



THARAMBA BUGHEEN

VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL
BUSINESS STRATEGY
2017–2021

VICTORIA
State
Government

Economic Development,
Jobs, Transport
and Resources

THARAMBA BUGHEEN (pron. Ta-RUM-ba Boog-GEEN): Gunaikurnai words meaning “clever makers” which captures the creative, enterprising aspects of Aboriginal small business as well the important contribution they make to Victoria’s economy.

We thank the Gunaikurnai people for allowing the use of their language, and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages for its support, in the naming of Tharamba Bugheen.

COVER ARTWORK

© Deanne Gilson

Title: Reconciliation

Year: 2016

Medium: Black Hill white ochre, charcoal from my fire, gold leaf, acrylic on linen

Size: 900 (L) x 100 (H) cm

Reconciliation depicts feathers of my totem Waa the Crow. The feather itself is used to represent the human figure and I have given it a dual meaning. The feathers symbolise Western society and Aboriginal spirituality. The painting has one black feather, which I drew with charcoal sourced from a fire at my son’s eighteenth birthday party. Turning eighteen is a sign of standing alone and becoming an adult. The black feather stands alone with the aim to reconcile with the white feathers. As the title suggests, Reconciliation portrays growth and maturity, unity and an appreciation for each other, all cultures, race and spiritual beliefs.

The gold references my ancestral country of the goldfields in Ballarat and the other colours represent, blue for the sky, red for earth and country, black for Aboriginality and white for white person and spirit.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who may have passed away since the time of publishing.

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Authorised by the Victorian Government
1 Treasury Place Melbourne

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MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

The economic advancement of Aboriginal Victorians is critical for self-determination. That's why the Victorian Government is making a number of significant investments across the board to support this agenda.

For the first time this includes targets for government procurement which will provide a clear message to the broader community and bolster enterprise growth. Continuing to support the economic development aspirations of Aboriginal Victorians, the Government allocated \$4.5m in the 2015-16 Budget to establish the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board. A further \$8m has been provided in the 2016-17 Budget to support the World Heritage nomination for the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape and its development as a world class sustainable tourist destination.

Specifically, \$6.63m has been allocated in the 2016-17 Budget to implement Tharamba Bugheen.

The Government values the important contribution that Victoria's many Aboriginal businesses make to the state's economy and community.

Successful businesses give Aboriginal Victorians control of their own economic destiny and strengthen the economic position of Aboriginal communities. Crucially, they also provide role models for the young and inspire the next generation of Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

The Aboriginal business sector is diverse, including social and community enterprises, for-profit businesses, and everything from micro-businesses to major enterprises with multi-million dollar turnover. Tharamba Bugheen sets out our vision for Aboriginal Victorians to be supported to become innovative entrepreneurs and business leaders.

The Strategy focuses on three key challenges:

- Making sure businesses have access to support and advice that meets their needs
- Improving the visibility and networks of Aboriginal businesses
- Strengthening entrepreneurial culture and business experience.

The Strategy sets out how the government will provide the right type of support for the different kinds of businesses across the sector. For-profit businesses will have access to individually tailored support and training in leadership, business strategy, marketing and finance. Social and community enterprises will be supported with capacity building, early stage business planning and skills development.

For businesses looking to grow and reach new markets, there will be trade missions and opportunities through the Government's priority industry sector strategies.

Building clearly defined, accessible and coordinated points of entry for Aboriginal businesses into support services is a key focus of Tharamba Bugheen. This will be crucial to improving service utilisation and supporting Aboriginal businesses to develop vital partnerships with the finance, private and research and development sectors.

This Government is committed to working collaboratively with Aboriginal businesses, large corporates and the broader private sector, other tiers of government and relevant stakeholders to achieve the Tharamba Bugheen vision. This Strategy isn't telling Aboriginal businesses how to grow, it's about partnering with them to help chart their own course into an exciting future. By working closely together to understand the sector and the experiences of Aboriginal business people, we can make sure we provide the most effective and appropriate support across this diverse and important sector.

The Government looks forward to working with you to achieve a bigger, more visible and more successful Victorian Aboriginal business sector.



Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs



Hon Philip Dalidakis MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

THE VICTORIAN ECONOMY: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

Introduction

Aboriginal people in Victoria have a history of enterprise, including mining and large-scale aquaculture, long before European settlement. Since settlement, Aboriginal people have not been afforded the same opportunities for economic participation and wealth creation as non-Aboriginal people. Even today, Aboriginal people own and operate a business at about one third the rate of other Victorians.

However, there are signs that Aboriginal enterprise is growing and diversifying:

- the 2011 national Census indicates that in Victoria the number of Aboriginal owner-managers has increased by 28 per cent, from 702 to 902
- 18 per cent of Victorian Aboriginal businesses provide services in the key growth industries of Health, Education and Professional Services
- at least 40 Aboriginal businesses across Australia have a turn-over of more than \$2 million.

The Aboriginal business sector has evolved far beyond tourism, the creative arts and natural resource management. Aboriginal entrepreneurs are working at the cutting edge of sustainability, have established business partnerships with globally successful firms, are supporting their communities and are winning awards and plaudits for the valuable contribution they make to the Victorian economy.

The Government's vision is that *Aboriginal Victorians are supported to become innovative entrepreneurs and business leaders*. To achieve this we need to promote what is already happening more effectively. We also need to support Aboriginal businesses individually, and the sector overall, to grow. Tharamba Bugheen aims to achieve both of these things.

Our starting point is to support Victorian Aboriginal entrepreneurs to position themselves strategically within our economy.

Economic challenges and opportunities

The Victorian economy is changing. It was once built around goods produced in industries such as manufacturing and agriculture and is now services orientated, built around knowledge and skills in sectors like health care, education and professional services.

This fundamental shift in the direction of our economy presents opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal businesses in areas like procurement and international markets in Asia. Strong Aboriginal employment participation in health care and education also provides a solid base to increase Aboriginal private sector activity in these important sectors. Similarly, the Government will support well-established and new Aboriginal businesses to take advantage of opportunities related to Victoria's growth as an international tourism destination.

The Victorian Government's response

The Government is using the strengths of the Victorian economy – including advanced skills, an export-orientated knowledge economy and proximity to Asia – in five major initiatives to sustainably develop the economy and grow employment. These initiatives are:

1. **Back to Work Scheme** – provides up to \$100 million to support businesses who hire disadvantaged job seekers, as part of a plan to create at least 100,000 jobs. Eligible job seekers include apprentices or trainees, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and disability pensioners
2. **Premier's Jobs and Investment Panel (PJIP)** – provides strategic advice to the Premier about driving economic growth and creating high-skill, high-wage jobs in Victoria. It will be supported by a \$508 million fund. Sixty million dollars of this will be allocated to LaunchVic, an initiative to support innovative, high growth and globally focused companies
3. **Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund** – the Government's \$500 million overarching regional development package. It will grow jobs, build infrastructure and strengthen regional communities
4. **Future Industries Fund** – \$200 million that will support six high-growth sectors that have potential for extraordinary economic expansion:
 - Food and fibre
 - International education
 - New energy technology
 - Professional services
 - Transport, defence and construction technology
 - Medical technologies and pharmaceuticals
5. **Visit Victoria** – the Government's new entity bringing tourism and major events under one roof, working together to sell the State's great strengths to visitors from Australia and all over the world.

The Victorian Government has also committed \$4.5 million over four years to funding key initiatives under the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy (VAES). This funding has supported the establishment of a Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board (VAEB) which aims to:

- leverage support through industry agreements from private industry and finance sectors. The industry agreements will support improved employment, training and career pathways for Aboriginal Victorians
- identify opportunities and provide advice to build economic development outcomes
- identify best practice strategies and advise the Government of opportunities
- identify and support landmark projects for consideration. Landmark projects will deliver integrated outcomes to the Aboriginal community through skills, jobs and enterprise.

The VAEB will link with the PJIP through cross over membership.

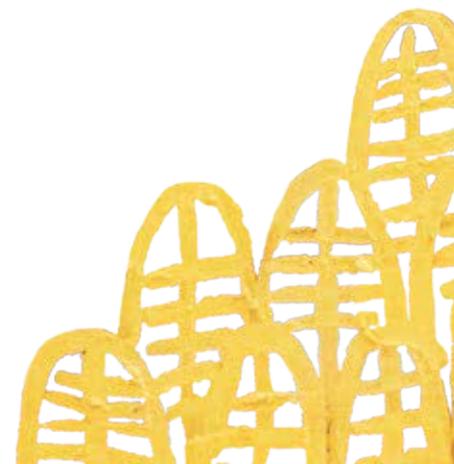


Tharamba Bugheen – which has received \$6.63 million in the 2016/17 State Budget – will leverage these initiatives and other government initiatives and opportunities in the private sector, to support the growth of Aboriginal businesses. Examples of opportunities include:

- a partnership with the corporate sector to support Aboriginal businesses to engage with corporates, particularly for the purpose of securing private sector procurement opportunities
- equipping land-based Aboriginal businesses with the skills to identify and implement commercial opportunities in areas like native food production
- LaunchVic will support Aboriginal businesses through incubator models, co-operative/shared working spaces and specialist training for promising young Victorian Aboriginal entrepreneurs
- through the Regional Skills Initiative, support Aboriginal Victorians to establish small businesses in regional areas
- provide young Aboriginal Victorians with support to complete Certificates in Business and undertake placements in the fashion, gaming, design and performing arts sectors
- facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal businesses in Victoria to participate in in-bound and out-bound trade missions.

An important commitment under the VAES was the release of Victoria’s Aboriginal Tourism Development Strategy (VATDS). The Strategy is focused on:

- positioning Melbourne as the destination recognised as having a suite of authentic, in depth and accessible Aboriginal experiences
- developing and promoting regional Victorian Aboriginal tourism offerings
- developing and growing the industry capabilities of Aboriginal tourism businesses
- marketing and distributing Aboriginal product and experiences to a global audience.







WORKING WITH ABORIGINAL VICTORIANS

i. Why a Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy?

The purpose of Tharamba Bugheen is to help advance the economic position of Aboriginal Victorians. Fully participating in the economy provides Aboriginal Victorians with the resources they need to determine the future they want. Economic participation is therefore critical to self-determination.

Successful Aboriginal entrepreneurs provide role models that inspire young Aboriginal people. As businesses become economically mobile, they create an economic space for the next generation of entrepreneurs to move into. Over time, this strengthens the economic position of Aboriginal communities, highlighting the importance of promoting Aboriginal entrepreneur success stories.

ii. Who are we targeting?

The Victorian Government is targeting its efforts at different levels. We will support individual entrepreneurs, social enterprises and more traditional businesses. We will support:

- the establishment and growth of small Aboriginal businesses and start-ups
- successful Aboriginal business owners to “take the next step” (e.g. by accessing international markets in order to grow their business)
- Aboriginal entrepreneurs, through training and business concept development.

iii. How will we engage?

The way in which we partner with Aboriginal businesses and entrepreneurs is equally as important as the type of support we provide.

The Government established an advisory group of Aboriginal entrepreneurs to support the development of Tharamba Bugheen. Aboriginal entrepreneurs and business owners were also involved in intensive planning workshops to determine the strategic focus of the Strategy.

Aboriginal entrepreneurs told us that an Aboriginal business strategy should help all businesses – whether start-up or growing and successful – to move to the next level. They highlighted the critical importance of investment in skills. Supporting businesses to link into contemporary economic opportunities, such as digital disruption and global engagement, was also a prominent theme in our discussions with Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

This input has ensured that the finalised Tharamba Bugheen is a direct response to the identified needs of Aboriginal businesses.

In the implementation and delivery of the Strategy, engagement with Aboriginal Victorians will take place in three key ways:

1. Work with Aboriginal Victorians to strengthen the roles and influence of Aboriginal-controlled peak bodies to ensure that Aboriginal voices play a stronger role in determining the direction of economic policies and programs.
2. Simplify service delivery engagement by establishing coordinating structures, clarifying and promoting points of entry into business support, and implementing culturally tailored marketing strategies to improve service accessibility.
3. Share the stories of successful Aboriginal Victorian entrepreneurs, with younger Aboriginal Victorians in particular. The aim being to increase interest in small business as a career and increase participation in tertiary business courses.



THE VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL BUSINESS SECTOR

i. The Victorian Aboriginal business sector

The Victorian Aboriginal business sector is large, diverse and includes for-profit business, social enterprise and community enterprise.

The size and profitability of Aboriginal business within Australia is demonstrative of its continued growth. Current data indicates 15 per cent of the 276 Aboriginal businesses certified with SupplyNation across Australia (approximately 41 businesses) have a turn-over of \$2 million or more.

Social and community enterprises undertake commercial activity that generates profit to support social needs, such as increasing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people.

The activity of land-based Aboriginal businesses (for-profit or community enterprise) includes primary production, natural resource management, ecosystem services and cultural tourism.

The Victorian Government defines an Aboriginal business as:

- at least 50 per cent Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned
- undertaking commercial activity
- registered in Victoria.

The 2011 national Census¹ shows that there are 902 Aboriginal owner-managers in Victoria, 548 of these are in Greater Melbourne and 354 are in regional Victoria.

Aboriginal owner-managers are:

- on average younger than other Victorian owner-managers (consistent with the demographic profile of Aboriginal Victoria), with a notably smaller proportion of owner-managers over 50 years old
- over-represented in Construction (8.2 percentage points higher than the Victorian proportion) and under-represented in service industries such as Retail, Professional Services and Healthcare (all about 3 percentage points lower), which are also key growth industries
- not as prevalent in regional Victoria as suggested by the general trend of Aboriginal Victorians being more regionally based. The Local Government Areas with the highest number of Aboriginal owner-managers are Greater Bendigo, Casey, Knox and Melbourne.

The Victorian Government is undertaking work to strengthen data collection about the numbers, size, industries, locations and economic contribution of Victorian Aboriginal businesses. This will support improved design of policies and programs for Victorian Aboriginal businesses.

¹ The national Census is the most comprehensive source of quantitative data about Aboriginal self-employment. It collects data about the *number of Aboriginal owner-managers* of incorporated and unincorporated enterprises, rather than the number of Aboriginal businesses in Victoria. Despite this, it is the best proxy we have for the number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses.

ii. The “pipeline”

Historically, the rate of self-employment among Aboriginal people across Australia has been much lower than that of non-Aboriginal Australians.

In 1991, the rate of entrepreneurship for non-Aboriginal Australians (10 per cent) was about five times that of Aboriginal entrepreneurship (2 per cent). While there has been a slight closing of the gap over the 1991-2011 period, the most recent Census figures indicate that the Aboriginal rate (3 per cent) is only one third that of the Australian average (10 per cent).

The Victorian Government wishes to strengthen the entrepreneurial culture among Aboriginal Victorians in order to support increased self-employment rates and the associated benefits that flow from business participation.

One indicator of the Aboriginal entrepreneurial “pipeline” is the rate of participation in business courses.

Available data indicates that while there has been an increase in the numbers of Aboriginal students in business courses between 2010 and 2014 (105 to 191), there is still a 7 per cent gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians choosing business courses.

Conversely, participation in VET related business courses between 2010 and 2014 has fallen (1154 to 1002).

Given that the VET sector has a role to play in strengthening entrepreneurial culture, we will promote increased use of the VET sector to Aboriginal Victorians establishing and growing businesses.

Aboriginal Victorian student participation in VET courses aligned to the Victorian Government’s high growth sectors shows that the most substantial participation is in the Food and Fibre sector (393 out of a total of 795 students in 2014).

Professional services (from 126 to 195) and Transport, Defence and Construction Technology (from 20 to 149) are the two sectors which have shown the most growth in Aboriginal student enrolments between 2010 and 2014. Over the 2010 to 2014 period, about 16 per cent of all Aboriginal VET students were undertaking these courses which was comparable to the non-Aboriginal figure of 17 per cent.

The Victorian Government will seek to improve these figures by stronger promotion of business courses to young Aboriginal Victorians. Tharamba Bugheen proposes a number of initiatives to improve participation in business courses.

The private sector – and large corporates in particular – are also critical to strengthening the entrepreneurial culture among Victorian Aboriginal businesses. They can support Aboriginal businesses along the journey from “good idea” to a service or product that will succeed in the market.

To leverage the support of corporates, Tharamba Bugheen includes private sector procurement mentoring opportunities and networking/mentoring opportunities within business training courses. The Government will also work with Kinaway: Chamber of Commerce Victoria to leverage further corporate support in areas such as pro-bono hours, secondary/tertiary scholarships, micro-finance and investment.

03

THARAMBA BUGHEEN: SUMMARY DIAGRAM

Tharamba Bugheen vision: Aboriginal Victorians are supported to become innovative entrepreneurs and business leaders.

PARTNERSHIPS

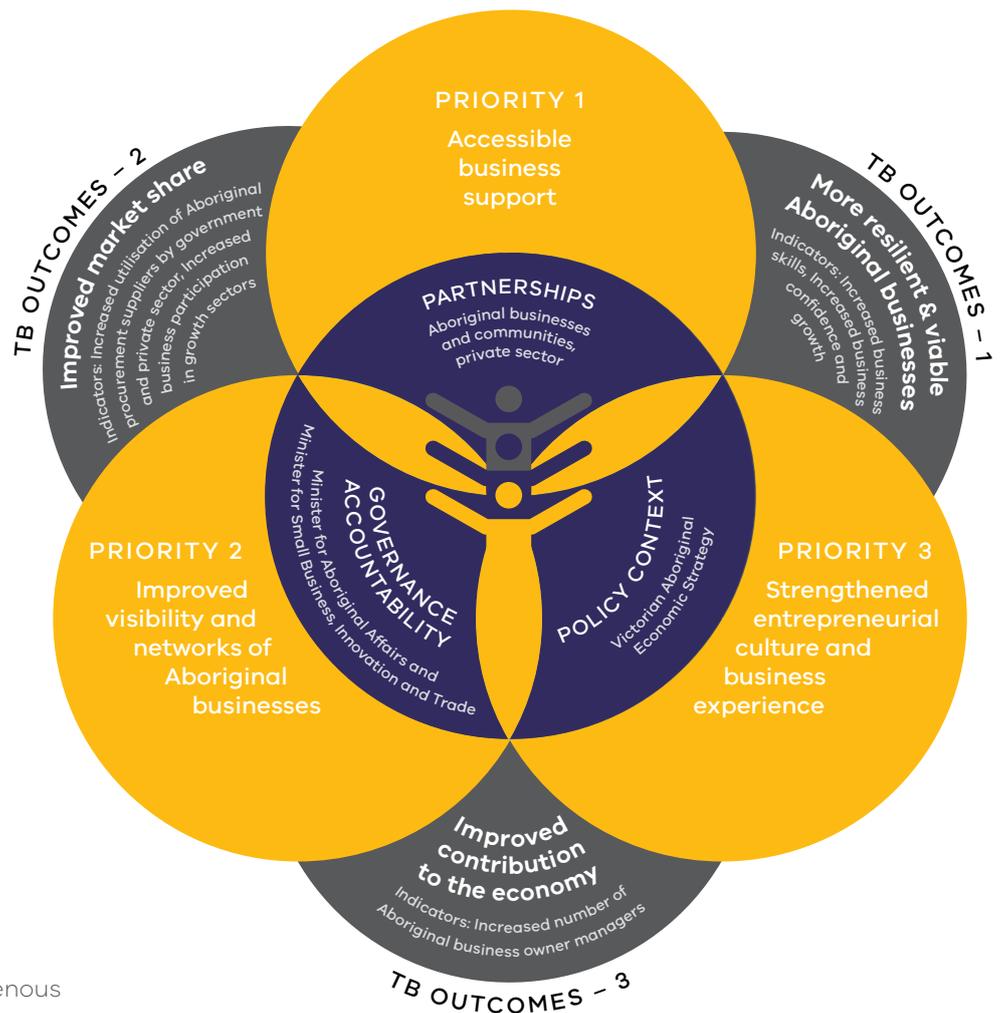
- Aboriginal businesses and communities
- Large corporates and the private sector
- Commonwealth agencies
- Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board

GOVERNANCE/ ACCOUNTABILITY

- Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
- Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

POLICY CONTEXT

- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework
- Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy
- Future Industries Strategies
- Back to Work Plan
- Labor's Plan for SMEs
- COAG Strategy for Closing the Gap and National Indigenous Reform Agreement
- Commonwealth Government Aboriginal economic policies





04

THARAMBA BUGHEEN: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To achieve the aims of Tharamba Bugheen, increase overall numbers of Victorian Aboriginal businesses, and support those businesses who wish to grow, three strategic priorities have been developed:

- 1 Accessible business support and advice
- 2 Improving the visibility and networks of Aboriginal businesses
- 3 Strengthening entrepreneurial culture and business experience

Creating greater opportunity rests in facilitating the transition from innovative idea and unique service offering to a commercial reality. This encompasses the full services life-cycle from pre-entry to start-up, to ongoing operation and to transition to new ownership, evolution or closure.

Strategic Priority 1: Accessible business support and advice

The key outcome sought from Strategic Priority 1 is more resilient, connected and viable Aboriginal businesses. Progress toward achieving this outcome will be measured by the following indicators:

- increased business skills
- increased business confidence and growth.

Each initiative outlined in this priority area will be underpinned by:

- targeted and robust promotion, using Aboriginal media and networks to ensure information about business support services is provided to all Victorian Aboriginal businesses
- flexible service delivery (timing, use of mediums/technology and models) that meets the needs of Aboriginal Victorians
- tailored services that are responsive to specific business support needs, with a high focus on best practice programs identified by Victorian Aboriginal businesses.

Barriers to support

Aboriginal businesses in Victoria have identified a number of key barriers they currently face when attempting to access business support:

- poor coordination of business support services
- lack of flexibility in the delivery of business support
- low awareness of existing business support services
- lack of programs tailoring assistance to the particular needs of a business
- over-supply of support for start-up businesses relative to mature business support
- travel requirements, distance and cost.

Many Aboriginal business owners in Victoria have difficulty accessing finance because they lack:

- family or individual wealth and savings
- assets or equity
- credit history.

Reports commissioned by the Victorian Government also confirm a gap between available business support and the awareness and take up of these services among Aboriginal businesses in Victoria.

Business support services provided by government agencies and private providers have an important role to play. However, this Strategy also recognises the role of big business in providing support to the Aboriginal business sector. Many large corporates are supporting Aboriginal businesses in diverse ways: procurement, joint ventures, cadetships, microfinance, mentoring, pro-bono hours, secondary/tertiary scholarships and skills development workshops.

The Government will actively work with our key partners to engage the support of big business in these areas to strengthen outcomes for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses.

The initiatives for Strategic Priority 1 will improve accessibility and ensure services respond to the specific needs of Aboriginal businesses in Victoria through:

- stronger coordination of business support
- targeted promotion and flexible delivery of business support services to Aboriginal businesses in Victoria
- developing and promoting tailor made finance products for Aboriginal businesses
- providing individually tailored business assistance and support for mature/growth phase Aboriginal businesses in Victoria.

Priority 1 initiatives

- Establish the Aboriginal Business Support Network (ABSN) and develop a strategy to connect and facilitate business owners to the right support services.
- Improve the entire Business Victoria Aboriginal support portal to provide virtual coordination of all available business support.
- Establish a business management skills program for Aboriginal start-up and social enterprise businesses with the intent to:
 - engage brokers to diagnose individual business' needs and link to appropriate business support
 - provide support through digital engagement, skype and webinars
 - pro-actively market the program through Aboriginal media and networks.
- Support Aboriginal businesses in Victoria to develop their product through involvement in industry champion programs and the VAEB.
- Develop a suite of informational guidebooks targeting Aboriginal businesses with advice tailored to their interests and needs.
- Work with the Finance Sector to develop and promote finance products that better target the Aboriginal business sector.
- Establish a partnership with the higher education sector and large corporates to support training for mature/growth phase Aboriginal businesses in leadership, business strategy, marketing and business finance.
- Provide training opportunities for Traditional Owner Corporations (TOCs) to support improved business strategy, economic decision making, human resource management and negotiation outcomes.
- Support Aboriginal businesses in regional areas to grow, innovate and improve productivity through access to regional funding programs like the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund.

Case Study

PwC Indigenous Consulting

What started out as an idea to combine commercial activity with positive societal outcomes has grown into a national partnership between Indigenous Australia and one of the world's largest professional service firms, PwC.

In 2013, PwC Indigenous Consulting, an independent company initially consisting of four Indigenous Australians and a number of representatives from PwC, opened its doors for the first time.

With the backing and security of PwC Global, PwC Indigenous Consulting has been able to power towards achieving its aim of creating positive change across Indigenous Australia by providing trusted professional services and advice to government, corporate and community clients on indigenous matters.

PwC Indigenous Consulting is a clear example of a business strategy addressing a market need, with the firm having worked on and completed more than 100 projects for numerous clients, many of whom have returned time and time again.

Today, the multi-award winning PwC Indigenous Consulting operates in seven locations throughout Australia and has grown to employ more than 25 Indigenous and non-indigenous staff.

**NAB Supplier
Awards 2014**

Winner

PricewaterhouseCoopers

For Supplier Diversity



Strategic Priority 2: Improving the visibility and networks of Aboriginal businesses

The key outcome sought from this strategic priority is to support Aboriginal businesses in Victoria to improve their market share. Progress toward achieving this outcome will be measured by the following indicators:

- increased number of businesses as procurement suppliers
- increased business participation in growth sectors.

The number of Victorian Aboriginal businesses is currently difficult to pinpoint and the promotion of Aboriginal businesses is lacking effectiveness.

This low awareness is reflected in modest outcomes for Aboriginal businesses from government and private sector procurement opportunities. Yet procurement is one of the areas of great potential.

Many opportunities are available to Victorian Aboriginal businesses through State and Commonwealth government policies and the private sector. The VAES includes a commitment to leverage procurement processes to support supply chain opportunities for Aboriginal businesses, as well as growth in Aboriginal employment.

A key focus of the VAES is to create the conditions that will enable Victorian Aboriginal businesses to take advantage of procurement opportunities.

An important step forward in this regard is the establishment by the Victorian Government of a target equal to one per cent of government procurement for Aboriginal businesses, to apply from 2019-2020, with a view to building towards a more ambitious target in the future.

The target will be based on the number of Aboriginal businesses that the Government contracts with.

To support this work, with the help of our partners, we will establish a comprehensive online database of Victorian Aboriginal businesses. This will improve the accessibility of Aboriginal businesses to government and private sector procurers.

The Government will also work with the Commonwealth Government to increase Victoria's share of the Commonwealth's Indigenous Procurement Policy spend.

Creating the conditions to improve procurement outcomes also requires ongoing promotion of Aboriginal businesses and support for Aboriginal businesses to build capacity in marketing and promotion. Many of the initiatives included in Strategic Priority 1 are designed to support capacity building.

As another avenue to stronger capacity, the Victorian Government will support Aboriginal businesses in establishing joint ventures with non-Aboriginal businesses. In particular, big business will be targeted to support Aboriginal businesses through joint ventures.

Big business is at the leading edge of corporate collaboration and can support Aboriginal businesses which are trying to grow and diversify.

We will also provide networking opportunities for Aboriginal businesses, for example with businesses from international markets and with highly successful Victorian businesses.

The initiatives for Strategic Priority 2 will increase the visibility and networks of the Aboriginal business sector by:

- developing a comprehensive data picture of the Victorian Aboriginal business sector and promoting this to business networks
- appointing Aboriginal representatives to high profile government business councils
- establishing a comprehensive online database of Victorian Aboriginal businesses. This will improve their accessibility to government and private sector procurers
- providing networking opportunities for Aboriginal businesses through events like trade shows and forums.

Priority 2 initiatives

- Appoint an Aboriginal business owner to the Small Business Ministerial Council.
- Through data and analysis, develop a comprehensive picture of the Victorian Aboriginal business sector.
- Establish a comprehensive online database of Victorian Aboriginal businesses.
- Establish a target equal to one per cent of government procurement for Aboriginal businesses, to apply from 2019-2020
- Establish a partnership with the corporate sector to support Aboriginal businesses to engage with corporates regarding private sector procurement opportunities. The partnership will include a mentoring program - with content on issues including 'business pitch', corporate procurement policies and processes, tendering, due diligence and "scaling up" - and an annual Private Sector Procurement forum, to enable the sharing of best practice.
- Support Victorian Aboriginal businesses to develop joint ventures with non-Aboriginal businesses to increase competitiveness in securing government and private sector procurement contracts. Large corporates will be an important focus of this initiative.
- Facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal businesses in Victoria to participate in in-bound and out-bound trade missions.
- Provide supply chain procurement opportunities for Aboriginal businesses as a result of major infrastructure projects (Melbourne Metro Rail Project, Caulfield-Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project).
- Support Aboriginal businesses in Victoria (e.g. tourism), to access international markets through participation in trade shows and targeted marketing campaign activities.
- Establish partnerships with Aboriginal peak bodies and the higher education sector to strengthen investment and innovation in high growth sectors (e.g. Food and Fibre) to support economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses, including TOCs.
- Support Aboriginal businesses in Victoria to develop digital content for promotion through digital marketing platforms.
- Strengthen the profile of Aboriginal businesses in regional Victoria through inclusion of their business/economic needs in Regional Strategic Plans.





Case Studies

BMGenerations

Based in the regional Victorian town of Bacchus Marsh, hairdressing business BMGenerations is a community staple that's been operating for more than twenty years. Bought by owner Wendy Hayes in 1995 as a run-down old-style salon, a refurbishment and fresh perspective quickly began to grow the business.

As a small business owner-operator, Wendy sought to run a business that was more than just a hairdressing salon. Constant research into new products, styles and techniques made sure that she continually delivered clients a service above and beyond what they could expect from other salons in the area.

Over its twenty one year lifespan, BMGenerations has gone through innumerable changes and overcome many of the challenges associated with owning and operating a small business for a long period of time.

Despite changes in size, staff, clientele trends and everything in-between, the ethos of the business is still to deliver a high quality service that means clients return again and again.

The first two decades of operation for BMGenerations have been filled with growth and positivity and fond memories of a successful small business. The years to follow look just as promising.

Wathaurong Glass

Wathaurong Glass is a Geelong based specialist glazier that's been in operation for more than 15 years. Like many small businesses it has experienced a series of unique challenges and changes in that time.

In the early years, Wathaurong Glass used its medium as a way to provide the local indigenous community with the knowledge and skills to broaden their employment opportunities.

At the height of this training scheme, the business produced more than 40 capable employees who went on to find gainful roles.

Following a series of market hurdles, Wathaurong Glass finished its training operations and moved to a stand-alone small business model, employing five full-time staff all working to produce the specialised product.

Producing a range of hand crafted glass art and retail glass items all based around Aboriginal art and culture, Wathaurong Glass has also recently expanded into plaque manufacturing.

Owner Mark Edwards believes in encouraging his employees to ensure that they focus on their own specific cultural area when creating their designs, ensuring that they stick to the unique style and ultimately produce a product that's representative of this.

The expansion is a demonstration of the business' ability to diversify in a challenging market and overcome some of the speedbumps along the way.

While the business has undeniably experienced some difficult periods, Mark believes that some of the hardest years have now passed and has confidence in the longevity of Wathaurong Glass going from strength to strength in years to come.



Strategic Priority 3: Strengthening entrepreneurial culture and business experience

The key outcome sought from this strategic priority is that Aboriginal businesses improve their contribution to the Victorian economy. Progress toward achieving this outcome will be measured by the following indicator:

- increased number of Aboriginal business owner managers.

The rate of self-employment among Aboriginal people is much lower than the Australian average. The most recent Census figures indicate that the Aboriginal rate (3 per cent) is only one third that of the Australian average (10 per cent).

The participation of Aboriginal students in business related courses, both in VET and in higher education, is also low in comparison to non-Aboriginal students.

We know that self-employment offers an important pathway toward self-determination and the means by which Aboriginal Victorians – and the community as a whole – can achieve economic mobility.

We will support increased participation in self-employment by promoting and celebrating Aboriginal entrepreneurial success, providing young people with cutting-edge business training, establishing partnerships and resourcing skill development opportunities.

The private sector, especially large corporates, is critical to strengthening entrepreneurial culture and business experience. For example:

- companies can support secondary or tertiary scholarships for Aboriginal business students; and
- joint ventures between Aboriginal businesses and big business can support Aboriginal businesses which are trying to grow and diversify.

The initiatives for Strategic Priority 3 will directly address the above challenges by:

- establishing a partnership with the business higher education sector
- providing business traineeships in the Creative Industries sector
- providing support to fledgling businesses through incubator models
- placing (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) students into Aboriginal businesses to implement growth initiatives.

Priority 3 initiatives

- Provide a training program for 10 promising young Aboriginal entrepreneurs in “start-up thinking” i.e. achieving high growth, global engagement and use of disruptive technology.
- Promote and celebrate Aboriginal entrepreneur success stories to young Aboriginal Victorians in schools and higher education.
- Provide 30 young Aboriginal Victorians with Creative Industries traineeships, involving:
 - completion of Certificates in Business (Certificates 2-4)
 - work placements with businesses in the fashion, gaming, design and performing arts sectors.
- Work with Kinaway: Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce to establish a central advisory hub for corporates wishing to engage with Aboriginal businesses. This will facilitate access to support such as mentoring, scholarships, micro-finance, pro-bono hours and private investment. This work will also support businesses to progress opportunities that are unique to regional areas.
- Establish partnerships with higher education organisations to support growth in individual Aboriginal businesses in Victoria, by providing access to skills required to implement business expansion ideas.
- Explore opportunities to support Aboriginal businesses in Victoria through LaunchVic, for example business incubator models, co-operative/ shared working spaces and accelerator programs, to boost business function quickly. This initiative will draw on the support of corporates, especially the business incubation aspect.
- Partner with peak Aboriginal organisations, such as Kinaway and the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations, to undertake targeted networking activities, including themed events (e.g. procurement), industry based events (e.g. land-based businesses) and purposeful opportunities to meet with non-Aboriginal businesses.
- Support Aboriginal people in regional areas to establish small businesses through the Regional Skills Initiative.
- Support emerging and existing Aboriginal businesses with high growth potential, and Aboriginal entrepreneurs seeking to expand business opportunities, through Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board landmark projects.

Case Study

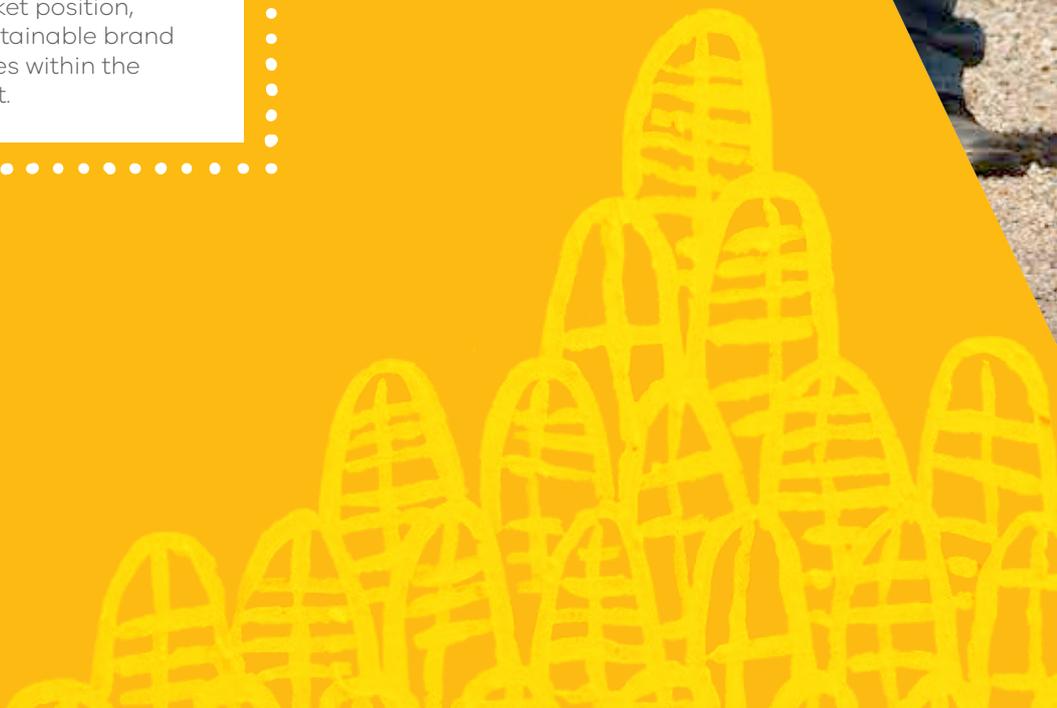
Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises Pty Ltd

Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises is a story of true small Aboriginal business success: from humble beginnings in land-based offerings with a focus on natural resource management, to expansion into research and consulting, specialist landscaping and cultural awareness.

Following its formation in 2012, Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises has grown its total annual profit by more than \$9,000 while at the same time using existing small business knowledge to identify, plan for and overcome some of the common market hurdles that many small businesses face.

As a result of the strong growth Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises has undergone throughout its half decade existence, the business can now actively sustain itself on a model of balanced operating revenue and expenses.

For Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises the future looks bright and the business already has a number of key growth activities planned, including firming up its market position, developing a strong and sustainable brand and exploring the possibilities within the heritage and tourism market.





Case Study

Kalinya Communications

In the language of the Yorta Yorta people of Northern Victoria, Kalinya means good, beautiful and honest.

Founded in 2012 on the passion of Indigenous self-representation, Kalinya Communications is an agency that uses events, marketing and the media to promote and illustrate Melbourne's creative and vibrant local Aboriginal community across a range of industries.

The only Aboriginal owned and operated communications agency in the greater Melbourne area, and one of the few existing within Australia, Kalinya occupies a unique position in the market and is using this to further its standing and achieve its aims.

As a business, Kalinya Communications has demonstrated its adaptability by identifying the shifting media landscape and taking advantage of new technologies to help those Indigenous Australians who are documenting, curating and promoting their own identities to help promote themselves and their stories.

Having built a name for itself working with organisations like the National Gallery of Victoria, The University of Melbourne, the Koori Heritage Trust and a number of Australian Football League Clubs, Kalinya Communications continues to thrive in its own space and is bound for further success in years to come.





SECTOR ROLES AND PARTNERSHIPS

i. Sector roles

Working with Aboriginal communities

An important focus of Tharamba Bugheen is self-determination. One way of progressing this aim is by encouraging and supporting Aboriginal Victorians to be front and centre of the implementation of the Strategy.

The Victorian Government will work with peak bodies to determine the most appropriate ways to engage Aboriginal Victorians in the implementation of this Strategy including:

Kinaway Chamber of Commerce Victoria Limited

– Kinaway Chamber of Commerce Victoria is a registered company based in Melbourne that provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and entrepreneurs with a collective voice both within the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business community and the general business community.

The primary focus of Kinaway is to promote the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs in trade and commerce in Victoria along with the provision of policy, advocacy and representation services to Aboriginal businesses and entrepreneurs. In addition, Kinaway will provide services, support and/or products to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and entrepreneurs to be commercially sustainable, profitable and innovative.

Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations

– the Federation is the peak representative body for TOCs providing advocacy and support to its members and professional services across Australia. The Federation supports TOCs to develop businesses, work in partnership with the private and public sectors, and leverage and enhance their assets unlocking the potential for economic growth across the State.

State Government

The Victorian Government has an important role in creating an environment where businesses can improve productivity and create quality employment opportunities for all Victorians. This includes facilitating partnerships and connections throughout various sectors, including Aboriginal businesses and communities, key growth industries, the education sector and research and development organisations.

Victorian Aboriginal Economic Board (VAEB)

To facilitate these partnerships and connections, the Victorian Government has established the VAEB. The VAEB will support the implementation of the VAES and provide strategic input to support Tharamba Bugheen, including:

- identifying barriers to Aboriginal business establishment and growth
- identifying best practice business strategies and initiatives
- leveraging private sector support for Aboriginal businesses.

The VAEB will support the development of industry wide agreements and provide support to emerging and existing Aboriginal enterprises through landmark projects.

Role of state government departments

DEDJTR, as the Government's lead economic development agency, will work in partnership with Aboriginal Victoria (DPC) and the VAEB to implement Tharamba Bugheen. DEDJTR brings together the key levers and functions that drive economic development and job creation across Victoria.

The Strategy includes many initiatives from DEDJTR portfolio areas that will support the establishment and growth of Aboriginal businesses.

Private sector

The private sector is the major driver of Victoria's economy. Significant improvements in the economic position of Aboriginal Victorians will depend on the extent to which governments, Aboriginal communities and corporations work together to draw on opportunities available in the private sector.

Large corporates - in particular - are critical. Many are supporting the growth and success of Aboriginal businesses through initiatives including joint ventures, skill development workshops, procurement, cadetships, microfinance, mentoring, pro-bono hours, secondary/tertiary scholarships and investment. The Government sees corporate Victoria as a key player in the implementation of Tharamba Bugheen. Large corporates can support Aboriginal businesses to grow, diversify and strengthen their skill base.

The Victorian Government will work with large corporates and the broader private sector to identify economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and shape initiatives in accordance with their specific needs. One of the key mechanisms for this will be through the work of the VAEB.

Commonwealth agencies

A number of Commonwealth agencies provide support to Aboriginal businesses.

Key agencies include:

- **Indigenous Business Australia (IBA)** – IBA is a commercially focused organisation that promotes and encourages self-management, self-sufficiency and economic independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. IBA delivers benefits to Aboriginal Australians through the administration of three programs focusing on home ownership, business ownership and investments.
- **Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC)** – in 1995, the Commonwealth Government established the ILC to assist Aboriginal people to acquire and manage land to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits. Tharamba Bugheen will explore how ILC resources can be leveraged to support economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses.

A key focus of the Aboriginal Business Support Network (an initiative under Strategic Priority 1) will be to strengthen information about, and the referral pathways between, all business support services. The Government will seek Commonwealth representatives on this network.

SupplyNation

SupplyNation is a not-for-profit organisation, funded by the Commonwealth Government that aims to connect Aboriginal suppliers (businesses) with government and private sector organisations in order to secure procurement opportunities.

The Government will work with SupplyNation to:

- strengthen the visibility of Victorian Aboriginal businesses to government and the private sector
- increase Victorian Aboriginal businesses' market share of government and private sector procurement contracts.

ii. Partnerships

The Government will enter into the following partnerships to deliver some of the key initiatives outlined under the strategic priorities:

Tertiary institutions:

- training for 20 mature/growth phase Aboriginal businesses in leadership, business strategy, marketing and business finance
- 30 businesses to be supported with access to skills to implement business growth/expansion ideas
- 20 TOC executives to be trained in strategy, economics, decision making, human resource management and negotiations
- 4 joint venture networking events.

Kinaway and the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations:

- 6 targeted networking activities, including themed events (e.g. procurement), industry based events (e.g. Food and Fibre for land-based businesses and TOCs) and opportunities to meet with non-Aboriginal businesses
- investigate economic opportunities for Aboriginal businesses, including TOCs, in the Food and Fibre sector
- develop a strategy to strengthen Aboriginal businesses' access to finance/capital.

Foundation for Young Australians and LaunchVic:

- 10 promising young Aboriginal entrepreneurs trained in "start-up thinking" i.e. achieving high growth, global engagement and use of disruptive technology
- support for Aboriginal businesses to boost business function quickly through business incubator models, co-operative/shared working spaces and accelerator programs
- promote young Aboriginal Victorian entrepreneur success stories across Victoria, through digital platforms and youth media.

SupplyNation:

- establish a comprehensive online database of Victorian Aboriginal businesses.





REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Victorian Government reports to the Council of Australian Governments on progress against the Closing the Gap targets contained in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement. The Victorian Government also tables an annual Aboriginal Affairs Report in the Victorian Parliament, which reports against headline indicators and targets for the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2018 (VAAF), the overarching policy framework for Aboriginal Victorians.

Given the important role Aboriginal businesses play in job creation, the VAAF headline indicator of most relevance to Tharamba Bugheen is increasing Aboriginal labour force participation (Table 1).

Reporting on Tharamba Bugheen outcomes towards this headline indicator will be undertaken as part of overall VAAF reporting. Reporting on other outcomes and activities will occur through the Secretaries' Leadership Group on Aboriginal Affairs and the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Annual reports.

Table 1: VAAF headline indicators and targets of direct focus for Tharamba Bugheen

Strategic Action Area	Headline indicator	Targets
Economic participation	Increase Aboriginal labour force participation	<p>By 2018, halve the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians, as measured by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment to population ratio, for 15 to 64 year olds • Unemployment rate • Labour force participation rate
	<p>Tharamba Bugheen also aims to achieve specific outcomes relating to the growth of individual Aboriginal businesses and strengthening of the sector overall. These outcomes are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More resilient and viable Aboriginal businesses 2. Improved market share 3. Improved contribution to the Victorian economy. 	<p>We will use a range of indicators to measure the achievement of these outcomes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased business confidence and growth (Outcome 1) • Increased business skills (Outcome 1) • Increased utilisation of Aboriginal procurement suppliers by the private and public sectors (Outcome 2) • Increased business participation in growth sectors (Outcome 2) • Increased number of Aboriginal business owner-managers (Outcome 3).

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation strategy is being developed to measure our progress towards Tharamba Bugheen outcomes. The evaluation will be undertaken as the Strategy is being implemented, which will enable us to modify and improve business support for Aboriginal businesses to reflect what we learn along the way.

i. Accountability

Tharamba Bugheen will be led by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade.

