

YUNMA YIRRAMBOI

Victorian Aboriginal Employment
and Economic Strategy



Artist — Dixon Patten, Yorta Yorta and Gunnai

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria, their ongoing connection to this land and we pay our respects to their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches our society more broadly. We embrace the spirit of self-determination and reconciliation, working towards equality of outcomes and ensuring an equitable voice.

Acknowledgement of artist

Artist — Dixon Patten, Yorta Yorta and Gunnai

This artwork depicts the department, its people and its commitment to developing the economy by helping to create Aboriginal employment opportunities, supporting inclusion and economic prosperity and thriving Aboriginal communities.

The bigger circle in the middle represents the broad work of the department and its different Groups working together to achieve this.

The pathways represent the opportunities for the Aboriginal community to achieve personal and economic prosperity and improved employment outcomes.

The various smaller circles represent the different mobs within the Aboriginal community and the footprints represent the diversity of knowledge, skills and resources the community have.

The artefacts represent our traditional economy and are a reminder of our trade/barter system(s) and the connection to our cultural practices and ceremonies.

The emu and kangaroo tracks represent the department's commitment to moving forward, as these animals can't walk backwards.



Yuma Yirramboi

Woiwurrung words meaning Invest in Tomorrow which captures the long-term vision, coordinated, and sustained approach to increasing the wealth and prosperity of Aboriginal Victorians.

We thank the Wurundjeri people for allowing the use of their language, and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages for its support, in the naming of Yuma Yirramboi.

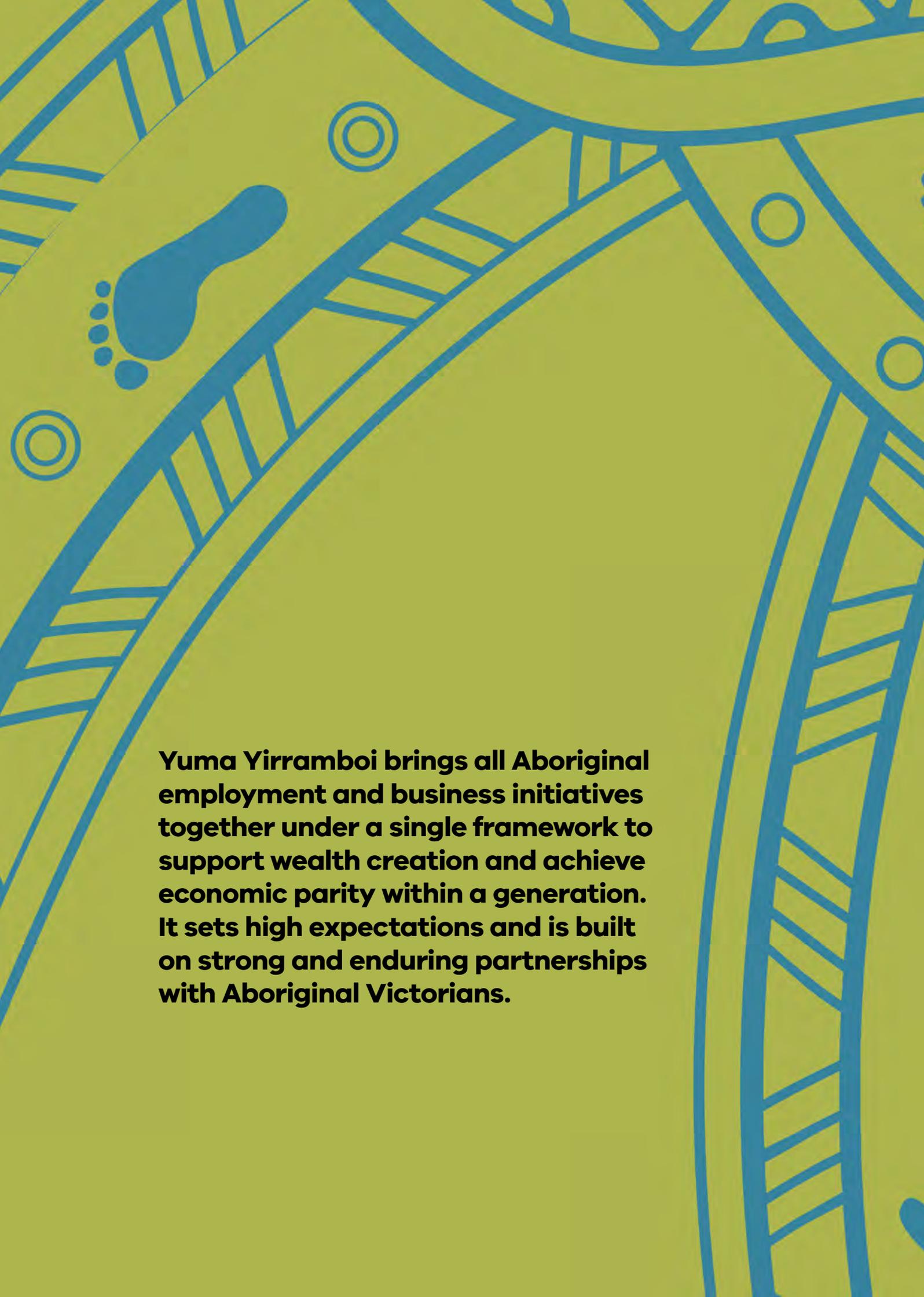
Language Statement

We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal people living throughout Victoria. The term Aboriginal Victorians is used throughout the Strategy, to encompass Victorian Traditional Owners, clans, family groups and all other people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent living in Victoria.

The term Aboriginal community includes Traditional Owners, business owners and other community representatives.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) is referred to throughout this document as 'DJPR' or 'the department'.

This Strategy represents our shared commitment, and the use of the word 'we' throughout refers to the shared voice of the Victorian Government and Aboriginal Victorians.



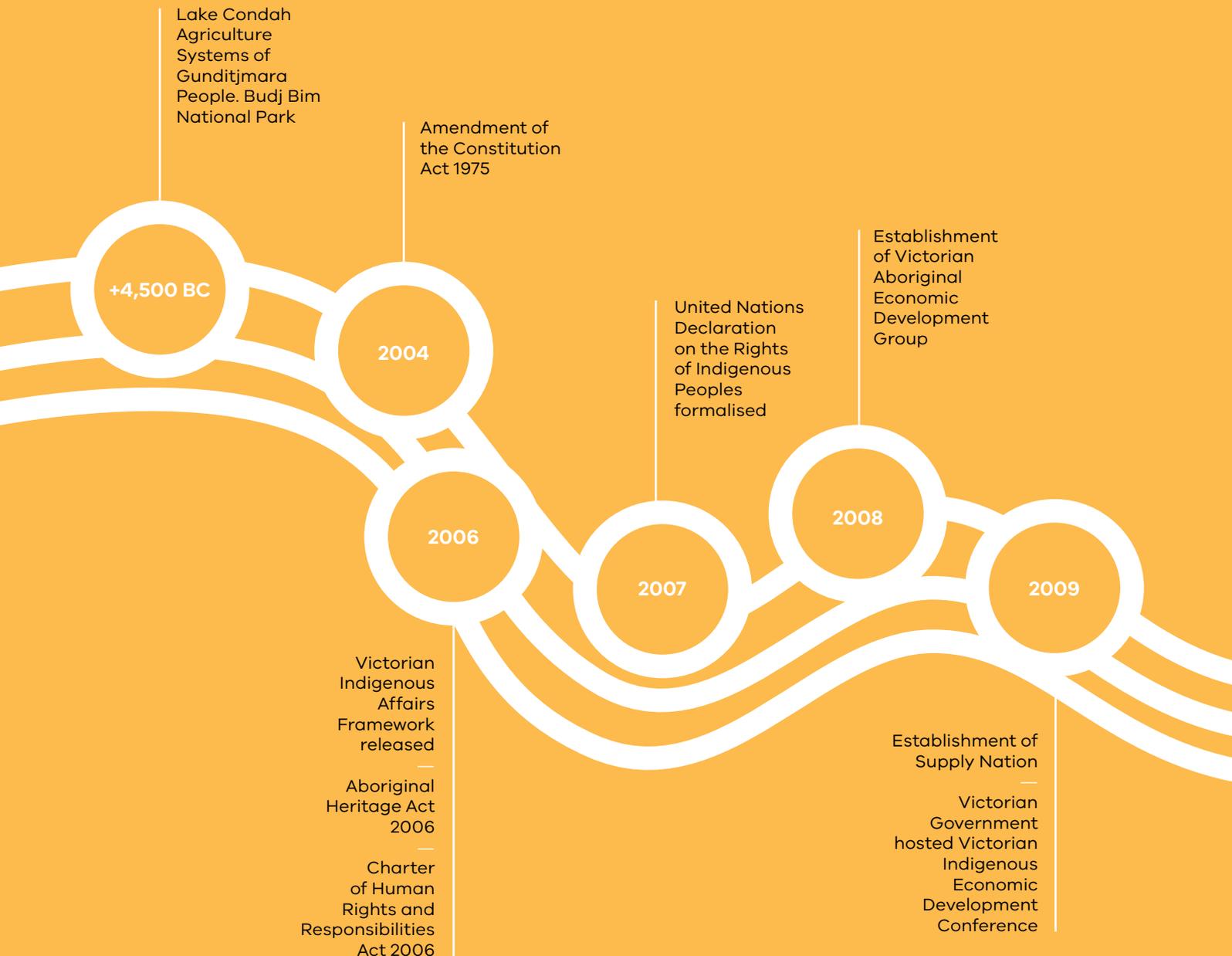
Yuma Yirramboi brings all Aboriginal employment and business initiatives together under a single framework to support wealth creation and achieve economic parity within a generation. It sets high expectations and is built on strong and enduring partnerships with Aboriginal Victorians.

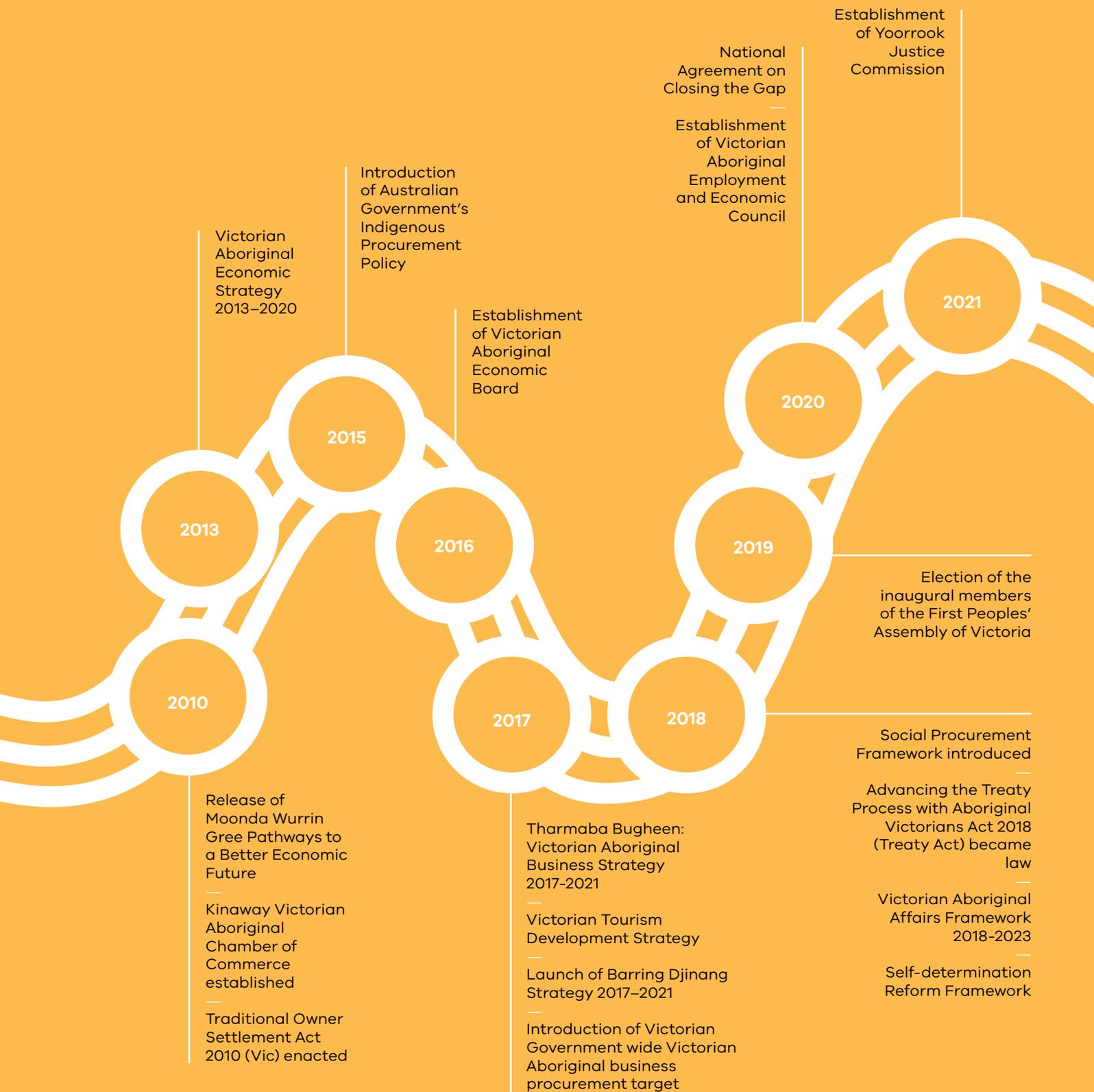


The Economic Journey

in Victoria

Aboriginal Victorians have always been at the forefront of leading their pathway to prosperity. This has been interrupted by settlement and colonisation. Yuma Yirramboi builds on foundations upon which Aboriginal Victorians will drive their vision for prosperity and wealth creation.





Message

from the Koori Caucus

We are pleased to share this Yuma Yirramboi: Invest in Tomorrow Strategy (the Strategy).

Yuma Yirramboi sets out a road map to greater economic participation and wealth creation for Aboriginal Victorians. Development of the Strategy was driven by us, the Koori Caucus of the Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council (VAEEC), on behalf of Aboriginal Victorians. We have listened to what our communities have told us and are bringing to life a plan to create greater economic independence and ultimately wealth for all Aboriginal Victorians. We know that our vision of 'Aboriginal Victorians generate greater individual and collective wealth' is ambitious but we are not deterred. A successful Victorian Aboriginal economy will create a more prosperous economy and future for all Victorians.

This is a transformational era for Aboriginal Affairs in Victoria. Over the last decade, working alongside the Aboriginal community, the Victorian Government has developed and implemented key frameworks and initiatives to advance self-determination and the social and wellbeing outcomes of Aboriginal Victorians. To date, most of the attention has been on responding to social inequalities. With this Strategy, the spotlight turns to Aboriginal economic participation and recognises the benefit that economic independence will bring.

The Strategy establishes a long-term, coordinated plan to achieve the economic opportunity, prosperity and parity aspirations and expectations of Aboriginal Victorians. For too long, we have been kept on the fringe of the Victorian economy. There was a thriving Aboriginal economy in Victoria for thousands of years before the arrival of European settlers in the 1830s. Government policies (historic and more recent) significantly interrupted Aboriginal trade routes and activities. However, we are resilient and our entrepreneurial spirit and desire to be part of a vibrant and growing economy remain strong.

This Strategy honours our right to participate in Victoria's economy as employees and employers, consumers and suppliers, investors and investees, creators and contributors. Through its commitment to make long-term, sustained and coordinated investments in the six pillars for success set out in the Strategy, the Victorian Government is seeking to harness the strength of the broader economy to enable meaningful economic outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians. The Strategy also signals to private sector players the significant role they have in achieving economic parity and prosperity for Aboriginal Victorians. We believe they are ready to take up the challenge.



The Strategy is innovative and flexible, celebrating and building on the economic and entrepreneurial successes of Aboriginal Victorians to date. It prioritises Aboriginal culture and language as a core part of us and as a distinctive attribute of our businesses. Investment will ensure that Aboriginal Victorians have the skills needed to participate in the economy and create culturally confident and diverse employment opportunities. Our big and small Aboriginal businesses collectively and privately owned, no matter their location in Victoria, will continue to be supported to grow and evolve. The Victorian Government will be held to account with a robust and transparent approach to monitoring and reporting the outcomes of this Strategy.

We are proud of this Strategy and our central role in its development. We want a different future for our children, our children's children and the generations beyond, where equity in the Victorian economy is the ambition and also the reality. Unlocking our potential unlocks Victoria's potential, which makes sense for everyone.

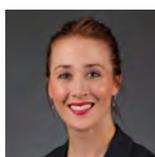
Message

from the Ministers



The Hon. Jaala Pulford

Minister for Employment, Minister for Innovation,
Medical Research and the Digital Economy,
Minister for Small Business and Minister for Resources



The Hon. Gabrielle Williams

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



For millennia, Aboriginal Victorians had thriving economies based on connections to land, water and resources. This was upended by colonisation, dispossession and exclusionary policies that resulted in ongoing inequities and enormous economic loss for Aboriginal Victorians. Despite this, Aboriginal Victorians remain strong in their culture and identity.

Yuma Yirramboi is the Victorian Government's bold new strategy to address inequality, move towards self-determination and achieve economic parity within a generation.

We have worked in partnership with Aboriginal businesses, peak bodies, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, industry experts and academics, communities, and all tiers of government to develop the Strategy. Thank you to all who contributed.

Yuma Yirramboi has been developed against the backdrop of Victoria's nation-leading efforts in treaty, truth and justice. The Yoorrook Justice Commission is investigating historical and ongoing injustices committed against Aboriginal Victorians, across all areas of social, political, cultural and economic life. Alongside the Commission's inquiry, Victoria's treaty process will provide a framework for the transfer of decision-making power and resources to support self-determination – enabling Aboriginal communities to take control of matters that affect their lives. The Strategy sets out actions we can take now to magnify the future impact of Treaty on Aboriginal wealth creation.

Now is the time to be bold. We must take real action and be held accountable for achieving economic and employment parity, ensuring a better and more equal future. We look forward to working in partnership with Aboriginal Victorians in the further development of a thriving Aboriginal economy.



The background of the page is a solid teal color. On the left side, there is a large, stylized graphic of a gear or a wheel with intricate patterns. In the upper right quadrant, there is a dark teal footprint icon. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, hand-drawn style arrow pointing downwards and to the right, colored in a lighter shade of teal.

Contents

Message from the Koori Caucus viii

Message from the Ministers x

1. Introduction 3

2. Current state 13

3. The Strategy on a page 20

4. Advancing the Strategy 26

5. Governance and reporting 29



1

Introduction

Our commitment to the wealth and prosperity of Aboriginal Victorians

We recognise government needs to change from supporting economic enablers in Aboriginal communities to a more sustained approach that is truly self-determined. Gone are days of sporadic, short term investment without clear strategic focus on achieving and contributing to sustaining economic outcomes.

This Strategy is the result of engagement and consultation among the members of the Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council (VAEEC) and a wider range of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders with an interest in, and commitment to, creating wealth and prosperity for Aboriginal Victorians. The consultation has enabled us to develop a Strategy to inform and guide wealth-generating investment for the years ahead.

What makes this Strategy unique is the ability to adapt its objectives and measures as circumstances and policies change. This supports a shift in how the Victorian Government invests to achieve a generation of change, so the Strategy sustains a meaningful long-term outlook. Implementation plans and reviews will support the Strategy to provide currency and accountability.

Economic prosperity cannot be achieved with sporadic, short-term investment. This Strategy sets out a long-term, coordinated, and sustained approach to increasing the wealth and prosperity of Aboriginal Victorians. It maps a path for supporting Traditional Owners, Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses, community organisations and individuals to realise their individual and collective economic and employment aspirations. With a strengths-based focus, the Strategy recognises the capabilities and assets of Aboriginal Victorians. The Strategy harnesses the strength of the Victorian Government as a purchaser, service provider and investor. The strength of the private sector is leveraged to support the Aboriginal economy. In doing this, we are taking a significant step towards delivering on our commitment of economic prosperity and parity for Aboriginal Victorians.

The Strategy recognises that without greater wealth and prosperity, we will never successfully close the gap in wellbeing indicators between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As such, the Strategy elevates employment and economic participation from a fringe consideration in all government strategies to a central enabler of wellbeing and self-determination.

The vision of the Strategy is that:

Aboriginal Victorians generate greater individual and collective wealth.

Figure 1 below provides a summary of the Strategy:

Figure 1: Strategic pillars, initiatives and actions

IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

- ▼
- Rights**
The voice, decisions, ideas and aspirations of the Aboriginal community will reinforce First People’s rights
- Reaffirming Aboriginal culture**
The unique rights of Aboriginal Victorians are reaffirmed. Aboriginal culture and spiritual identity, language and knowledges must be recognised and valued as core to building strength and resilience in people, businesses and organisations
- Parity**
Aboriginal Victorians must achieve wealth and prosperity outcomes equal to those of the rest of the population
- Place**
Enacting the right to self-determine while respecting the diversity of Aboriginal communities across the State
- Eliminating structural racism**
Racism in any form is never acceptable
- Enabling partners**
Industry and government must work for and with Aboriginal Victorians and communities to achieve their goals and aspirations

INVEST IN TOMORROW

OUR VISION

Aboriginal Victorians generate greater individual and collective wealth



OUR COMMITMENT

The Victorian Government, recognising the inherent rights of Aboriginal people as First Peoples will make long term, sustained investment in the six strategic pillars to ensure the vision is achieved. The pillars are activated through the championing of entrepreneurship, meaningful careers and harnessing culture, assets, knowledge and expertise.



THE STRATEGIC PILLARS



CULTURE

Aboriginal culture is our greatest asset



PEOPLE

Nurture a strong and ready talent pool



BUSINESS

Grow in size, scale, diversity and maturity



THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT WILL:

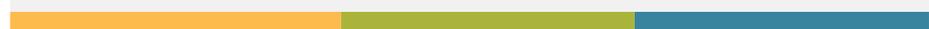
invest in Aboriginal knowledge, cultural beliefs and practices to realise economic benefits for Aboriginal Victorians



support Aboriginal communities and people throughout their careers



be coordinated, consistent and apply a long-term approach to enable Aboriginal business growth and economic development



DELIVER PARITY FOR ABORIGINAL VICTORIANS IN EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES through implementation and actions

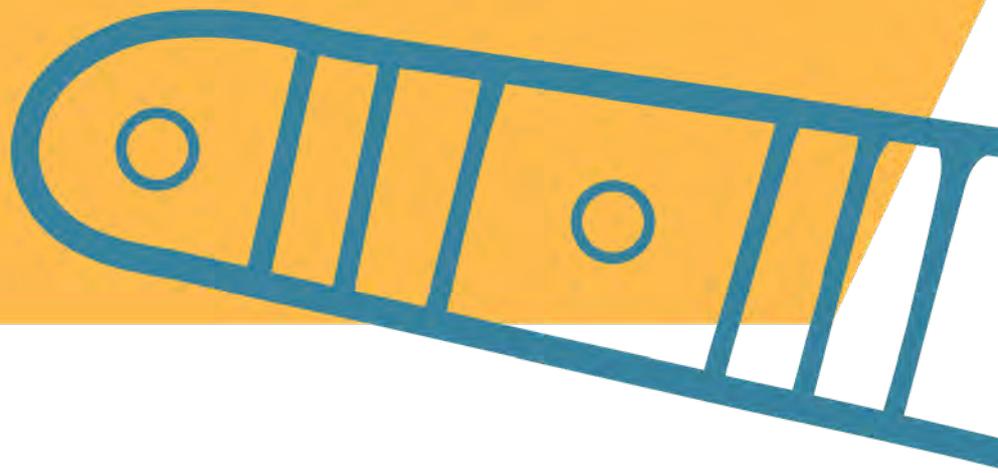


Figure 1 highlights the six strategic pillars that underpin the Strategy, and the Victorian Government initiatives and actions needed to achieve its vision. The pillars, initiatives and actions are described in more detail in Section 3 of the Strategy.

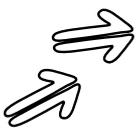
The Strategy intends to guide investment over the longer term, while recognising that implementation will need to align with the Victorian Government’s budget cycles and outcomes. This need for a long-term focus on wealth creation and prosperity was a major element of feedback received from consultations with the VAECC and other stakeholders. Making real advances in this area requires sustained focus and commitment.

The Strategy is intended to be flexible and responsive to changing priorities and circumstances. This need for flexibility is even more important given Victoria’s movement towards Treaty, which is discussed below.

The Strategy seeks to dismantle the barriers to economic independence and participation for Aboriginal Victorians by directing public and private sector investment into building the necessary resources, capabilities and tools to scale up Victoria’s Aboriginal economy. The cultures of Aboriginal Victorians are recognised in the Strategy as an asset and an enabler for the Aboriginal Victorian economy.

The Strategy will:

- **Create an enabling environment that supports Aboriginal Victorians**
- **Activate economic opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians, individually and collectively**
- **Support delivery of existing government policies and initiatives.**

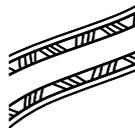


WEALTH CREATION

Accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate and opportunities for wealth generation



facilitate greater access to wealth generating resources and commercial expertise to accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate



JOBS

Generate jobs and careers to reach employment parity



generate more jobs and meaningful careers across the public, private and community sectors



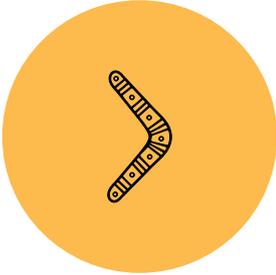
ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparent reporting against commitments



regularly provide structured and transparent reporting of the impact of this Strategy





1. Culture

Aboriginal culture is our greatest asset

Objective:

To invest in Aboriginal knowledge, cultural beliefs and practices to realise economic benefits for Aboriginal Victorians

Initiatives:

- 1.1 Protect cultural and intellectual property
- 1.2 Drive the creation of an Aboriginal Economic and Innovation Precinct or Precincts
- 1.3 Support Aboriginal Victorians to commercialise cultural knowledge, language and practices



2. People

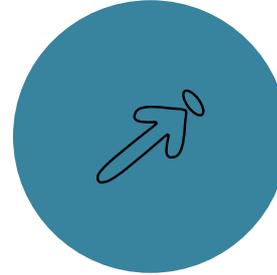
Nurture a strong and ready talent pool

Objective:

Support Aboriginal Victorians throughout their careers

Initiatives:

- 2.1 Provide support and connect Aboriginal Victorians with opportunities through career and mentor programs
- 2.2 Redesign employment readiness programs that provide enabling environments
- 2.3 Develop succession plans that provide meaningful career pathways, increasing skills and qualifications
- 2.4 Increase opportunities for Board Management and Company Directorships



3. Business

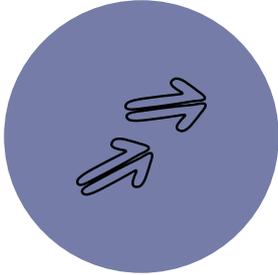
Growth in size, scale, diversity and maturity

Objective:

To be coordinated, consistent and apply a long-term approach to supporting Aboriginal business growth and economic development

Initiatives:

- 3.1 Increase support for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses, including improved access to capital, information and expertise
- 3.2 Improve outcomes for Aboriginal businesses and accountabilities in the Victorian Social Procurement Framework
- 3.3 Celebrate the successes and achievements of the Victorian Aboriginal business sector
- 3.4 Create partnerships with research institutions, business and industry to develop innovation and best practice models



4. Wealth Creation

Accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate and opportunities for wealth generation

Objective:

To facilitate greater wealth generating resources and commercial expertise to accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate in step with the pursuit of Treaty

Initiatives:

- 4.1 Assist Aboriginal communities to increase their land and asset bases and build strong balance sheets
- 4.2 Resource Aboriginal communities to realise their own economic development initiatives
- 4.3 Explore the feasibility of sustainable business models within Aboriginal organisations and communities
- 4.4 Work with Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal businesses and peak bodies to promote private commercial and philanthropic investment and co-investment opportunities



5. Jobs

Generate jobs and careers to reach employment parity

Objective:

To generate more jobs and meaningful careers (working with public, private and community sectors)

Initiatives:

- 5.1 Champion jobs growth and collaboration across all sectors to advance opportunities for pay parity and career progression
- 5.2 Use available levers to activate the private sector to increase employment of Aboriginal people
- 5.3 Sustain and grow the Aboriginal workforce across all sectors including the public sector
- 5.4 Set an expectation of cultural safety and actively eliminating racism



6. Accountability

Transparent reporting against commitments

Objective:

To provide structured and transparent reporting of impact

Initiatives:

- 6.1 Strengthen the Aboriginal voice, leadership and advisory capacity to government in employment and economic policy
- 6.2 Develop and report against Aboriginal Economic Outcomes Framework
- 6.3 Elevate the importance of Aboriginal economic development within DJPR
- 6.4 Evaluate implementation phases

The Strategy helps deliver existing commitments and provides a platform for Treaty to build on

Development of the Strategy has occurred while nation-leading Treaty negotiations have been underway in Victoria.

It is anticipated these negotiations will lead to the recognition of inherent rights and drive reforms to accelerate the growth of Aboriginal wealth creation and establish new institutional and legislative settings to support prosperity for Aboriginal Victorians across the six pillars of the Strategy.

The establishment of the Self-Determination Fund required under Victoria's Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018 (the Treaty Act) will provide a financial resource, independent from the State, that empowers Aboriginal Victorians to build capacity, wealth and prosperity.

The Strategy complements the opportunities we will soon see arise from Treaty. It sets out actions that are underway or can commence soon that will provide a platform for growth which will flow from future Treaty outcomes. The Strategy may evolve under any future agreements in Treaty or Treaties, which may be addressed and aligned through the Strategy's phased Implementation Plans and their review. Section 4 provides more detail on Implementation Plans and their review.

This Strategy elevates the central importance of wealth creation and economic development to achieving the Victorian Government's long-standing commitments to Aboriginal Victorians. These commitments are set out in various documents. The key documents are summarised below:

- **The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 (VAAF)** is Victoria's overarching strategic framework to progress change across government, address inequity and deliver stronger outcomes for and with Aboriginal Victorians. The VAAF is built around six domains, one of which is Opportunity and prosperity, which contains three goals focused on:
 - Wealth equality
 - Workforce participation
 - Realising Aboriginal income potential.
- **The Closing the Gap Implementation Plan** aims to achieve the objectives of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap.¹ The Closing the Gap Implementation Plan is focused on reducing disparity in employment, home ownership and general prosperity outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

- **The Self-Determination Reform Framework** is the Victorian government's framework to guide public service action to enable self-determination in line with commitments in the VAAF. It sets out the government's role in supporting self-determination through increased wealth creation, prosperity and employment of Aboriginal Victorians.

This Strategy places economic development and prosperity at the heart of the government's efforts to deliver the outcomes already committed to under these and other plans and frameworks.

This Strategy builds on previous strategies and investments

This is not the first Strategy focussed specifically on the wealth and prosperity of Aboriginal Victorians. The Strategy replaces two earlier strategies: the *Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013–2020* and the *Tharamba Bugheen: Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017–2021*.

A snapshot of the achievements of these earlier strategies is provided in Table 1.

This Strategy progresses the government's focus on Aboriginal employment and economic development and provides the foundation for future investment that will flow from Treaty and the Self-Determination Fund once they are established.

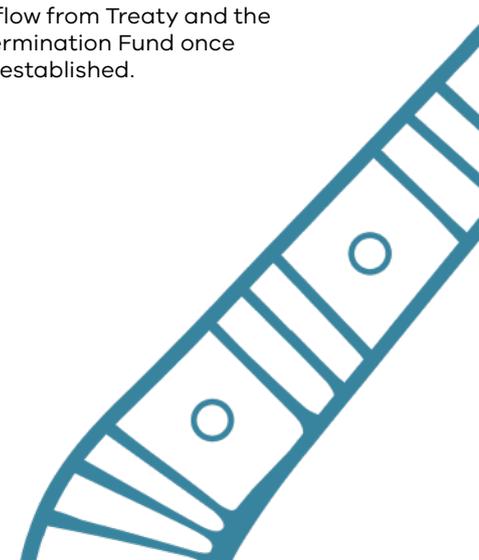




Table 1: Achievements of previous strategies and frameworks which sought to foster Aboriginal economic prosperity

**Tharamba Bugheen:
Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy
2017–2021**

Supported Kinaway to deliver the:

- Aboriginal Business Support Network
- Aboriginal business procurement portal
- Private Sector Procurement Forum.

Supported LaunchVic to provide grants to:

- Established accelerator and incubator programs for Aboriginal start-ups and entrepreneurs
- Support Aboriginal women in regional Victoria to start new businesses.

Supported Creative Victoria to:

- Deliver a traineeships program which placed Aboriginal young people in organisations in the creative industry.

Supported Visit Victoria to:

- Establish and operate a tourism business advisory and mentoring program
- Improve the digital and marketing capability of Aboriginal tourism business
- Undertake dedicated marketing efforts in international markets to expand the reach of the sector.

**Victorian Aboriginal
Economic Strategy
2013–2020**

The establishment of:

- Place-based regional economic development strategies (e.g. Goulburn Murray Regional Prosperity Plan and the Gippsland Aboriginal Economic Strategy)
- Aboriginal public sector employment and career development strategies (e.g. Latrobe Valley and Barwon)
- The Aboriginal Economic Brokers Program
- Aboriginal Women in Business initiatives to promote the establishment and growth of new and existing ventures
- The Aboriginal Procurement Research Series to increase the level of procurement from Aboriginal businesses across public and private sectors
- A range of employment pathways and youth initiatives (e.g. Employment Pathway Scholarship)
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) research to understand the levers to increase Aboriginal pathways into STEM
- The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board.

In addition to the key strategies and policies listed in Table 1, there are other investments across multiple portfolios that focused on supporting Aboriginal economic development and employment, which can be leveraged and built on to achieve the vision of the Yuma Yirramboi Strategy or the Strategy.



Our Approach

This Strategy is the first to be developed in close consultation with and leadership from Aboriginal Victorians. Development of the Strategy was informed by an analysis of Australian and international strategies and evaluations relating to First Nations employment and economic development. Most importantly, comprehensive consultation was undertaken with over 100 individuals and organisations from across Victoria. Participants included:

- The VAEEC
- Aboriginal businesses and peak bodies
- Traditional Owners
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations
- Aboriginal community members
- Industry experts and academics
- Victorian and Commonwealth Government agencies.

The consultation prioritised Aboriginal voices, perspectives and lived experiences. It is intended that implementation of the Strategy will also be led by these voices.

The consultation process identified key shared aspirations for Aboriginal employment and economic development in Victoria. These shaped the Strategy's vision, pillars, actions and initiatives and they are consistent with some of the outcomes anticipated from Treaty.

Some key aspirations worth highlighting in the Strategy are:

- There is a need for an ongoing Government commitment to invest in a fund that can be drawn upon for self-determined economic initiatives
- The aspiration of parity must apply to achieving wage parity across industry sectors that employ significant numbers of Aboriginal Victorians
- There must be a focus on building the estate and ownership of land for Aboriginal Victorians

- Aboriginal culture and language are central to all aspirations and must be strengthened through structured investment and capacity building
- It is essential that efforts are made to protect the cultural and intellectual property rights of Aboriginal Victorians, and to capitalise on these to benefit Aboriginal people.

To this end, the department will continue to work across government, as our commitment to the community is to get momentum on these aspirations.

A major influence in the development of the Strategy has been the participation of Koori Caucus members of the VAEEC. This has resulted in a Strategy that differs from previous strategies in several ways:

- **Our long-term commitment and investment**
The Strategy recognises the need for a long-term commitment. It assumes a generational commitment from government, with the first iteration of Implementation Plans spanning the next four years. At some point during this time, it is anticipated the Self Determination Fund required under Treaty will be established and begin the process of targeted, enduring investment to build wealth and prosperity.

- **Capacity for the Strategy to be adapted in response to Treaty developments and negotiations**

The framework and approach outlined in the Strategy and the success of initiatives launched under the Strategy will guide and inform future investment decisions consistent with Treaty developments. However, the Strategy in no way binds future decisions and the issues it identifies will inevitably be revised in response to future outcomes and priorities under Treaty or Treaties.

- **A focus on locally driven responses**

The Strategy recognises the place-based knowledge and expertise that exists across Aboriginal Victorians and the importance of harnessing this to inform employment and economic responses. Scope for locally driven solutions is provided for, rather than adopting a generic, one-size-fits all approach.

- **A holistic approach to Aboriginal economic development**

The Strategy seeks to link all investments supporting wealth creation and prosperity under a single framework. While individual portfolios, ministers and departments will continue to identify and implement initiatives, the Strategy provides a united and coherent approach to articulate why any future investments are important and where they fall within the Strategy framework.

- **A focus on building upon existing partnerships and collaboration**

Importantly, this Strategy recognises the diversity of economic and employment opportunities for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians in other key economic-focused initiatives and strategies such as Caring for Country and Closing the Gap. The department will continue to work collaboratively with other Victorian Government agencies to strengthen and build on existing partnerships and opportunities. This includes for example with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

The Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council (VAEEC) was formed in 2020 to provide independent and strategic advice to DJPR on matters affecting the economic development and prosperity of Aboriginal Victorians. It operates within the principles of self-determination and is made up of senior executive officers from Victorian and Commonwealth Government agencies and Aboriginal community members (Koori Caucus). Aboriginal community members offer diverse experiences and skills in the areas of business and entrepreneurship, traditional owner economic development, education and skills development, creative industries, community development, tourism, and young people.





2

Current state

Victoria's Aboriginal economy

Too many Aboriginal Victorians are currently excluded from the economic benefits of Victoria's historically strong, growing, and inclusive economy. Too few are sharing in the wealth of our nation and state

A history of trade and commerce

Aboriginal Victorians have a rich history of trade and commerce. Despite the ongoing impacts of colonisation and past discriminatory policies, they have maintained strong connections to culture, knowledge, language, practices, and Country and demonstrate undeniable strength, resistance, and resilience. Aboriginal Victorians have been growers, makers, and traders for millennia, with many well recognised examples of Aboriginal innovation including Budj Bim², the oldest aquaculture site in the world situated on Gunditjmarra Country and the Wurundjeri peoples' mining and use of diorite in Victoria.³

Economic prosperity and participation today

In the absence of 2021 Census data to inform this Strategy, we have relied on data from the 2016 Census. It is acknowledged that the 2016 Census data is outdated and most significantly, does not reflect the impact of COVID-19 on the wider Victorian economy and the economic wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians.

While impossible to speculate with any certainty, it is reasonable to assume that COVID-19 has had a significantly negative impact on the wealth and prosperity of many Aboriginal Victorians. Historically, economic downturns of any type hit the people and communities already economically excluded the most. This fact, together with anecdotal evidence from several sources, suggests that Aboriginal Victorians may have been pushed further behind than they were at the time of the 2016 Census.

This reality makes this Strategy even more important. It underscores the need for targeted, long-term and creative approaches to supporting economic development. Without this, the state of play detailed in the 2016 Census will deteriorate further. Whether through this Strategy or the future impact of Treaty, economic growth and wealth creation must be a primary objective of government policy.

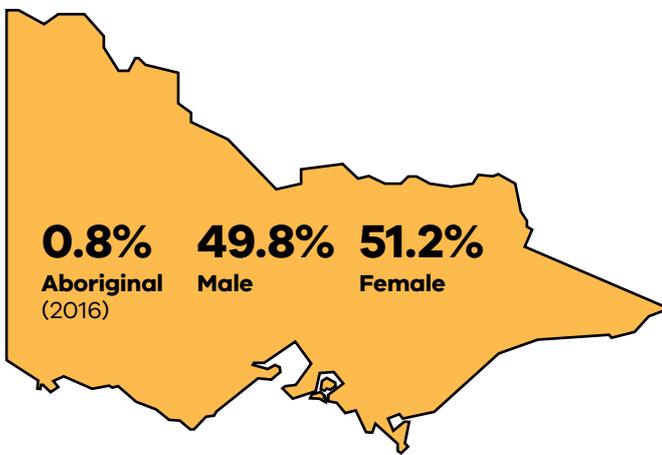


What the data tells us

At the 2016 Census, there were 47,787 Aboriginal people living in Victoria, comprising 0.8 per cent of the population. Of these, 49.8 per cent were male and 51.2 per cent were female. Almost half of Victoria’s Aboriginal people (23,000) were living in regional Victoria.

The snapshot in Figure 2 shows that the median age of Victorian Aboriginals is 22.8 years – young compared with the non-Aboriginal population median age of 37.1 years. The Australian Bureau of Statistics is projecting that Victoria’s Aboriginal population will continue to grow through to 2031.⁴

Figure 2: Victorian Aboriginal population snapshot



Aboriginal population growth

2021	0.95%	2031	1.05%
		Predicted growth	

Median Age

22.8 years	37.1 years
Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal

Residence

52.14%	35.12%	12.76%
Metro	Inner Regional	Outer Regional and Remote

National labour force data as shown in Figure 3 paints a grim picture for Aboriginal people, with:

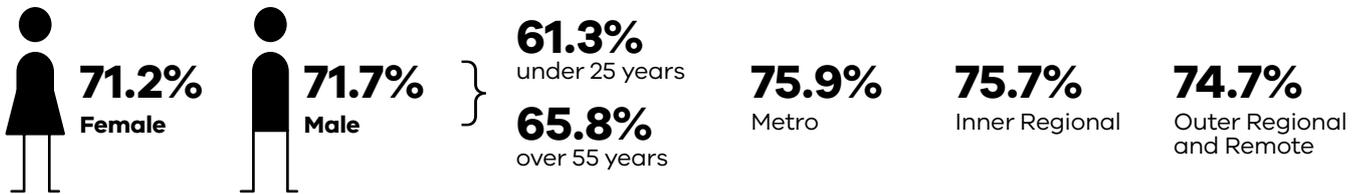
- significantly higher rates of unemployment
- significantly lower rates of participation
- higher rates of part-time employment
- higher rates of employment in relatively low-paid and low-skilled roles.

Figure 3: National workforce participation and employment statistics for Aboriginal people⁵

57.8%
workforce participation
Aboriginal people



71.4%
workforce participation
Non-Aboriginal people



Occupation share of employment (%)

Role	Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander	Victorian average
Labourers	18 ▲	9
Community and personal service	16 ▲	10
Sales	10 ▲	9
Machinery operators and drivers	9 ▲	6
Managers	6 ▼	13
Technicians and trades workers	11 ▼	14
Clerical and administrative	12 ▼	14
Professionals	19 ▼	26

The statistics set out in Figure 4 show that almost double the number of Aboriginal Victorians than non-Aboriginals live in poverty and they have lower levels of educational attainment. Aboriginal Victorians have lower rates of home ownership and lower rates of representation in fast-growing, lucrative industries. Aboriginal Victorians earn lower wages and have a much higher rate of involvement with 'deficit-based' government services including corrections, child protection, alcohol and drug treatment, housing and homelessness, and out-of-home care.

Figure 4: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population and housing in Victoria

LABOUR FORCE

UNEMPLOYMENT

POVERTY LINE

Aboriginal population

▼37.7%
of Aboriginals aged 15–64 are not in the labour force

▼14.2%
of the Victorian Aboriginal community is unemployed. This is more than double that of the rate of the non-Aboriginal community

▼25.4%
of all Aboriginal households live on or near the poverty line and the actual poverty rate among Aboriginals is double the non-Aboriginal rate

Non-Aboriginal population

23.5%
of the non-Aboriginal population are not in the labour force

6.7%
(in 2016), with this rate being higher for those residing in regional Victoria

13%
of non-Aboriginal households live on or near the poverty line

Aboriginal youth are **30%** less likely to complete Year 12

The rate of tertiary education qualifications between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people is significantly lower.

As an example, the proportion of non-Aboriginal people graduating with a bachelor's degree is three times greater than Aboriginal graduates.

Aboriginal median household income is **15%** below the non-Aboriginal median

Aboriginal Victorians are largely working in lower paying, less skilled occupations with the median wage of Aboriginal Victorians

\$165 a week
less than non-Aboriginal Victorians.

Aboriginal home ownership is around **35%** below the non-Aboriginal population

Aboriginal Victorians are grossly under-represented in the fast-growing industries: professional, scientific and technical services and finance and insurance services.

Source: ABS Cat.No.2077.0 — Census of Population and Housing: Understanding the Increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Counts, 2016

Aboriginal businesses

In line with the principle of self-determination, more Aboriginal people are seeking to establish a business to achieve economic independence and contribute to the economy. Victoria's Aboriginal business sector has grown steadily over the past decade in terms of size, maturity and diversity.

Evidence suggests this growth has been influenced by factors including:

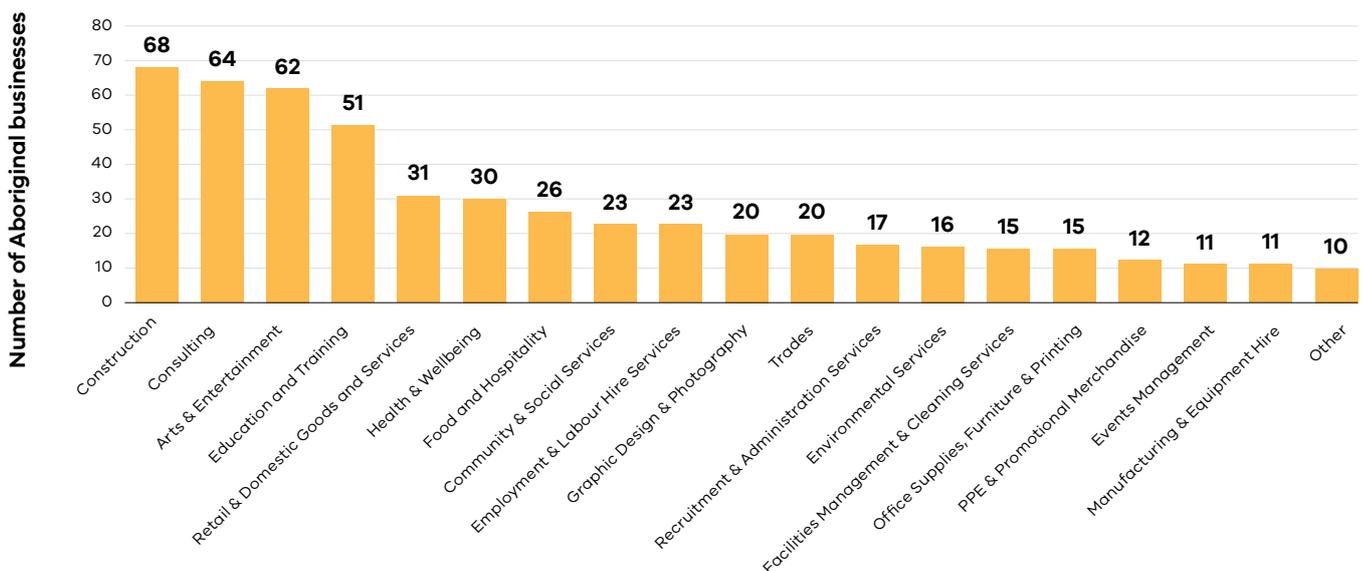
- Aboriginal Victorians seeking alternatives to traditional employment opportunities to provide for their families and communities
- the desire to develop local businesses to deliver needed services within local communities
- increased access to government-funded programs that promote Aboriginal economic development (such as government procurement policies like Victoria's Social Procurement Framework).

The emergence of community-based mechanisms that promote Aboriginal business development, such as the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce, which is the leading organisation dedicated to supporting Victorian Aboriginal business owners.

Another factor contributing to the growth of the sector is that Aboriginal businesses have a competitive advantage over non-Aboriginal businesses in several current and emerging industries.⁶ For Aboriginal businesses, the intrinsic knowledge within their cultures, and the immense opportunity associated with the use of Aboriginal-owned and controlled lands, can be leveraged to contribute to commercial success.⁷

There were 435 Victorian Aboriginal businesses registered with the Kinaway Chamber of Commerce as of July 2021. Figure 4 shows that these businesses operate across diverse industries including construction, consulting, the arts and entertainment sectors. Note that some businesses are identified in more than one category in the table below.

Figure 5: Kinaway Chamber of Commerce Industry specific Aboriginal Businesses as of 31 July 2021



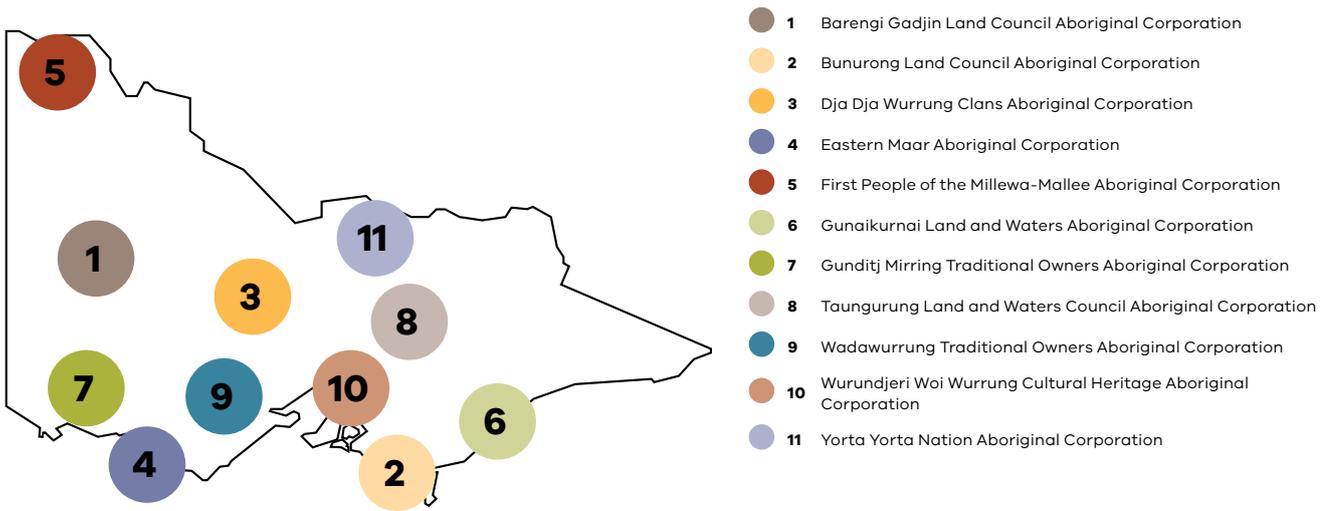
In addition to being more likely than non-Aboriginal businesses to employ Aboriginal workers, the creation of successful Aboriginal businesses can create a 'virtuous cycle' that can foster further economic development and wealth creation⁸.

The COVID-19 pandemic reached Australia in early 2020, with widespread shutdowns. COVID-19 has transformed how we work, trade, engage and go about our daily lives. Unprecedented in its impact and reach, the pandemic has disrupted global supply chains and major Australian industries, halted travel and migration, and impacted large segments of the global and Australian workforce. We are yet to fully understand the impact COVID-19 will have on the Aboriginal economic landscape.

Traditional Owner groups and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

There are currently 11 Registered Aboriginal Parties in Victoria who collectively cover approximately 74 per cent of the State's land. The names and general locations of the Registered Aboriginal Parties are shown in Figure 5. They have important roles in the Victorian Aboriginal economy as employers and asset holders, and this importance is anticipated to grow through the Treaty process.

Figure 6: Registered Aboriginal Parties in Victoria



The economic maturity of these Traditional Owner organisations varies, but all have started to venture into commercial operations that create employment opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians and generate revenue for their organisations. While these activities have historically been closely connected with cultural heritage and natural resource management services, Traditional Owner groups are increasingly exploring other ways to generate income by activating the Aboriginal Estate, including through commercial tourism, renewable energy production and agriculture. This Strategy recognises that with Treaty or Treaties, these income-generating activities may be streamlined and delivered under the Self Determination Fund.

This Strategy acknowledges the opportunity for increased consideration of the unique position and challenges of Traditional Owner enterprises, which in most instances are associated with the formally recognised Traditional Owner corporations. One challenge includes the constraints to commercial viability due to provisions of the Commonwealth Corporations (*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander*) Act 2006. It will be vital to support Traditional Owner enterprises to meet their economic endeavours with the right resourcing and capability to enable the commercial intent of Traditional Owners to build viable and sustainable commercial entities long into the future. Importantly, this Strategy seeks to leverage locally driven cultural practices and rights to place and Country to enhance economic prospects through land and sea management, such as cultural burning and cultural tourism opportunities.

Another key part of the Victorian Aboriginal economy is the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector. Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) are independent, not-for-profit organisations initiated by, and controlled and operated by Aboriginal people. ACCOs operate in regional and metropolitan communities and focus on delivering holistic and culturally appropriate services to their respective Aboriginal community.

ACCOs deliver services including health care, legal services and education. As leaders in the delivery of culturally competent services, ACCOs are the preferred service providers for the majority of Aboriginal Victorians.⁹

ACCOs are typically overseen by locally elected boards and promote self-determination by enabling Aboriginal people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural development.¹⁰

Government’s role in stimulating the Aboriginal economy

The Victorian Government recognises its critical role in creating the economic conditions for Aboriginal businesses to thrive and be sustainable, and to incentivise major corporations in Victoria’s private sector to embed Aboriginal businesses in supply chains.

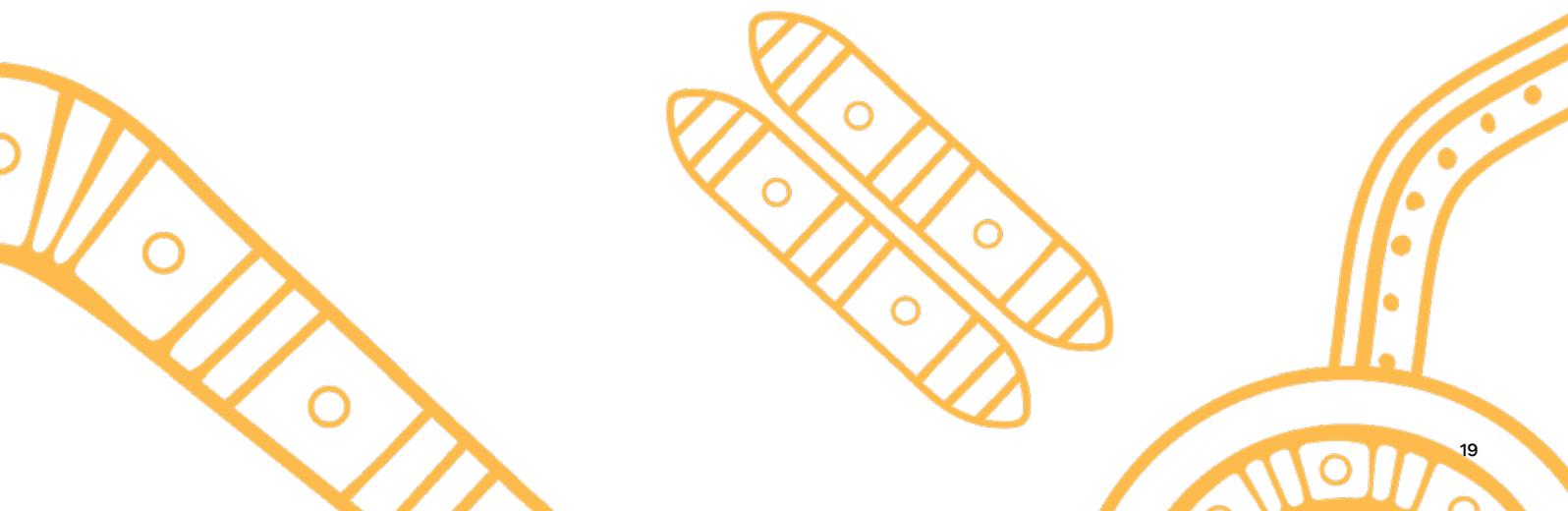
The main avenues for the government to achieve this are the Aboriginal Procurement Target (APT) and the Social Procurement Framework (SPF). In the *Tharamba Bugheen: Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017–21*, the Victorian Government endorsed a goal to achieve a one per cent procurement target by 2019–20. While the target was not reached, with a 0.6 per cent procurement achieved by 2019–20, the number of Aboriginal businesses the government entered into a purchase agreement with increased 35 per cent from 2018–19 to 2019–20. Total procurement value with Aboriginal businesses increased 176 per cent, from \$16.7 million to \$46.1 million.¹¹

Beyond these procurement-focused levers, other levers available to the government to support Aboriginal wealth and prosperity are summarised in Table 2. This Strategy relies on the activation of these levers to generate opportunities for Aboriginal Victorians.

Making greater use of these levers will enable the government to move from a reactive response to problems emerging in the Aboriginal community to a more proactive, long-term and early investment approach. The levers set out in Table 3 rely on input from multiple partners including government, agencies, businesses, peak bodies and the Aboriginal community more broadly. Collaboration is key.

Table 2: Economic levers to support Aboriginal wealth and prosperity

Demand side	Supply side
Purchasing power to influence private sector behaviour	Skills and capability building
Victorian Government is a significant employer	Creating pathways and increasing awareness of opportunities
Incentives, support and direct investment	
Collecting, analysing, and reporting data	
Research to influence future policy and investment	
Cross-department / Whole of Victorian Government collaboration	



3

The Strategy on a page

IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES



Rights

The voice, decisions, ideas and aspirations of the Aboriginal community will reinforce First People's rights

Reaffirming Aboriginal culture

The unique rights of Aboriginal Victorians are reaffirmed. Aboriginal culture and spiritual identity, language and knowledges must be recognised and valued as core to building strength and resilience in people, businesses and organisations

Parity

Aboriginal Victorians must achieve wealth and prosperity outcomes equal to those of the rest of the population

Place

Enacting the right to self-determine while respecting the diversity of Aboriginal communities across the State

Eliminating structural racism

Racism in any form is never acceptable

Enabling partners

Industry and government must work for and with Aboriginal Victorians and communities to achieve their goals and aspirations

INVEST IN TOMORROW

OUR VISION

Aboriginal Victorians generate greater individual and collective wealth



OUR COMMITMENT

The Victorian Government, recognising the inherent rights of Aboriginal people as First Peoples will make long term, sustained investment in the six strategic pillars to ensure the vision is attained. The Pillars are activated through the championing of entrepreneurship, meaningful careers and harnessing culture, assets, knowledge and expertise.



THE STRATEGIC PILLARS



CULTURE

Aboriginal culture is our greatest asset



PEOPLE

Nurture a strong and ready talent pool



BUSINESS

Grow in size, scale, diversity and maturity



THE VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT WILL:

invest in Aboriginal knowledge, cultural beliefs and practices to realise economic benefits for Aboriginal Victorians



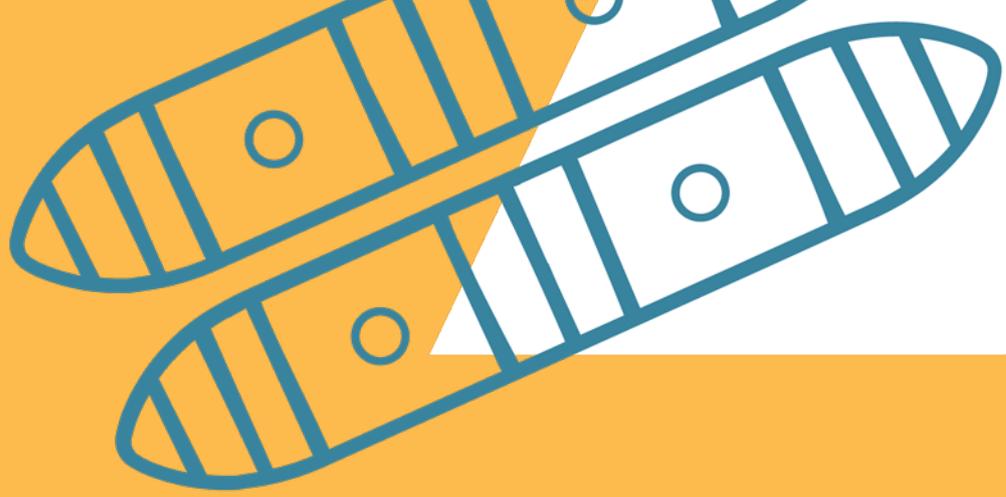
support Aboriginal communities and people throughout their careers



be coordinated, consistent and apply a long-term approach to enable Aboriginal business growth and economic development



DELIVER PARITY FOR ABORIGINAL VICTORIANS IN EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES through implementation and actions



Our Vision

Aboriginal Victorians generate greater individual and collective wealth

The importance of wealth generation to achieving at least parity in measures of health, wellbeing and prosperity within a generation was emphasised during the stakeholder and community consultations that informed development of this Yuma Yirramboi Strategy or the Strategy.

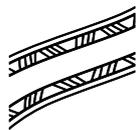
The Strategy recognises that wealth creation depends on multiple factors and multiple stakeholders playing their part. Vitally, it recognises the importance of culture, assets, knowledge and the strength and expertise of Aboriginal Victorians to realise the vision.

For Aboriginal Victorians to be economically prosperous and achieve economic and employment parity, these separate but connected elements of the Strategy must be supported to flourish.



WEALTH CREATION

Accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate and opportunities for wealth generation



JOB

Generate jobs and careers to reach employment parity



ACCOUNTABILITY

Transparent reporting against commitments



facilitate greater access to wealth generating resources and commercial expertise to accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate



generate more jobs and meaningful careers across the public, private and community sectors



regularly provide structured and transparent reporting of the impact of this Strategy





Principles

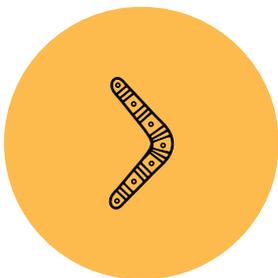
We know from our wide-ranging and ongoing discussions with members of the Victorian Aboriginal community and from our research that these principles really matter. The following principles underpin the Yuma Yirramboi Strategy and will inform its implementation.

Principle	Rationale
Rights The voice, decisions, ideas and aspirations of the Aboriginal community will reinforce First People's rights.	Aboriginal Victorians have inherent rights to participate in all aspects of society, including the economy. We know that sovereignty and economic development go hand in hand, and we recognise Aboriginal Victorians' rights to participate in designing and implementing this Strategy and direction setting for their economic futures.
Reaffirming Aboriginal culture The unique rights of Aboriginal Victorians are reaffirmed. Aboriginal culture and spiritual identity, language and knowledges must be recognised and valued as core to building strength and resilience in people, businesses and organisations.	Connectedness to culture, language and community strengthens individual and collective identities, and promotes self-esteem, resilience and improved outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians. Strong, confident and resilient people make better employees, business owners and organisational leaders. Our investment in, and protection of, Aboriginal culture and knowledge will not only support Aboriginal Victorians but also strengthen our economy.
Parity Aboriginal Victorians must achieve wealth and prosperity outcomes equal to those of the rest of the population.	To strive for anything less than parity is unacceptable. The Strategy is creating the enabling environment for Aboriginal Victorians to achieve parity in employment, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunities within a generation.
Place Enacting the right to self-determine while respecting the diversity of Aboriginal communities across the State.	Place, and Country, play a central role in Aboriginal culture and custom. We recognise and respect that Victorian Aboriginal communities — and Aboriginal Victorian people — are not homogenous. Place-based and community-led responses and initiatives will be encouraged and invested in.
Eliminate structural racism Racism in any form is never acceptable	The ongoing impacts of colonisation, including unjust government policies, severely disrupted traditional Aboriginal economies and continue to result in inequities and racism. Specific supports and investments are required to redress some of these barriers and enable Aboriginal Victorians to reach economic parity.
Enabling partners Industry and government must work for and with Aboriginal Victorians to achieve their goals and aspirations.	A partnership with government alone will not be enough to achieve the ambitious targets set out in this Strategy. Corporate Victoria — as employers, buyers of goods and services, investors, and advocates — needs to be brought on this journey as well.

Strategic pillars, initiatives, and actions

Yuma Yirramboi is built on six strategic pillars. Each pillar is described below, along with the initiatives proposed to achieve them. The scope of the Strategy is broad, the initiatives are ambitious and delivering them will require a range of actions.

Not all the initiatives can be supported simultaneously. A focus on capacity building and phased implementation that reflects the level of investment available will be required. Central to this will be engagement with the VAEEC and other stakeholders to determine priority initiatives and actions to be implemented. Ongoing assessment of the impact of investments and actions will be central to the implementation of the Strategy.



1. Culture

Aboriginal culture is our greatest asset

Aboriginal culture, knowledges and practices are the most important assets in a thriving Aboriginal economy. By investing in preserving and celebrating the culture, knowledge and practices of Aboriginal Victorians, we are recognising their important contribution to the holistic wellbeing of Aboriginal people. This investment recognises the value of Aboriginal culture as a competitive advantage or point of difference for Aboriginal businesses and organisations.

We will invest in Aboriginal knowledge, cultural beliefs and practices to realise economic benefits for Aboriginal Victorians.

- 1.1 Protect cultural and intellectual property
- 1.2 Drive the creation of an Aboriginal Economic and Innovation Precinct or Precincts
- 1.3 Support Aboriginal Victorians to commercialise cultural knowledge, language and practices.



2. People

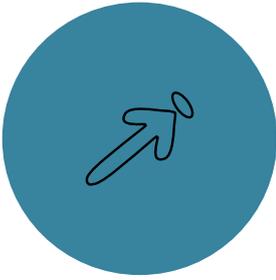
Nurture a strong and ready talent pool

The Victorian Aboriginal community is diverse in identity and experiences. Aboriginal Victorians have been directly and indirectly impacted by colonisation (through trans-generational trauma). We also live and work in a society that still struggles to acknowledge the impact of previous decisions in history and how that impacts Aboriginal Victorians today. We have made inroads to address some of these social justice challenges, but there is still much work to do. Treaty and the Yoorrook Justice Commission are significant ways these matters can be addressed and this Strategy provides further support.

The Strategy will support all Aboriginal Victorians by nurturing diverse talent pools across the state, recognising their different skills, interests and aspirations.

We will prepare Aboriginal Victorians for, and support them throughout, their careers.

- 2.1 Provide support and connect Aboriginal Victorians with opportunities through career and mentor programs
- 2.2 Redesign employment readiness programs that provide enabling environments
- 2.3 Develop succession plans that provide meaningful career pathways, increasing skills and qualifications
- 2.4 Increase opportunities for board management and company directorships.



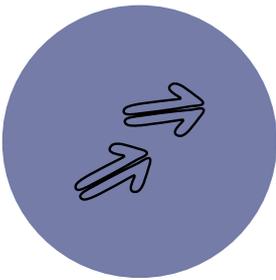
3. Business

**Growth in size, scale,
diversity and maturity**

The Aboriginal business sector is the backbone of an Aboriginal economy. The sector includes privately-owned Aboriginal businesses, Traditional Owners and ACCOs. It creates jobs and careers, generates wealth (collective and individual) and nationally it makes a significant annual contribution to the broader economy. The Victorian Aboriginal business sector is in the early stages of maturity with great opportunity to grow through thriving markets, procurement targets and strong Aboriginal communities, entrepreneurs and Traditional Owners.

We will take a coordinated, consistent, and long-term approach to supporting Aboriginal business growth and economic development.

- 3.1 Increase support for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses, including improved access to capital, information and expertise
- 3.2 Improve outcomes for Aboriginal businesses and accountabilities in the Victorian Social Procurement Framework
- 3.3 Celebrate the successes and achievements of the Victorian Aboriginal business sector
- 3.4 Create partnerships with research institutions, business and industry to develop innovation and best practice models.



4. Wealth Creation

**Accelerate
the growth of
the Aboriginal
Estate and
opportunities
for wealth
generation**

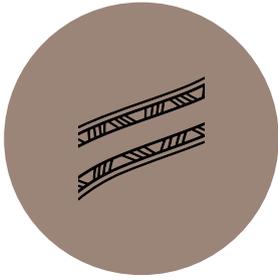
Aboriginal wealth creation is built upon opportunities to increase acquisition and utilisation of the land and waters owned or managed by Aboriginal Victorians, as well as Aboriginal culture, knowledges and practice. Traditional Owners have an inherent right as First Nations Victorians to own and determine the future uses of these assets. This will be progressed via Treaty, which will also be supported through this Strategy. Today, less than one per cent of these assets are Aboriginal owned, which reflects the impacts of colonisation and the unfinished processes available through various land rights settlement legislation.

To become significant economic contributors and fulfil their economic aspirations, it is vital that Traditional Owners increase the scale, scope and value of their asset bases. The experience of First Nations people in other jurisdictions demonstrates that increasing the amount of land and water Traditional Owners own and manage strengthens their organisations. Strong Traditional Owners will have strong and influential voices and have greater freedom to make their own economic and social development decisions into the future.

The rights of Traditional Owners in land use, assets and wealth generation will likely be a focus for the development of Treaty or Treaties in Victoria, including the establishment of the Self-Determination Fund. The actions and any future implementation of this Strategy will be reviewed so that it aligns with the Treaty process.

We will facilitate greater wealth generating resources and commercial expertise to accelerate the growth of the Aboriginal Estate in step with the pursuit of Treaty.

- 4.1 Assist Aboriginal communities to increase their land and asset bases and build strong balance sheets
- 4.2 Resource Aboriginal communities to realise their own economic development initiatives
- 4.3 Explore the feasibility of sustainable business models within Aboriginal organisations and communities
- 4.4 Work with Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal businesses and peak bodies to promote private commercial and philanthropic investment and co-investment opportunities.



5. Jobs

Generate jobs and careers to reach employment parity

The status of Aboriginal employment in Victoria highlights the significant growth required to achieve parity in employment outcomes.

Aboriginal people should have a genuine choice of employment pathways, and government has a key role in promoting opportunity either via direct employment within the public sector or across the private and community sectors using policy, targets and other incentives.

We will generate more jobs and meaningful careers (working with the public, private and community sectors).

- 5.1 Champion jobs growth and collaboration across all sectors to advance opportunities for pay parity and career progression
- 5.2 Use available levers to activate the private sector to increase employment of Aboriginal people
- 5.3 Sustain and grow the Aboriginal workforce across all sectors including the public sector
- 5.4 Set an expectation of cultural safety and actively eliminating racism



6. Accountability

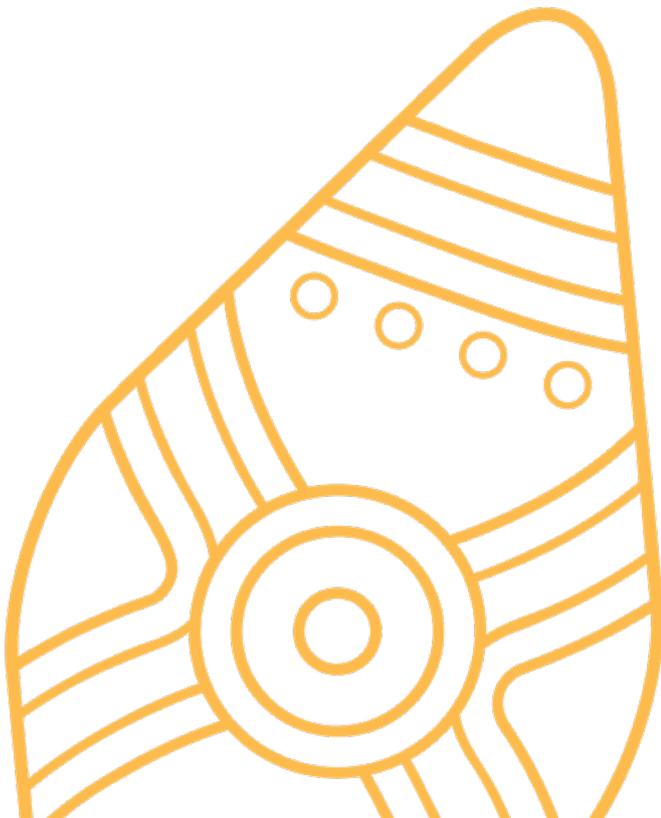
Transparent reporting against commitments

The vision outlined in this Strategy will only be achieved with meaningful implementation, supported by a structured, transparent, and regular approach to monitoring and reporting.

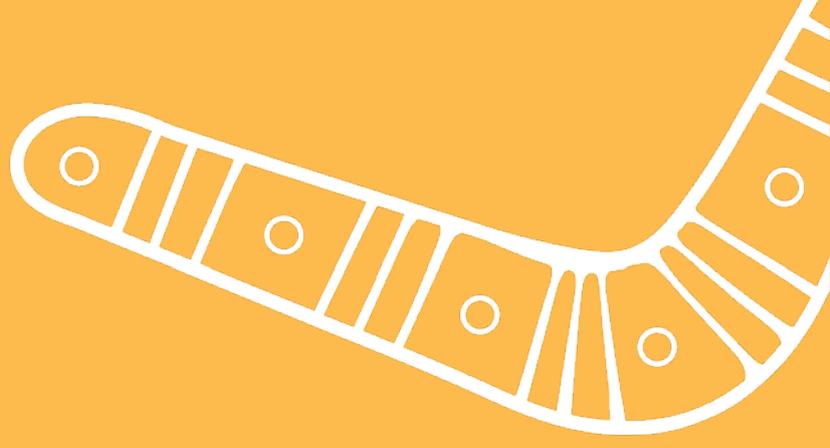
We will ensure clear accountability for the Strategy's implementation and regular public reporting, as well as monitor and evaluate progress achieved towards employment parity, entrepreneurship and economic opportunities for all Aboriginal Victorians.

We will provide structured and transparent reporting of impact.

- 6.1 Strengthen the Aboriginal voice, leadership and advisory capacity to government in employment and economic policy
- 6.2 Develop and report against Aboriginal Economic Outcomes Framework
- 6.3 Elevate the importance of Aboriginal economic development within DJPR
- 6.4 Evaluate implementation phases.



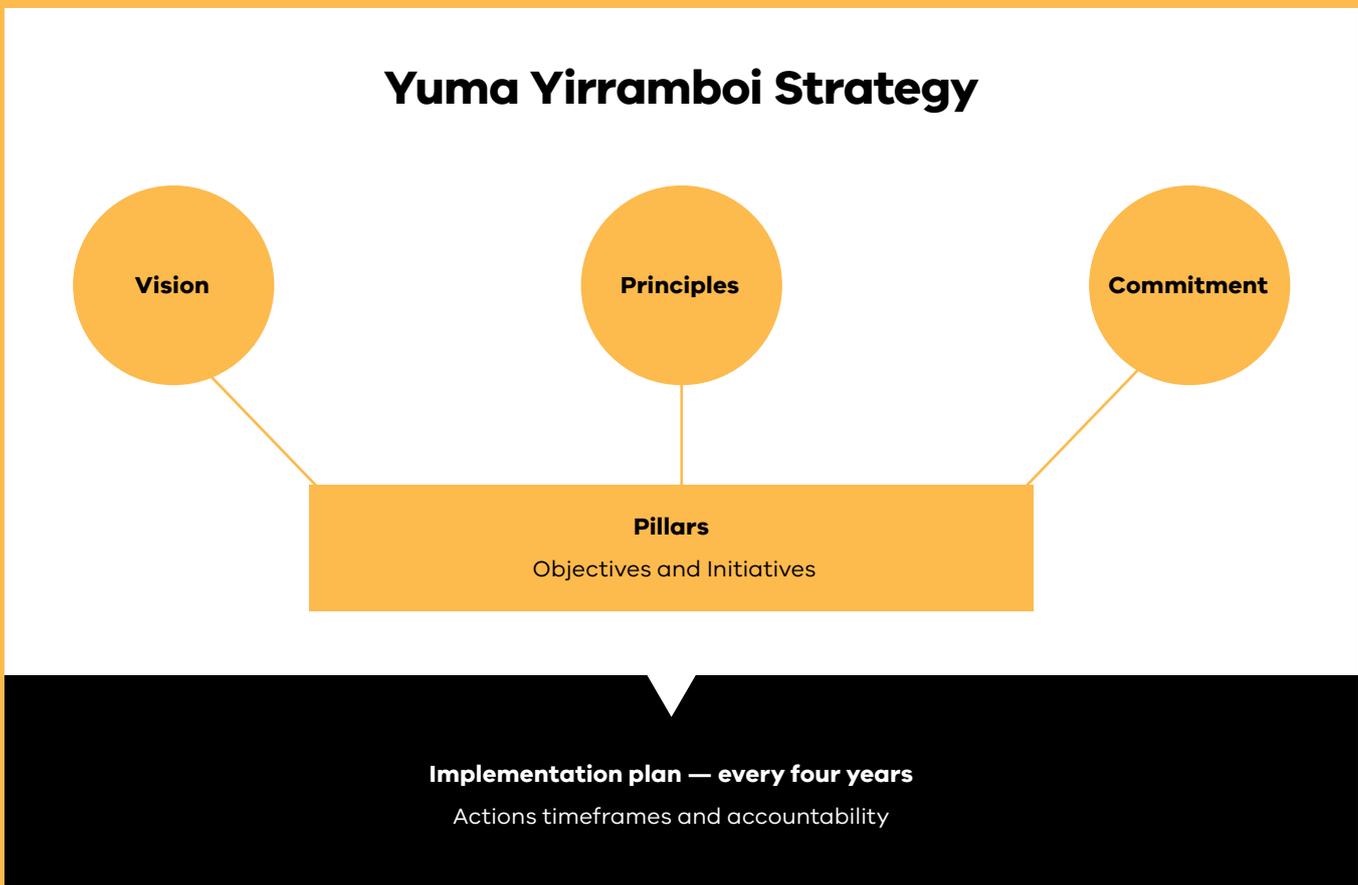
4



Advancing the Strategy

Implementation phases

Consecutive implementation plans of four years in duration will be developed to drive actions underpinning each of the six pillars of the Strategy.



Each implementation plan will have its own focus, aiming to move the Victorian Aboriginal economy and Aboriginal Victorians with increasing momentum towards the goal of parity.

The increasing pace of change in the world makes it difficult for long-term strategies to remain relevant. We have overcome this by establishing the long-term goal of parity for Aboriginal Victorians in employment, entrepreneurship and economic opportunities within a generation, while allowing flexibility in how the Victorian Government designs and delivers its support over a generation.

Our intention is for the Phase 1 (first 4 years) implementation plan to focus on continuing to strengthen the foundations of the Victorian Aboriginal economy, including laying the groundwork for the economic impact of Treaty. A separate Phase 1 implementation plan will be prepared outlining the range of priority actions to be delivered during this phase of the Strategy, consistent with Budget outcomes. Our intention is that this approach will continue for the life of the Strategy.

Suggested focus areas for subsequent implementation phases are shown below.

Phase 1

Establish foundations and system change

Implementation focus

- strengthen foundations for successful strategy implementation
- continue to build cultural competency
- consolidate sustainable supply systems
- accelerate land acquisition processes
- build cross-sector commitments to Aboriginal employment
- develop and commence implementation of accountability framework
- lay the groundwork for Treaty

Evaluation focus

- progress against indicators
- consolidate transparent and accessible reporting

Phase 2

Extend and expand

Implementation focus

- consolidate Phase 1 achievements
- accelerate growth of Aboriginal economy
- key strategic focus on strengthening Aboriginal businesses and leadership roles
- integrate Treaty

Evaluation focus

- progress against indicators
- mid point assessment of progress towards long-term vision (outcome evaluation)
- process evaluation (focus on enablers and obstacles)

Phase 3

Sustain

Implementation focus

- consolidate Phase 2 achievements
- engage sector leaders to broaden the impact of the Strategy
- develop plans to ensure initiatives can continue in a financially, culturally and environmentally sustainable manner
- focus on the Aboriginal circular economy

Evaluation focus

- progress against indicators
- mid point assessment of progress towards long-term vision (outcome evaluation)
- make or provide recommendations to government on implementation priorities for remaining two phases

Phase 4

Deliver

Implementation focus

- consolidate Phase 3 achievements
- greater self-determination in the implementation of the Strategy
- deliver tangible outcomes for all components of the Victorian Aboriginal economy.

Evaluation focus

- progress against indicators
- evaluation outcome
- identify opportunities and needs for future strategy development

Phase 5

Achieve and plan for the future

Implementation focus

- Consolidate Phase 4 achievements
- continue implementation of initiatives and actions
- respond to new developments and innovations
- identify, evaluate, and analyse potential limitations and barriers of the Strategy
- begin development of subsequent strategies and follow-up work

Evaluation focus

- summative process and impact assessment (including identification of learnings and insights for future strategy development and implementation)
- identify opportunities and needs for future strategy development

Review

Each implementation plan will be regularly reviewed so it remains relevant and aligned with shifts in priorities and related actions. Review points will respond to various considerations including:

- treaty negotiations and frameworks and the exercise of greater self-determination by Aboriginal Victorians over time
- emerging evidence, successes and opportunities
- engagement with and feedback from other government departments, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Traditional Owner groups, Aboriginal businesses and other stakeholders
- other strategies related to Aboriginal Victorians.

The Phase One Implementation Plan (first four years) will focus on establishing and strengthening the foundations for systemic change, leveraging existing strategies, unifying the whole-of-Victorian Government approach, and establishing the necessary monitoring and evaluation processes.

5

Governance and reporting

The VAEEC was established as the key Aboriginal voice to guide the Strategy and monitor its progress. The implementation of the Strategy will be guided, informed and governed by the VAEEC.

Governance

The Yuma Yirramboi Strategy will require a significant effort from the Victorian Government and Aboriginal Victorians. The Victorian Government is committed to implementation of the Strategy and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to keep government accountable for achieving the vision of the Strategy.

The VAEEC was established as the key Aboriginal voice to guide the Strategy and monitor its progress. Implementation of the Strategy will be guided and informed by the Council. Governance mechanisms may also be subject to the review process and strengthened by any future agreements reached through Treaty negotiations. Priority actions in the Strategy will be led by partnership groups working with clear responsibilities and timelines.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring the progress of initiatives will deliver transparent reporting against commitments to drive accountability, as well as uncover evidence and insights to drive continuous improvement. The Strategy recognises the importance of flexibility in monitoring and evaluation to align with Treaty outcomes.

An Aboriginal Employment and Economic Outcomes Framework will:

- facilitate monitoring and reporting on progress against the priorities and actions of the Strategy
- track progress towards achievement of intended outcomes over a multi-year period
- support adaptation and learning through a cycle of continuous improvement
- identify leading-edge responses, practice improvements and learnings to be captured and shared.

Results of this monitoring will support reporting against other government commitments.

Key components of the Aboriginal Employment and Economic Outcomes Framework will include measures and specific evaluation domains and associated evaluation questions to capture a range of quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation domains set out in Figure 6 include:

- **Appropriateness** – the extent to which the stated needs and objectives are being achieved
- **Effectiveness** – the extent to which the intended outcomes are being achieved
- **Efficiency** – the extent to which the inputs are delivering the stated outputs.

Figure 6: Key components of the Aboriginal Employment and Economic Outcomes Framework



Endnotes

- 1 www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement
- 2 Budj Bim on Gunditjmara Country is known for its cultivation and trade of local eels and fish. The Budj Bim lava flows enabled the Gunditjmara people to develop one of the largest and oldest aquaculture networks in the world, composed of channels, dams, and weirs used to channel floodwaters and create basins to trap, store and harvest the kooyang eel, providing the population with an economic and social base for six millennia. Budj Bim was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2019.
- 3 Diorite is a green stone quarried in the Mount William area of Victoria by the Wurundjeri people and was used for hatchet heads. Axe hatchets were widely used across Aboriginal nations, attached to wooden poles, used for cutting bark from trees to make canoes, for making shields, spears, clubs, for cutting trees to collect honey and to catch possums. The Wurundjeri people worked the quarry by digging deep pits to reach underground stone and applying heat to the rock to extract the stone from the earth.
- 4 Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) Projected population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Australia, state and territories, 2016 to 2031.
- 5 NATISH 2018-19 ABS Labour Force Detailed.
- 6 For example, key business activities in which Aboriginal businesses possess a competitive advantage include cultural products (arts and recreation), agriculture, tourism, land, and water management as well as within emerging domestic and export markets for bush foods and bush medicines.
- 7 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 'Open for Business: Developing Indigenous enterprises in Australia', Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 2008, p 20. At: http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=atsia/indigenouenterprises/report.htm
- 8 S Hudson, S. 'Awakening the 'Sleeping Giant': The hidden potential of Indigenous businesses', Policy, Volume 32, Issue 1, 2016, p 5. At: <https://www.cis.org.au/app/uploads/2016/04/32-1-hudson-sara1.pdf> (accessed 22 May 2017).
- 9 VACCHO submission to support development of DHHS Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan, 2016.
- 10 See Article 5 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007.
- 11 Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Report 2020, page 56.



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