

Media Release

Vicki Ward MP

Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
Minister for Employment



Thursday, 18 July 2024

BACKING MORE FIRST NATIONS BUSINESSES IN VICTORIA

The Allan Labor Government is supporting First Nations businesses to grow and upskill with the announcement of the new *Victorian Aboriginal Business Investment Program*.

Minister for Employment Vicki Ward today visited Djaara's DUMAWUL Cultural Tourism and Creative Arts Hub in Bendigo to announce the new program as part of the Labor Government's \$10 million package to support First Nations businesses.

From Monday 22 July 2024, Aboriginal owned and operated businesses working in regional Victoria can apply for funding to support and expand their businesses, with grants of up to \$10,000 available to businesses for training and accreditation, mentorship, networking, marketing and access to expert advisory services.

Businesses will also be able to apply for grants of up to \$100,000 for purchasing new assets, planning and delivering business cases, conducting studies and specialist training.

The initiative is part of the Government's commitment to making rural and regional Victoria an even better place to live, work, stay and play and boosting local jobs and businesses in every corner of our state.

The \$10 million package also includes support for seven Traditional Owner Corporations in regional Victoria - this will help to establish economic hubs where Aboriginal businesses can connect, access support and showcase their work.

These initiatives will support communities to focus on connection to culture and Country and build on the Labor Government's commitment to self-determination and economic inclusion and prosperity.

Applications for the *Victorian Aboriginal Business Investment Program* will open on Monday 22 July 2024 and close on Friday 6 September 2024.

To learn more and to apply visit business.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-business-grants.

Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Vicki Ward

"This program is a game changer, by working with local First Nations communities the hubs can help close the economic gap between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Victorians and help owners expand their businesses."

Quote attributable to Premier and Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan

"Aboriginal businesses deliver great outcomes for Victoria – through this program we are creating hubs like this one in Bendigo and investing in a more sustainable future for First Nations businesses."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"These new grants are a big boost for First Nations businesses across Victoria and this hub in Bendigo is supporting local businesses in our community."

Quote attributable to Koori Caucus Chair Jason Mifsud

Media contact: Liam Mcallister 0488 771 334 | liam.mcallister@minstaff.vic.gov.au

“If we close the economic gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, we will see more Aboriginal people moving from welfare to wages, and from wages to wealth. This shift will bring significant economic benefits back into the whole Victorian economy.”

Quote attributable to Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Group CEO Rodney Carter

“Enterprises and hubs like DUMAWUL support Traditional Owners to build sustainable businesses and re-establish thriving economies that benefit all Victorians.”