assets bought by Governments or organisations on behalf of the community which do not allow the asset to be sold (and therefore be offered as collateral for a loan)
- Lack of understanding about community enterprises by commercial lenders leading to an inflated perception of risk.

## Increasing access to support

### Managing money

There are a range of supports available for business establishment and growth. These include government and non-government programs, services and financial support. For example through the *New Enterprise Incentives Scheme*, the Commonwealth Government offers unemployment benefits to eligible people in the first year of a business start up combined with business training. Not many Aboriginal people and communities in Victoria use these programs and services.

There are also some Aboriginal specific business and financial supports including those delivered by the Koori Business Network, the Aboriginal Land and Economic Development Program, Indigenous Business Australia and the Indigenous Land Corporation. The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Victorian government are establishing an Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce in Victoria. Each of these has strengths that could be enhanced through greater integration with mainstream providers of financial and business products and services.

Internationally, microfinance plays a major role in economic development. Banks in Victoria have indicated a willingness to offer small loans of up to \$20,000 to people who may have few personal assets or savings, a poor or no credit history as part of a program that also provides business and finance support.

Sometimes this amount of money is all that is needed to buy tools or equipment. Importantly, this type of program builds skills, capacity and a financial track record that may secure a larger loan to grow the business.

Successful Aboriginal businesses also need support to take the next step. This might include a loan, access to microfinance or access to business mentoring.

Aboriginal people may not consider a commercial loan as sometimes they are unfamiliar with taking on debt or dealing with banks. Financial literacy support and finance brokering followed up with sustained business support and business mentoring can assist in this circumstance.

The Victorian Government can increase access to commercial loans for Aboriginal enterprises by underwriting a proportion of the loan for a fixed period of time to reduce the risk for commercial lenders. This can be backed up by financial and business training, support and mentoring to ensure business success. This is preferable to grants because the business must pass a commercial test to get a loan which is likely to increase their success rate. As a key principle, governments should be careful in providing grants for Aboriginal businesses other than for feasibility or scoping.

Social Ventures Australia, together with Social Traders in Victoria are considering establishing a social investment fund for social enterprises. Many Aboriginal community enterprises would fit the criteria to be able to access this fund.



# Business is business

## Managing business

There are also business models that offer a more supportive and accessible way to business ownership such as franchises and joint ventures.

Employees working in a franchise have the opportunity to lease and/or purchase a business. Ongoing support is then provided to ensure long-term business success. Targeted promotion and support by Government and franchisors should be provided to enable more Aboriginal people to operate a franchised business.

Joint ventures between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses should be encouraged as they can:

- Increase the small Aboriginal businesses' ability to win contracts
- Enable skill and capacity transfer between businesses (including cultural competency for the non-Aboriginal business)
- Support the growth of the Aboriginal business in an 'incubator' environment until the business is able to successfully compete in the marketplace.

Government and the private sector can also use their supply chains to make it easier for Aboriginal businesses to succeed by:

- Working directly with Aboriginal business to build their ability to successfully tender or sub-contract for business
- Breaking up large contracts into smaller components
- Providing incentives for large contractors to form joint ventures with Aboriginal businesses to further build their capacity
- Establishing a minority supplier panel for Government contracts linked to the recently established Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council (AIMSC).

## Tailoring support to encourage business

Tailored support is needed to give more Aboriginal people access to commercial finance and business services, and to encourage more franchises and joint ventures involving Aboriginal Victorians. The types of supports that would be of benefit include:

- A finance broker to determine appropriate finance (including microfinance)
- Business planning, accredited business training, and mentoring
- A loan underwritten by the Government in conjunction with accredited business training if required
- Entry into a business incubator
- Social investment funds for community enterprises
- Accredited business training and planning
- Ongoing business mentoring and post-establishment support.

This could be co-ordinated and packaged up by mobile Account managers.

## A tailored package of supports

### Recommendations for action

#### To give the necessary support for Aboriginal businesses, it is recommended that:

1. A partnership be established with a business association to provide mobile Account Managers that co-ordinate tailored packages of support for Aboriginal businesses in areas with a significant Aboriginal population.
2. Partnerships are formed with financial institutions to provide financial products such as microfinance, and services such as Aboriginal Finance Brokers in key locations with significant Aboriginal populations. The role of an Aboriginal Finance Broker would be to ensure the commercial feasibility of Aboriginal business proposals and connect Aboriginal clients to the most appropriate finance products and services available.
3. The Victorian Government underwrite up to 40 per cent of the first year of a loan with an approved lender to an Aboriginal person starting up, growing or buying an existing business, provided they have a sound financial and business plan, have appropriate business skills and/or agree to undertake accredited business training, and have ongoing business mentoring and support.
4. Targeted support to assist Aboriginal employees to lease and/or buy franchises including awareness raising, business preparation, an underwritten loan, accredited business training, and ongoing mentoring.
5. A range of business supports including business planning and preparation, expansion support and ongoing mentoring be provided to Aboriginal businesses, along with links to mainstream business support provided through Small Business Victoria.
6. Accredited business training be available and accessible to meet the needs of Aboriginal people, including:
  - Bridging support such as literacy and numeracy
  - Financial literacy
  - Block release training and accommodation support
  - Using training to build enduring networks of Aboriginal participants
  - Integration with financial and business planning support and business incubators.
7. The Victorian Government partner with Social Ventures Australia and Social Traders in Victoria to:
  - Allocate some of the proposed social investment fund to Aboriginal community enterprises in Victoria
  - Tie social investment to building business capacity through accredited business training
  - Resource a position to administer this part of the fund and build relationships with the Aboriginal community.



# Business is business

## An Aboriginal Supplier Program

### To create the right business environment, it is recommended that:

8. An Aboriginal Supplier Program be established linked to the recently established Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council (AIMSC), to identify and work with small Aboriginal businesses to successfully tender for State Government and other large organisation contracts. It should include a Minority Supplier Panel.
9. As a procurement principle, large contracts be broken into smaller components where there is an Aboriginal business participating in the Aboriginal Supplier Program that can provide the product or service.
10. Building incentives into large contracts to encourage joint ventures with Aboriginal businesses, and to link this into the Aboriginal Supplier Program.



## Wealth from the land

**“In order to fully realise economic opportunities, traditional owners require both the know-how and the access to relevant government services and resources.”**

*Tom Calma, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, National Native Title Conference 2006: Tradition and Change – An Integrated Approach to Economic and Community Development on Indigenous Land.*

Aboriginal people continue to express their desire to care for and work on country. There are many employment and business opportunities in land and natural resource management, such as Park Rangers, running a business in aquaculture or pest management, or investing in emerging industries like carbon sequestration. Economic opportunities in land and natural resource management apply to both Traditional Owners and the broader Aboriginal community.

The three key areas where action can be taken to realise economic development opportunities connected to land are through:

- Native Title settlements
- Public sector procurement and employment
- Increasing access to land and its resources.

### Native Title settlements

As in other States, Aboriginal land tenure and rights in Victoria is a complex area. Traditional Owners are recognised as being the owners of the land prior to European settlement. However, Aboriginal communities in Victoria are often unable to demonstrate that they have remained continuously connected to land as required by the Native Title Act. The new Victorian Native Title Settlement Framework (NTSF) provides a mechanism to negotiate out of court settlements with Traditional Owners to deliver land justice without meeting the hurdles of the Native Title Act.

Native Title settlements will provide Traditional Owners with greater access to land through:

- Transfers of land to Traditional Owner groups (with or without conditions)
- Hand back of Crown land in perpetuity under joint management, and
- Joint management where the State retains control of the land.

It is critical that whatever the form of land settlement Aboriginal people are provided with genuine economic opportunities. This is particularly so under joint management arrangements.

*“Many co-management initiatives for protected areas ... begin timidly, as if the government agencies were afraid to lose power if the experiments went too far. Most often, the local institutional actors are invited to participate only in an advisory way.”*

(Sharing Power: Learning by Doing in Co-Management of Natural Resources throughout the World, Borrini-Feyerabend, p. 97, 2004)

Realising the opportunities from the NTSF will require natural resource management agencies to share decision-making with the community. Joint management arrangements could bring opportunities for Traditional Owners in land management and contracts for land and natural management services.

Traditional Owners will need to be supported to be entrepreneurial on the land over which a Native Title settlement applies. The NTSF must allow for Traditional Owners to negotiate economic benefits with third parties (such as mining companies and wind power operators) who are seeking access to land in their claim area. This includes employment and business opportunities in the mining, forestry, water, wind farming and carbon sequestration industries.

As part of any Native Title settlement, Traditional Owners need to be supported to pursue business opportunities using the right governance structures. International experience shows the critical importance of separating commercial from community/political governance structures.



## Wealth from the land

### Economic opportunities to be identified early in negotiations

A Traditional Owner Group who wishes to pursue a settlement with the State Government under the NTSF has the opportunity to negotiate the terms of that settlement. Although there are opportunities throughout the lifetime of the settlement to renegotiate, it is at the start of the process where all of the economic opportunities outlined above, should be identified if the greatest benefits are to be realised.

### Public sector procurement and employment

For all Aboriginal people, including those with no entitled access to land through Native Title, the opportunities include:

- Employment in land and natural resource management with State Government departments and agencies like Parks Victoria, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Primary Industries, and
- Providing sub-contracting services to government departments and agencies like Parks Victoria, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Primary Industries or the private sector.

Parks Victoria, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Department of Primary Industries all provide employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment encourage and support Aboriginal businesses to tender for contracts. In particular, Parks Victoria has set up an incubator to assist Aboriginal people start up businesses in land and natural resources management.

Partnerships between State and Commonwealth Government can be used to secure increased employment and business development in land and natural resource management. The Regional Partnership Agreement recently signed in northern New South Wales is a model that could be replicated in Victoria.

A Regional Partnership Agreement (RPA) is targeting the green economy to reduce Aboriginal unemployment in the Many Rivers region of northern New South Wales.

The Australian and New South Wales Governments will invest \$1.7 million over the next three years to support the employment of up to 400 trained Indigenous workers in the climate change, environment and conservation job markets.

The RPA builds on the extensive network of Aboriginal Green Teams currently working on country, which will provide advice and mentoring to young Aboriginal people living in the area. The Green Teams will source commercial contracts, co-ordinate and manage training and provide a central point of contact for agencies and companies seeking employees.

The RPA is the result of extensive consultation between the Australian and NSW Governments, the Many Rivers Training, Enterprise and Employment Aboriginal Corporation, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and representatives from industry and non-government organisations.

Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 25 August 2009

The Caring for Country program is another potential source of Commonwealth funding for Aboriginal employment opportunities to manage land and natural resources.

## Aboriginal communities should be entrepreneurial

### Increasing access to land and its resources

The legal relationship that Aboriginal people have with the land and its natural resources is a key driver of economic opportunities for Aboriginal people in Victoria. In addition to Native Title, the legal relationship could be:

- Outright ownership of the land and natural resources where a person or community has purchased the land themselves
- Leasing of the land with the right to use the natural resources to make money
- Partial ownership where an organisation such as the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) has bought the land on behalf of an Aboriginal organisation that is incorporated.

For Aboriginal people with freehold title to land or natural resources, and for those who are leasing land with the right to use the natural resources to make money, the capacity needed to realise economic opportunities is no different from the rest of the community. Access to business development advice, capital and the right skills and capabilities is important and is dealt with in the business section of this report. Aboriginal communities should be supported to be entrepreneurial. For example, opening a golf course where there are large numbers of tourists.

Since its inception in 2005, the ILC has acquired 222 properties in urban, rural and remote Australia, representing a total land area of 5.7 million hectares. But in Victoria the ILC has purchased 31 properties covering an area of just 4017 hectares (ILC, 2009).

Land purchased by the ILC has a caveat on its title that prevents it from being used as collateral to borrow money for investment. While this limits its wider applicability, the ILC can be used to secure the purchase of more land that can be used to generate employment and business development opportunities for Aboriginal people.



# Wealth from the land

**Identifying economic benefits and opportunities early**

**Natural resource and primary industries employment strategies**

**Business supports**

## Recommendations for action

**To strengthen Traditional Owner groups' capacity to negotiate and maximise economic benefits from Native Title settlements, it is recommended that:**

1. The Victorian Government support Traditional Owners to identify the economic benefits early in the negotiation of all native title settlements, including industries beyond those traditionally associated with land management. Joint venture models where Traditional Owner Groups lease land to the joint venture partner then buy them out over time should also be considered.
2. Business opportunities are identified by using broad-based industry analysis, supply chain mapping and community asset mapping, and be pursued through contracting, sub-contracting and joint ventures.
3. Native Title settlement agreements should identify:
  - Governance arrangements that establish business focused legal entities for the management of commercial activities
  - An appropriate mechanism for managing commercial risk, and
  - Training requirements.

**To increase public sector employment and purchasing of Aboriginal goods and services, it is recommended that:**

4. Industry employment strategies are developed across all natural resource management and primary industries sectors in the Victorian Government that would result in more employment for Aboriginal people. For example, through the soon to be finalised Victorian Timber Industry Strategy and Fisheries Strategy.
5. All natural resource management traineeship programs provide ongoing employment after completion of the traineeship in appropriate government or private sector organisations.
6. Preferred procurement be used by the Victorian Government to actively increase the number of Aboriginal businesses providing natural resource and primary industry products and services to Government.
7. An incubator model such as that being trialled by Parks Victoria, be used to establish an Aboriginal natural resource management service provider in each native title claim area. The model should take into account the success that Aboriginal Green Teams have had in northern New South Wales.
8. The Victorian Government in partnership with regional Aboriginal communities should work with the Commonwealth Government to access funding for employment through initiatives such as Regional Partnership Agreements (RPA) and Caring for Country.

**To increase the capacity of Aboriginal people to lease and own land, and then establish successful businesses, it is recommended that:**

9. A full range of business supports, including financial brokering to lease or purchase land for commercial purposes be provided.
10. Aboriginal organisations be supported by the Victorian Government to develop applications for Indigenous Land Council land acquisition with a view to developing sustainable land-based enterprises.



## Sharing Aboriginal culture through tourism

International visitors come to Australia to experience 'Aussie culture' and, while they are here, many also experience Aboriginal culture. They fly into Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, spend time in the city and then travel to Alice Springs and Darwin for their Aboriginal cultural experience.

International tourists are more likely to seek out an Aboriginal cultural experience than domestic tourists. This does not indicate a lack of interest. Recent research (May 2009) by Tourism Northern Territory of 1,200 people across Australia revealed that nearly all Australian parents with children under the age of 18 surveyed, wanted their children to learn more about and experience Aboriginal culture.

Of all the States, Victorians most believe they should definitely know more about Indigenous culture and that experiencing Indigenous culture is important for reconciliation (Tourism Northern Territory, Indigenous Cultural Education, March 2009).

In Victoria, Aboriginal tourism is an industry with little profile but great potential.

### A fledgling industry with potential

There are more than 30 Aboriginal tourism businesses in Victoria providing economic benefits to some 20 Aboriginal communities.

They are micro and small businesses with varying levels of success holding a small and poorly defined market position within the Victorian tourism industry.

The majority of Aboriginal tourism businesses offer the opportunity for tourists to buy Aboriginal art/craft or souvenirs, followed by visits to an Aboriginal art gallery.

There is current demand for Aboriginal tourism experiences. For the year ending 2008, 22 per cent of International visitors to Victoria chose to experience some form of Aboriginal based tourism. International visitors experienced Aboriginal tourism products predominantly in Melbourne. International visitors spend significantly more money on Aboriginal tourism products than domestic visitors (\$45.00 compared to \$6.00) (*International and National Visitor Survey, Tourism Australia, 2008*).

### There is 'latent' demand

There is indication that there is potential or 'latent' demand for Aboriginal tourism experiences in Victoria.

A rough estimate of the potential number of domestic tourists currently coming to Victoria who could experience Aboriginal tourism products during their visit is around 20,000-30,000. This is in addition to the roughly 60,000 who currently experience Aboriginal product during their stay. (*Estimated using data from the International and National Visitor Survey, Tourism Australia, 2008*).



## Sharing Aboriginal culture through tourism

### Growing a strong and sustainable Aboriginal tourism industry

Growing this demand would require strengthening the products offered, the businesses offering them, and a dynamic and integrated marketing plan.

The majority of tourism businesses in Victoria would require support to enable them to meet the criteria needed to grow a strong and sustainable Aboriginal tourism industry. The criteria for success are:

- Financial viability
- Consistent standard of high quality products
- Regular and consistent delivery of products
- Strong business networks including strong business relationships between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal tourism enterprises, and
- Strong integrated marketing.

The current barriers to achieving this are:

- Insufficient business support offered to Aboriginal tourism businesses including business mentoring
- Lack of awareness by consumers of the Aboriginal tourism offering in Victoria
- Where marketing occurs, Aboriginal tourism is marketed as a niche industry and not part of Victorian tourism as a whole
- Reduced access to capital for Aboriginal businesses
- The limited pool of qualified and appropriately trained Aboriginal staff to work in tourism businesses, and
- Limited relationships with mainstream tourism businesses and operators.

There are examples in other States where some of these issues have been successfully addressed. In the Northern Territory, the establishment of an Aboriginal tourism hub that undertakes the 'back of house' activities such as book-keeping and bookings was piloted and proved to be successful.

In 2006 Tourism NT and the then Northern Territory (NT) Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development (DBERD) developed the concept of Indigenous Tourism Hubs in the Northern Territory to support the development of Indigenous tourism enterprises across the NT. In June 2007 an Indigenous Tourism Hub in Nhulunbuy, East Arnhem Land was established for two years as a pilot program. The aim of the Hub was to provide a wide range of support and referral services to new and emerging Indigenous tourism businesses through all aspects and stages of their development. Strong support from stakeholders has led to the initiative being continued with the establishment of the Alice Springs Indigenous Tourism Hub funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Source: [www.tourismnt.com.au](http://www.tourismnt.com.au)

## Valuing Aboriginal culture

In Western Australia, the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee (WAITOC) is a successful example of how a well resourced peak body can significantly progress Aboriginal tourism.

Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee (WAITOC) is the peak not for profit Association representing Indigenous tourism in Western Australia. WAITOC comprises membership from all regions within Western Australia. The Association is autonomous and provides advice and information to all relevant State Government agencies as well as the tourism industry sector. WAITOC promotes Indigenous tourism and provides a supportive network for Indigenous tourism operators within Western Australia.

WAITOC represents over 50 Aboriginal tourism operators ranging from accommodation, traditional dance and dreamtime stories to contemporary history, bush tours and art. These members operate at different levels depending on the season and the length of time they have been in business. The range of membership is from tourism operators who are firmly entrenched in the tourism industry to those who are currently developing their tourism product and will be operating within the next 12 months.

WAITOC aspires to promote Indigenous tourism experiences and in doing so foster the development of new, culturally authentic Indigenous tourism ventures that will attract visitors to Western Australia ensuring that visitors receive the authentic Indigenous tourism experience they seek.

Source: [www.waitoc.com](http://www.waitoc.com)

## The opportunity

Fifteen years ago, Victorian wine producers operated in isolation with little to offer visitors except some door sales at some wineries and with limited tourism opportunities (with the exception of North East Victoria where the 'Winery Walkabout' indicated the opportunity and potential). Now wine tourism is a thriving industry with recognised regions attracting both international and domestic visitors who can sample local wine and produce at different wineries and find restaurants, cafes, retail, accommodation, and a raft of associated local tourism activities such as festivals and local markets within a short distance.

Wine producers and associated local businesses have successfully leveraged the communities' growing interest in food and wine and 'locally' made goods and products.

There is now indication of a societal shift in Australia and Victoria towards valuing Aboriginal culture. A trigger point for this was the Prime Minister's apology to the Stolen Generation. The research by Tourism Northern Territory on attitudes towards Aboriginal cultural experiences is further evidence of this shift.

The opportunity for Aboriginal tourism in Victoria is to generate wealth for Aboriginal families and communities through business and employment, enable Aboriginal communities to keep culture strong, enhance and deepen the current tourism offering, and fulfil a growing need by the broader community to understand and appreciate Aboriginal culture. This will also make a contribution to reconciliation.



## Sharing Aboriginal culture through tourism

**All Victorians and all Australians should be proud to live in a country with a culture which is in the truest sense of the word, unique**

A strong and flourishing Aboriginal Tourism industry in Victoria would have:

- At least one unique draw card or iconic attraction that establishes Victoria as a destination for Aboriginal tourism
- Independent and reputable businesses collaborating and networking across the State offering reliable and high quality Aboriginal experiences
- Mainstream and Aboriginal operators that routinely draw upon these businesses when packaging up tourism offerings, and
- A broad range of Aboriginal businesses that operate in mainstream tourism such as in retail, accommodation, hospitality, adventure tourism, etc.

It is realistic to expect that to reach its full potential this may take at least 10 years of long-term and strategic commitment from all parties.

Victoria has a strong tourism brand. Two key attractions for both international and domestic visitors to Victoria are Melbourne as the cultural centre of Australia and the Great Ocean Road.

The Koorie Heritage Trust, located in Melbourne offers a unique contemporary Aboriginal arts and culture experience with potential to add greater depth and strength to Melbourne's existing offering of arts, theatre and cultural heritage products.

Similarly, the world's oldest living village located at Lake Condah in South West Victoria is an exciting potential addition and to the Great Ocean Road experience.

Surrounding the Koorie Heritage Trust and Lake Condah are a variety of Aboriginal tourism products that, with strengthening, could form a strong tourism base that could drive the industry forward across the rest of the State.

## A 10-15 year Aboriginal Tourism Plan

## An iconic Aboriginal tourism region

### Recommendations for action

#### To develop Victoria's potential for Aboriginal cultural and tourism experiences, it is recommended that:

1. Tourism Victoria in conjunction with Aboriginal tourism providers should develop a 10 year Aboriginal Tourism Plan that:
  - Aims to establish Melbourne as an icon of contemporary Aboriginal culture offering interpretation and experience of both contemporary and traditional culture and providing a gateway to regional experiences and products
  - Develops a regional experience with particular consideration of the South West based around Lake Condah as part of mainstream promotion of the Great Ocean Road tourism experience
  - Provides a marketing plan linked to Tourism Victoria's broader Victorian Tourism marketing to establish the profile of Melbourne as the centre for contemporary Aboriginal experiences
  - Builds the capacity of Aboriginal businesses and quality of products through a range of supports, including accredited Aboriginal tourism training
  - Identifies strategic opportunities for product development including marketing and integrating with existing attractions such as the Aquarium in Melbourne and Flagstaff Hill in Warrnambool
  - Strengthens and resources Aboriginal Tourism Victoria, using the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee as a model.
2. A full scoping study be undertaken to determine the potential for and role of tourism hubs in strengthening Aboriginal tourism in Victoria.
3. A full feasibility and scoping study be undertaken of the potential of the South West to become an iconic Aboriginal tourism region that:
  - Integrates with broader tourism attractions such as the Great Ocean Road to the South and the Pyrenees wine region to the east
  - Attracts and provides for domestic families and groups
  - Co-ordinates its activities and offerings through a small regional hub linked to a potential Melbourne hub
  - Has a range of entrepreneurial associated products such as accommodation, food and beverages
  - Offers business support that is specific to tourism such as marketing and packaging and accredited Aboriginal tourism training.



# Leadership and mentoring

***“Indigenous communities have been providing cultural mentoring to their young for thousands of years so for them, mentoring has been in the context of passing on traditions through kith and kin. Non-Indigenous mentoring, however, has its roots in a very different context, being generally based on the development of supportive bonds outside familial relationships.”***

*Francis Broekman - Brophy Youth and Family Services, Warrnambool. Taken from: A guide for effective practices for mentoring young people (2006)*

There are many Aboriginal people quietly working in communities improving the lives of the people around them and Aboriginal people more broadly. What they do is often so connected to their local communities or a particular person that it cannot be replicated somewhere else.

What can be scaled up is the ability and commitment of Aboriginal people to make a difference.

## **Leadership and mentoring are integral to success**

Both are essential, but leadership and mentoring are not the same thing.

Leaders are often described as being highly experienced, skilled and well-regarded members of the community with strong social and economic networks who want to share their experience and skills in order to make a difference to others. They are, in short, role models.

Strong Aboriginal leaders can demonstrate what is possible, encourage others to have dreams and help guide them to realise their goals. Importantly, Aboriginal leaders speak to Governments and the broader community about the dreams and achievements of Aboriginal people.

By their ability to influence a large number of people, Aboriginal leaders are essential to bring about broad change for Aboriginal people.

Mentoring, at its basic level, is a relationship between two people where one person shares their knowledge and experiences in order to support the personal growth of the other. What's important is that mentoring can bring about a life change for an individual.

## **Expanding the pool**

Currently there are few opportunities available to Aboriginal people to improve their skills and knowledge by working with more experienced and knowledgeable people. Many Aboriginal leaders including elders, mentor people in their communities and are already stretched.

While there are mentoring and leadership programs in Australia and Victoria that have benefited some Aboriginal people, generally there are few opportunities for Aboriginal leaders in communities to further develop their leadership skills.

These generic programs do provide a potential pool of non-Aboriginal mentors from across a wide range of professions, industries and locations, and from all sectors, that could be made available to support Aboriginal people.

However, they do not provide the cultural context that is important to or needed by Aboriginal people.

More importantly, currently there is no comprehensive action focussed on growing the pool of Aboriginal leaders and mentors.

A comprehensive leadership and mentoring program that supports and builds the pool of Aboriginal leaders and mentors should be developed to provide:

- Support for more Aboriginal people to become recognised good leaders by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities
- More Aboriginal people to become good mentors to employers, employees, business people, entrepreneurs, young people and upcoming leaders
- Tools and supports to help people be mentors to Aboriginal people
- A place where leaders and mentors can meet, learn from each other, and grow their own networks (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal)
- Support for non-Aboriginal mentors to be better mentors to Aboriginal people.

## A Leadership and Mentoring Program

### Recommendations for action

**To expand the pool of Aboriginal leaders and mentors, it is recommended that:**

1. The Indigenous Leadership Network Victoria should be appropriately resourced to administer the Leadership and Mentoring program.
2. The Leadership and Mentoring program have a:
  - Young leaders program
  - Mentor Bank to provide a range of mentors for youth, business and employment
  - Role model and Champion program promoting Aboriginal role models across the breadth of the economy
  - Local leadership and problem solving forums around the state to build local leadership capacity and networks
  - International leadership program including study scholarships, study tours, international work experience, international 'development' experience
  - A range of mentoring tools for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mentors including a website
  - Learning programs including cultural competency and mentoring training
  - Board participation program promoting Aboriginal people on boards, a register of possible appointees and linked to the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



## Underpinning success

***“There is an urgent need to have reliable, rigorous data and interpretation of the economic status of Victorian Kooris.”***

*Professor Marcia Langton, Presentation to the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group, 2009*

This report is an opportunity to improve the economic circumstances of Aboriginal Victorians. Success means significantly improving the outcomes for young Aboriginal people, employment, business, and access to land and natural resources. Underpinning success is measurement, sharing stories, appropriate funding and partnership.

### **Measuring success**

Victoria has adopted the Council of Australian Governments' target of halving the gap in employment over 10 years. In Victoria, modelling indicates that achieving this by 2016 will require an additional 6,800 Aboriginal workers over the current Aboriginal workforce – roughly a 68% increase in Aboriginal employment in a decade.

Measuring success at the state and local level requires baseline data that can be monitored. The current data available for Aboriginal economic participation and development is limited in its availability and application. Where state level data is available, community consultations indicate official data underestimate the numbers of Aboriginal people.

There is no reliable data on Aboriginal businesses in Victoria.

There are labour force statistics available but the most reliable data is produced by the Census every five years. The sampling methodology combined with a small Aboriginal population in Victoria, makes more frequently available data unreliable.

Aggregated statistics are available for school retention and attainment but youth transition data is not captured at the state or local level.

Evidence shows that local or place based approaches are very effective. However, data weaknesses are most pronounced at the local level.

***“Each little success creates a platform for more success - a little more self-esteem, a little more sense of what’s possible. It’s not grand policy half so much as attention to detail. And persistence - making sure it works.”***

*Professor Mick Dodson, Australian of the Year 2009, speech to the National Press Club, February 2009*

## **Sharing success**

Measuring and monitoring success through data is not enough because success happens to individuals and it happens in communities.

Shepparton’s Indigenous community is making progress in improving the future prospects of its youth, in education and in employment

We believe that Ganbina’s efforts in education retention, training and employment are reshaping the thinking behind Indigenous employment participation and creating a cultural shift.

Ganbina’s registrations show we have 34 Indigenous students undertaking VCE studies in 2009 (15 in Year 12 and 19 in Year 11). These are the best numbers in the past 15 years and they are directly attributable to Ganbina’s longer-term engagement and partnership with individuals and their families. Indeed, the 2009 Year 12 students are the original Year 7 students from the 2004 program engagement. A greater number of Indigenous youth are seeking to develop employment skills and history while still involved in their secondary schooling.

31 young people are currently in employment, with 20 undertaking after school work. 18 of the 20 young people doing after school work are employed in the retail sector in such companies as KFC, Hungry Jacks, Coles and IGA.

One of these youth, Jordan, a Year 10 student, spoke of his after-school work: “I’m happy to have my own money to spend and later on I want to save.” Braydon, Jordan’s younger brother, a Year 9 student, was disappointed that KFC informed him that he was too young to work. Braydon has now placed an application with Hungry Jacks.

Andrian Appo, Executive Officer of Ganbina Koori Economic Employment & Training Agency Inc, exert from Crikey website.

Success is different for different people. Stories of success need to be shared so that Aboriginal people and communities can learn about what works from each other.

## **Funding for success**

A critical barrier to success that has emerged from consultations is the way that funding is currently provided to Aboriginal communities for economic participation and development activities. With some exceptions, current funding from across all sectors has been short-term, stop start, unco-ordinated, and not aligned. The impact on Aboriginal communities is too much effort is spent on seeking funding to maintain assets and restart initiatives.

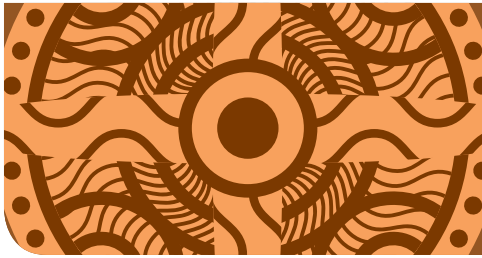
Funding in this way does not enable Aboriginal communities to define their own success and work towards achieving their goals. Funding for success needs to be flexible and long-term.

## **A partnership for success**

This report paves the way for action that will deliver much more than halving the gap in employment outcomes in a decade. However, success depends on the commitment of the whole Victorian community. Together we should be striving to close the economic gap in the same period of time – not merely halving it. This would be success.

This is not something that governments can achieve alone and there are many people in the wider community who want to contribute but don’t know how.

This commitment can be harnessed and driven through a partnership drawn from key leaders in the Aboriginal community, private, philanthropic and education sectors, and all levels of Government.



# Underpinning success

## Long-term systemic reform

## A partnership of key leaders

### Recommendations for action

#### To underpin success, it is recommended that:

1. A leading research organisation be engaged to establish baseline data by assembling a comprehensive picture of the current population and economic position of each Aboriginal community in Victoria.
2. The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments overhaul the existing funding arrangements to allow for larger block funding with longer-term horizons and investment by the private and philanthropic sectors.
3. The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments shift from short term and ad hoc programmatic responses to fundamental long term systemic reform.
4. A network is established and maintained and regular events held to showcase and celebrate success.
5. A partnership of key leaders from all sectors of the community be established for a limited period of time to:
  - Oversee the implementation the recommendations in this report
  - Oversee the Victorian Government's public sector Aboriginal employment and procurement strategies
  - Champion Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Broker deals that drive Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Oversee the establishment of a website as a 'One Stop Shop' for Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Monitor progress at the state-wide and local level.
6. The Victorian Government formally respond to this report. This response should be announced at a public function in partnership with leaders from the Aboriginal community, private and philanthropic sectors to demonstrate the commitment of all sectors to improving economic outcomes.



# Full list of recommendations

## Real pathways for young Aboriginal people

### To build the partnership for change, it is recommended that:

1. The Victorian Government establish a high-profile **Pathways Leadership Group** to generate immediate momentum and, as a first priority, secure the participation of:
  - The Aboriginal community
  - The AFL and its corporate partners, as football is of particular interest to young Aboriginal people and the AFL brand can help to attract corporate support and job opportunities
  - The Australian Employment Covenant (AEC) to set out how signatories can create real jobs and training opportunities
  - A key TAFE to generate momentum for rolling out the AEC's P-Platers Scheme across all TAFEs and the Victorian school system
  - Key Universities to find new paths into university
  - The philanthropic sector
  - A key professional association such as Engineers Australia
  - A key industry association such as the Australian Retailers' Association, and
  - Support from Local Government.
2. The **Pathways Leadership Group** will:
  - Create opportunities for schools to develop long-term formal relationships between individual employers and further education and training providers, individual students and their families starting early in Years 7 and 8 with visits to schools and student and family 'open' days at workplaces
  - Provide rewards to students who meet their goals (as agreed in their Managed Individual Pathways Plans) including (but not limited to):
    - scholarships to continue to year 12
    - scholarships to continue to University
    - work experience
    - part-time work, and/or
    - an ongoing job

### To make school interesting for Aboriginal people and their families, it is recommended that:

3. Football, netball, art and culture be integrated into Victorian school programs by involving organisations including the AFL, Netball Victoria, the Clontarf Foundation, the Koorie Heritage Trust and Arts Victoria.
4. The Victorian Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation (VAYSAR) sport carnivals be used as a vehicle to promote education and employment, including through careers fairs and job expos.



## Full list of recommendations

### **To support the engagement of employers in schools and co-ordinate activities across regions, it is recommended that:**

5. Brokers external to schools and possibly funded through COAG National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions be provided to work with schools and trainers, employers, local organisations and the Pathways Leadership Group to secure more opportunities for Aboriginal students aged 15 and over to work part-time while at secondary school or in tertiary education. The same Brokers support employers participating in the Australian Employment Covenant, and the Pathways Leadership Group, to provide young Aboriginal people with school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.
6. Koorie Transition Co-ordinators be provided across all DEECD regions to drive activities across regions aimed at strengthening pathways to employment and further education for young Aboriginal students. These Co-ordinators would be an interface between activities within and external to schools aimed at increasing the aspirations and the motivation of young Aboriginal people to complete secondary education and move into employment or further education and training. Co-ordinators would work closely with families, communities, schools and Koorie Engagement Support Officers to identify the supports young people need to remain engaged in school and succeed in employment or further education and training.

### **To provide individual support for Aboriginal young people and strengthen career development at all schools, it is recommended that:**

7. Every Aboriginal secondary school student from year 7 has an individualised education and career plan that includes work experience opportunities and career advice. The plan (a Managed Individual Pathway Plan) would be supported by a school based resource who co-ordinates the individual support provided within schools and who can leverage the opportunities generated by Brokers, the Pathways Leadership Group, School Business Community Partnership Brokers and Local Learning and Employment Networks.
8. An Aboriginal Career Development Program is established in all schools to introduce work concepts, job information and work experience well before the post-compulsory schooling years by which time many Aboriginal students have already disengaged. This would involve:
  - Aboriginal students from years 7 to 9 participating in career development activities including open days, part-time employment and work experience
  - Career development activities that involve families and communities in their children's career development
  - Providing a Career Mentor for every Aboriginal student early in secondary school
  - Co-ordinating the work of Koorie educators, career teachers and Brokers to achieve much better outcomes for Aboriginal students.

9. The Government encourage universities to implement the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) and support its introduction in secondary schools across Victoria.

**To reach young Aboriginal people aged 15-19 who have opted out of school, it is recommended that:**

10. One-on-one support be given to Aboriginal students at risk of disengaging or who have already left school or training to help them find the most appropriate schooling (secondary, TAFE or Adult and Community Education). Through the soon to be established and Commonwealth funded Youth Connections service, the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments should work together to ensure support is provided in a way that recognises the particular needs and local and family circumstances of young Aboriginal people.
11. Additional place based projects be funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments in areas with significant numbers of disengaged young Aboriginal people.

**To strengthen the pathway from training to employment, it is recommended that:**

12. The Australian Employment Covenant's P-Plater scheme is introduced to Victorian TAFEs from 2010. This scheme will support young people to complete their education and training and provide clear pathways into employment.
13. Every Aboriginal student in TAFE and ACE aged 24 years or younger be provided with a Pathway Plan that sets out the transition from training to employment, incorporating work experience and/or part time work.
14. TAFE Completion Officers are being introduced in some TAFE institutes. They should ensure Aboriginal students are provided with supports such as mentoring, careers advice and pathways planning.

**To draw together all of the VAED Group's recommendations and ensure a consistent and concerted effort across all sectors, it is recommended that:**

15. The Victorian Government develop a Statewide Aboriginal Youth Transitions Framework to complement the efforts of the Pathways Leadership Group. The framework should reach:
  - Students in secondary school - plans should be developed across networks of schools and set out how schools will work together to improve the transition of Aboriginal students. Individual schools should address transition planning for Aboriginal students in their strategic plan and set out how they will work with the local Aboriginal community, education and training providers, schools within their network, employers and support agencies such as Local Learning and Employment Networks and Brokers to help more students move from school to work or further education
  - Students in TAFE – plans should be developed by each TAFE and set out how 15 to 24-year-old students will be supported to transition into employment, further education or training
  - Students in ACE - plans should be developed by each ACE provider working with five or more Aboriginal students. It should set out how 15 to 24 year-old students will be supported to transition into employment, further education or training.



## Full list of recommendations

**16.** The Commonwealth Government should develop accountability arrangements which ensure that funding for Aboriginal students in non-government schools is used to deliver supports such as pathways planning and career advice needed to deliver improved student outcomes.

**To measure performance, it is recommended that:**

**17.** Indicators be developed and publicly reported to show the progress on young Aboriginal people’s educational attainment and transition to work. Reporting of outcomes by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, classified by gender, need to be developed for school, tertiary education and training, and labour force and employment.

**Proposed indicators**

School	Tertiary education and training	Labour force and employment
Retention through school	Participation	Participation by school leavers
Achievement at school	Completion	School leavers at risk
Employment experience at school	Re-engagement	Participation by 15-19 year-olds
Attainment at school		Participation by 20-24 year-olds
		Duration of transition

The annual reporting should be state-wide and, where data exists, at regional level. It should also incorporate relevant indicators in the performance review and professional development of senior staff working with young Aboriginal people.

## The bridge to work

### To build bridges between Aboriginal communities and employers, it is recommended that:

- 18.** A 10 Year Action Plan for Aboriginal employment be developed to align State and Commonwealth effort in partnership with local governments, businesses and Aboriginal communities. The Plan will have both a 'place based' and 'industry based' approach.
- 19.** Local Aboriginal Employment Brokers be employed for three years as the first step in the 10 Year Plan in places with a significant Aboriginal population. To be jointly supported by the State and Commonwealth, the brokers will engage with community, employers and governments at local, state and national level to develop employment strategies and five to 10-year employment plans.
- 20.** Industry-based Aboriginal Employment Brokers be appointed for three years initially, in the industries of greatest opportunity: retail, professional services, manufacturing, education and training, and construction. This should be done in partnership with industry associations and/or unions, and jointly supported. Again, both the State and Commonwealth Governments should jointly support these brokers.
- 21.** Pre-placement and post-placement support for Aboriginal employees and their employers be built into all job services that are supported by government.
- 22.** The Victorian and Commonwealth Government support the establishment of the Victorian Aboriginal Employment Resource Centre to recognise the critical role and contribution played by local Aboriginal employment practitioners and organisations. The Resource Centre should:
  - Provide a source of advice and access to expertise by companies wishing to develop their Aboriginal employment strategies, and on how to engage effectively with local Aboriginal communities, and thus to access potential employees
  - Support the creation of a best-practice network of Aboriginal employment practitioners which includes both Aboriginal employment practitioners and companies such as Rio Tinto and other corporate partners
  - Support the work of individual Aboriginal employment professionals and to provide them with professional development and education opportunities
  - Advise State, Commonwealth and Local Governments on the progress of employment initiatives and their practical impact, and the need and nature of further action required.
- 23.** Government procurement policies should support employers who employ Aboriginal people and/or create real pathways to employment.
- 24.** The Victorian Government should work with the Aboriginal community to develop Aboriginal workforce strategies that identify skills shortages in Aboriginal communities and detail actions to address them. This could include a cadetship program across the Government and community sectors where Aboriginal people are offered a range of paid employment and accredited training across a range of organisations.



## Full list of recommendations

### **To increase the opportunities to move from training to work, it is recommended that:**

- 25.** Free vocational training be provided to Aboriginal people regardless of their training history where there is a demonstrated pathway to a job (for example through an apprenticeship or traineeship).
- 26.** Pathway Plans be provided to Aboriginal people in TAFE and ACE with little or no employment history to show the clear link between training, local skills needs, and employment prospects in the context of the Koorie State Training Plan.
- 27.** The Koorie State Training Plan clearly shows the skill needs of local employers and how the training system will meet those needs.

### **To ensure that Aboriginal people leaving government services are skilled and work ready, it is recommended that:**

- 28.** Education, employment and training pathway plans be developed and supported for all Aboriginal people participating in Victorian Government services such as justice and human services.

## Business is business

### To give the necessary support for Aboriginal businesses, it is recommended that:

- 29.** A partnership be established with a business association to provide mobile Account Managers that co-ordinate tailored packages of support for Aboriginal businesses in areas with a significant Aboriginal population.
- 30.** Partnerships are formed with financial institutions to provide financial products such as microfinance, and services such as Aboriginal Finance Brokers in key locations with strong Aboriginal populations. The role of an Aboriginal Finance Broker would be to ensure the commercial feasibility of Aboriginal business proposals and connect Aboriginal clients to the most appropriate finance products and services available.
- 31.** The Victorian Government underwrite up to 40 per cent of the first year of a loan with an approved lender to an Aboriginal person starting up, growing or buying an existing business, provided they have passed the test of a sound financial and business plan, have appropriate business skills and/or agree to undertake accredited business training, and have ongoing business mentoring and support.
- 32.** Targeted support to assist Aboriginal employees to lease and/or buy franchises including awareness raising, business preparation, an underwritten loan, accredited business training, and ongoing mentoring.
- 33.** A range of business supports including business planning and preparation, expansion support and ongoing mentoring be provided to Aboriginal businesses, along with links to mainstream business support provided through Small Business Victoria.
- 34.** Accredited business training be available and accessible to meet the needs of Aboriginal people, including:
  - Bridging support such as literacy and numeracy
  - Financial Literacy
  - Block release training and accommodation support
  - Using training to build enduring networks of Aboriginal participants
  - Integration with financial and business planning support and business incubators.
- 35.** The Victorian Government partner with Social Ventures Australia and Social Traders in Victoria to:
  - Allocate some of the proposed social investment fund to Aboriginal community enterprises in Victoria
  - Tie social investment to building business capacity through accredited business training
  - Resource a position to administer this part of the fund and build relationships with the Aboriginal community.



## Full list of recommendations

### To create the right business environment, it is recommended that:

- 36.** An Aboriginal Supplier Program be established, linked to the recently established Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council (AIMSC), to identify and work with small Aboriginal businesses to successfully tender for State Government and other large organisation contracts. It should include a Minority Supplier Panel.
- 37.** As a procurement principle, large contracts be broken into smaller components where there is an Aboriginal business participating in the Aboriginal Supplier Program that can provide the product or service.
- 38.** Building incentives into large contracts to encourage joint ventures with Aboriginal businesses, and to link this into the Aboriginal Supplier Program.

## Wealth from the land

### **To strengthen Traditional Owner groups' capacity to negotiate and maximise economic benefits from Native Title settlements, it is recommended that:**

- 39.** The Victorian Government support Traditional Owners to identify the economic benefits early in the negotiation of all native title settlements, including industries beyond those traditionally associated with land management. Joint venture models where Traditional Owner Groups lease land to the joint venture partner then buy them out over time should also be considered.
- 40.** Business opportunities are identified by using broad-based industry analysis, supply chain mapping and community asset mapping, and be pursued through contracting, sub-contracting and joint ventures.
- 41.** Native Title settlement agreements should identify:
  - Governance arrangements that establish business focused legal entities for the management of commercial activities
  - An appropriate mechanism for managing commercial risk, and
  - Training requirements.

### **To increase public sector employment and purchasing of Aboriginal goods and services, it is recommended that:**

- 42.** Industry employment strategies are developed across all natural resource management and primary industries sectors in the Victorian Government that would result in more employment for Aboriginal people. For example, through the soon to be finalised Victorian Timber Industry Strategy and Fisheries Strategy.
- 43.** All natural resource management traineeship programs provide ongoing employment after completion of the traineeship in appropriate government or private sector organisations.
- 44.** Preferred procurement be used by the Victorian Government to actively increase the number of Aboriginal businesses providing natural resource and primary industry products and services to Government.
- 45.** An incubator model such as that being trialled by Parks Victoria, be used to establish an Aboriginal natural resource management service provider in each native title claim area. The model should take into account the success that Aboriginal Green Teams have had in northern New South Wales.
- 46.** The Victorian Government in partnership with regional Aboriginal communities should work with the Commonwealth Government to access funding for employment through initiatives such as Regional Partnership Agreements (RPA) and Caring for Country.



## Full list of recommendations

**To increase the capacity of Aboriginal people to lease and own land, and then establish successful businesses, it is recommended that:**

- 47.** A full range of business supports, including financial brokering to lease or purchase land for commercial purposes be provided.
- 48.** Aboriginal organisations be supported by the Victorian Government to develop applications for Indigenous Land Council land acquisition with a view to developing sustainable land-based enterprises.

## Sharing Aboriginal culture through tourism

### To develop Victoria's potential for Aboriginal cultural and tourism experiences, it is recommended that:

- 49.** Tourism Victoria in conjunction with Aboriginal tourism providers should develop a 10 year Aboriginal Tourism Plan that:
  - Aims to establish Melbourne as an icon of contemporary Aboriginal culture offering interpretation and experience of both contemporary and traditional culture and providing a gateway to regional experiences and products
  - Develops a regional experience with particular consideration of the South West based around Lake Condah as part of mainstream promotion of the Great Ocean Road tourism experience
  - Provides a marketing plan linked to Tourism Victoria's broader Victorian Tourism marketing to establish the profile of Melbourne as the centre for contemporary Aboriginal experiences
  - Builds the capacity of Aboriginal businesses and quality of products through a range of supports, including accredited Aboriginal tourism training
  - Identifies strategic opportunities for product development including marketing and integrating with existing attractions such as the Aquarium in Melbourne and Flagstaff Hill in Warrnambool
  - Strengthens and resources Aboriginal Tourism Victoria, using the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee as a model.
- 50.** A full scoping study be undertaken to determine the potential for and role of tourism hubs in strengthening Aboriginal tourism in Victoria.
- 51.** A full feasibility and scoping study be undertaken of the potential of the South West to become an iconic Aboriginal tourism region that:
  - Integrates with broader tourism attractions such as the Great Ocean Road to the South and the Pyrenees wine region to the east
  - Attracts and provides for domestic families and groups
  - Co-ordinates its activities and offerings through a small regional hub linked to a potential Melbourne hub
  - Has a range of entrepreneurial associated products such as accommodation, food and beverages
  - Offers business support that is specific to tourism such as marketing and packaging and accredited Aboriginal tourism training.



# Full list of recommendations

## Leadership and Mentoring

**To expand the pool of Aboriginal leaders and mentors, it is recommended that:**

- 52.** The Indigenous Leadership Network Victoria should be appropriately resourced to administer the Leadership and Mentoring program.
- 53.** The Leadership and Mentoring program have a:
- Young leaders program
  - Mentor Bank to provide a range of mentors for youth, business and employment
  - Role model and Champion program promoting Aboriginal role models across the breadth of the economy
  - Local leadership and problem solving forums around the state to build local leadership capacity and networks
  - International leadership program including study scholarships, study tours, international work experience, international 'development' experience
  - A range of mentoring tools for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mentors including a website
  - Learning programs including cultural competency and mentoring training
  - Board participation program promoting Aboriginal people on boards, a register of possible appointees and linked to the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## Paving the way to success

### To underpin success, it is recommended that:

- 54.** A leading research organisation be engaged to establish baseline data by assembling a comprehensive picture of the current population and economic position of each Aboriginal community in Victoria.
- 55.** The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments overhaul the existing funding arrangements to allow for larger block funding with longer-term horizons and investment by the private and philanthropic sectors.
- 56.** The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments shift from short term and ad hoc programmatic responses to fundamental long term systemic reform.
- 57.** A network is established and maintained and regular events held to showcase and celebrate success.
- 58.** A partnership of key leaders from all sectors of the community be established for a limited period of time to:
  - Oversee the implementation the recommendations in this report
  - Oversee the Victorian Government's public sector Aboriginal employment and procurement strategies
  - Champion Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Broker deals that drive Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Oversee the establishment of a website as a 'One Stop Shop' for Aboriginal economic development in Victoria
  - Monitor progress at the state-wide and local level.
- 59.** The Victorian Government formally respond to this report. This response should be announced at a public function in partnership with leaders from the Aboriginal community, private and philanthropic sectors to demonstrate the commitment of all sectors to improving economic outcomes.





