

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP
Minister for Environment
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Outdoor Recreation



Friday, 14 February 2025

BACKING FIRST NATIONS TOURISM IN VICTORIA

First Nations groups across the state can now apply for new grants to expand their First Nations tourism experiences – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today announced up to \$3.6 million in grants under the First Peoples Tourism Industry Strengthening Program are now available. These grants will create and expand tourism offerings that celebrate and empower family, community, culture and Country.

The program was developed based on feedback from the community and is now open for applications from Victoria's 12 Registered Aboriginal Parties, with grants of up to \$300,000 available. Registered Aboriginal Parties provide advice and knowledge on matters relating to Aboriginal places and objects in their region.

The new program will support First Nations tourism businesses across the state, and builds on the Labor Government's Experience Victoria 2033 (EV33) plan to strengthen Victoria's visitor economy through five key pillars – First Nations-led experiences, wellness, arts and culture, food and drink, and nature.

In 2023, more than 500,000 people visited Victoria and participated in First Peoples tourism experiences as part of their travels – spending a total of \$1.3 billion.

The First Peoples Tourism Industry Strengthening Program will provide even more support to this growing sector, backing these unique organisations to grow their one-of-a-kind tourism offerings.

The Labor Government announced its *Victorian Aboriginal Business Investment Program* in July 2024, which is another way the Government is backing First Nations communities and their businesses.

Applications are open until 10 April 2025. For more information about the program, visit tourism.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"People and families travelling to Victoria continue to visit our unique First Nations tourism experiences because they're interested in learning about First Peoples' culture and knowledge."

"We're backing the growth and expansion of First Nations tourism offerings and giving more people the chance to experience them – while backing local communities and First Nations jobs at the same time."

Quote attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"This will support First Nations communities in Victoria, while also fuelling further growth across our tourism sector."