

# Aboriginal Participation Strategy



October 2024

[dphi.nsw.gov.au](http://dphi.nsw.gov.au)





# Acknowledgement of Country

---

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Country that always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work.

Published by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

[dphi.nsw.gov.au](http://dphi.nsw.gov.au)

Aboriginal Participation Strategy

First published: October 2024

Copyright and disclaimer

© State of New South Wales through the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure 2024. Information in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing, October 2024, and is subject to change. For more information, please visit [nsw.gov.au/copyright](http://nsw.gov.au/copyright)

# Secretary's message

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Aboriginal Participation Strategy is designed to maximise the number of contracts the department awards to Aboriginal business while ensuring alignment to the NSW Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy and achieving value for money.

We recognise that improving the opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and peoples benefits the whole community and supports our responsibility to address the Closing the Gap initiatives.

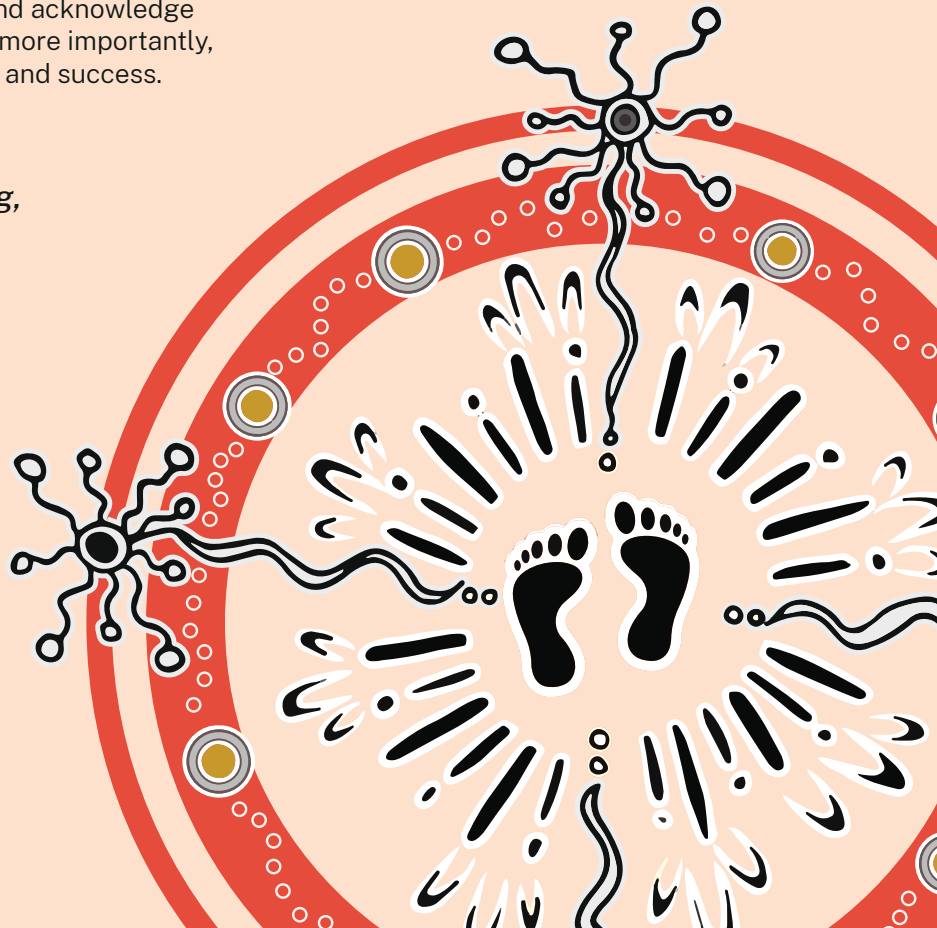
The strategy demonstrates the department's commitment and provides pathways to delivering Aboriginal procurement outcomes. It aims to strengthen the employment of Aboriginal people through a strong supply chain.

We are committed to becoming a department of choice for Aboriginal businesses to engage with. We are consulting with Aboriginal businesses, communities and advocacy groups, creating opportunities for Aboriginal businesses and strengthening the employment of Aboriginal people through a strong supply chain. We are increasing the number of contracts we have with Aboriginal businesses.

Proudly, this strategy represents the combined conversations and wisdom of many people. I would like to thank and acknowledge those who contributed to its development and, more importantly, those who will contribute to its implementation and success.

## **Kiersten Fishburn**

*Secretary of the Department of Planning,  
Housing and Infrastructure*



---

# Content



Introduction	3
Purpose	3
NSW Aboriginal Procurement Policy	4
Our responsibilities	5
Our actions	6
Measures of success	7
More information and support	9

---

# Introduction

---

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's Aboriginal Participation Strategy has been developed and endorsed by the department's Executive Leadership Committee, in line with the NSW Aboriginal Procurement Policy and the government's commitment to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Based on our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander communities, peoples and businesses, we use the term Aboriginal to mean both Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander peoples and cultures. We acknowledge these are not interchangeable. It is important in our context and stakeholder group that we use the term Aboriginal with regards to procurement and participation in our supply chain.

Similarly, we use the term 'Aboriginal business' to mean one that has at least 50% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ownership and is recognised through an appropriate organisation such as Supply Nation or NSW

Indigenous Chamber of Commerce.

We are committed to the ongoing participation of Aboriginal peoples, businesses and communities in all we do.

Encouraging Aboriginal participation must be done with a focus on protecting Aboriginal people's rights in relation to their heritage, knowledge and cultural expressions. This strategy thoughtfully considers and addresses the importance of protecting Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property in procuring goods and services from Aboriginal businesses and people.

The department will work collaboratively with and for Aboriginal peoples, communities and entities, transforming our engagements and delivery to achieve better outcomes and close the socio-economic gap for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. This strategy covers the period October 2024 to October 2025.

---

# Purpose

---

We seek to extend our commitments to Aboriginal peoples and our Aboriginal business partners by executing and implementing this strategy. We will publish this strategy on our website for accountability and transparency. We welcome feedback on the strategy so we can continuously improve outcomes for those the department seeks to serve.

Our overarching intent is to deliver on and exceed the requirements of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy by engaging with Aboriginal businesses in a way that is

genuine, culturally appropriate and mutually beneficial. This strategy provides the requirements of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy as a baseline (the 'why'), the specific responsibilities (the 'what') and the relevant actions (the 'how' and 'who'), all to be executed in the next 12 months.

This strategy aims to provide clear direction to all staff and demonstrate the department's commitment to Aboriginal participation.

# NSW Aboriginal Procurement Policy

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy was prepared by the NSW Government. The NSW Government has mandated targets and objectives that directly contribute to increasing Aboriginal economic participation in the development of NSW. The Aboriginal Procurement Policy is publicly available and can be found on the buy NSW website.

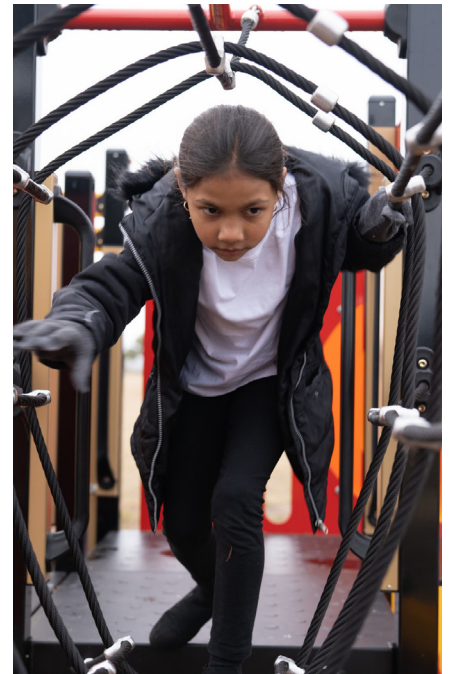
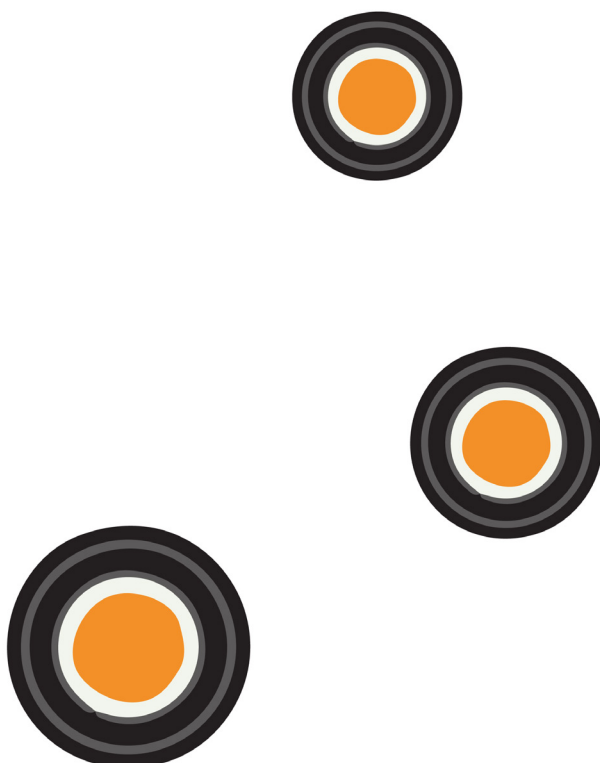
## Aboriginal Procurement Policy targets

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy aims for NSW Government agencies to direct 1% of their addressable spend and 3% of goods and services contracts to Aboriginal businesses.

For contracts valued at \$7.5 million or more, agencies must include a minimum requirement of 1.5% Aboriginal participation by meeting one or a combination of the following conditions:

- At least 1.5% of the contract value should be subcontracted to Aboriginal businesses.
- At least 1.5% of the contract's Australian-based workforce ('full time equivalent' workers) that directly contribute to the contract should be Aboriginal peoples.
- At least 1.5% of the contract value should be applied to the cost of education, training or capability building for Aboriginal staff or businesses directly contributing to the contract.

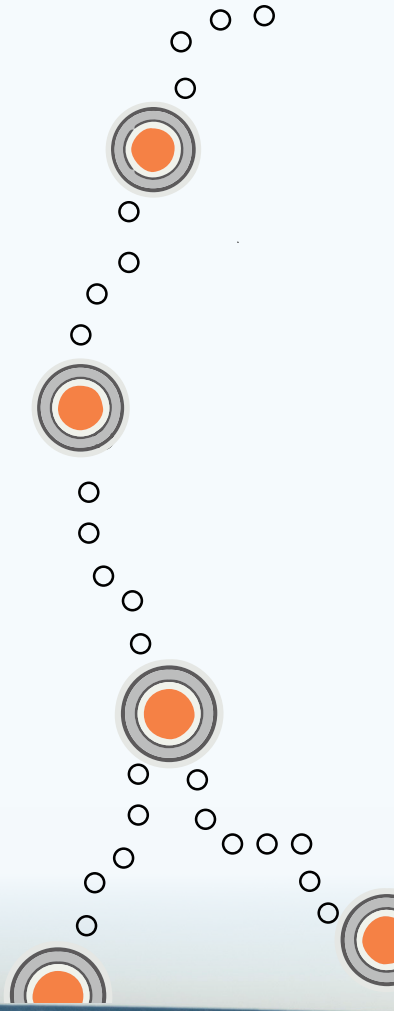
Successful suppliers of contracts above \$7.5 million must implement an Aboriginal participation plan and report upon progress throughout the project.



# Our responsibilities

We have developed 3 key responsibilities to allow us to achieve our commitment to increase Aboriginal participation:

- **Seek executive leadership support and initiatives** to ensure the department prioritises and places the relevant importance on our role in Closing the Gap.
- **Increase procurement spend and support employment opportunities with Aboriginal businesses** by ensuring the Aboriginal Procurement Policy addressable spend and contract targets are exceeded – this will create more full-time employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through our procurement activities.
- **Develop enabling systems and reporting** to ensure we remain on track to achieve, at a minimum, the Aboriginal Procurement Policy targets, as well as meeting the reporting obligations under the Aboriginal Procurement Policy.



---

# Our actions

---

This section looks at the overarching actions we will take under this strategy, categorised by the 3 departmental responsibilities we have defined. These actions will help us to engage Aboriginal businesses and make a positive change and impact for Aboriginal peoples.

## Executive leadership support and initiatives

The department's executive leadership team are committed to helping staff achieve the objectives and targets of this strategy. The executive leadership team will encourage the training and development of all staff, both professionally and personally, to grow our collective knowledge of Aboriginal culture and cultural protocols to best support the objectives of this strategy.

The actions our executive leaders will take are to:

- complete cultural knowledge training to be ready to support our teams
- support staff to undertake cultural training programs, either procurement-specific or to increase general knowledge and awareness of cultural protocols
- assess Aboriginal participation, instruct change and provide guidance to teams on areas for improvement
- empower our respective business units to drive greater Aboriginal spend in our core business functions and use reporting mechanisms to increase this specific spend year-on-year
- embed annual Aboriginal procurement targets into the department's executive leadership performance agreements.

## Procurement spend with Aboriginal business

As a department, we are committed to developing our awareness, knowledge and engagement of Aboriginal stakeholders throughout our supply chain. We are dedicated to achieving year-on-year increases in Aboriginal procurement. We will improve our processes to enable us to achieve these procurement targets.

It is our collective responsibility to take actions that increase Aboriginal procurement and engagement with

the department in a culturally safe and respectful way.

The actions we will take to enable increased procurement spend with Aboriginal business are to:

- produce quarterly reports on Aboriginal participation to drive positive change and/or seek executive leadership guidance on areas for improvement, which includes reviewing the engagement and conversion rates (how many Aboriginal businesses are engaged in tendering comparing with those who win the work)
- focus on Aboriginal procurements that are within our core business functions, not just for ancillary services, to build the capability and capacity of Aboriginal businesses to support us long term
- identify opportunities to work with Aboriginal businesses across our major programs
- provide support to Aboriginal businesses, such as giving feedback on tendering to enable businesses to continuously improve
- encourage industry upskilling, which will lead to an increase in the number of contracts being awarded to Aboriginal businesses
- exceeding the current minimum targets for the percentage of addressable spend directed to Aboriginal businesses and the number of contracts awarded to Aboriginal businesses
- increase the number of Aboriginal businesses being awarded longer-term contracts.

## Systems and reporting

This strategy identifies ways to achieve better reporting and outcomes for Aboriginal business and the our staff.

The actions we will take to improve our systems and meet our reporting responsibilities are to:

- collect more detailed data on Aboriginal-owned businesses and make it available to staff
- enable business units to report data relevant to their area of expertise, as well as tracking spend data
- include reporting on staff training and cultural and community engagements
- provide information to Aboriginal businesses about the department's procurement requirements.

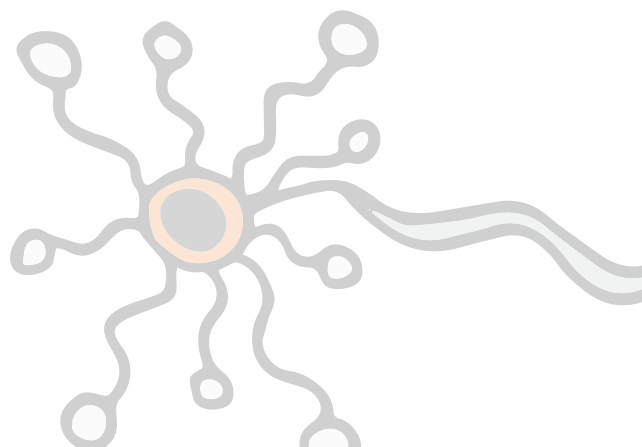


# Measures of success

There are some key challenges in achieving the actions associated with each of the responsibility areas we have identified. To ensure these challenges are overcome, this strategy allocated measures of success. Each action requires an accountable (A) and responsible (R) person to drive and monitor progress and outcomes.

## 1. Executive leadership support

Action	Who is A) accountable and R) responsible
Offer training courses to their respective business units and undertake training themselves at least twice per year in areas of Aboriginal procurement and culture	A) Executive leadership team R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Deliver quarterly reports to the executive leadership team that capture Aboriginal participation data and allow leaders to instruct change or provide guidance to teams on areas for improvement	A) Executive leadership team R) Procurement and Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Take part in a minimum of 6 Aboriginal participation meetings annually with their respective business units to ensure compliance to this strategy is ongoing	A) Executive leadership team R) Executive directors
Allocate adequate resources within teams to ensure successful implementation of this strategy	A) Executive leadership team R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Identify at least one project that will commence with an Aboriginal business in the first 12 months of this strategy within the areas of addressable spend	A) Executive leadership team R) Contract managers
Embed annual Aboriginal procurement targets in the executive leaders' performance agreements	A) Secretary R) Executive leadership team



## 2. Procurements through Aboriginal businesses

Action	Who is A) accountable and R) responsible
Increase the number of contracts being awarded to Aboriginal businesses	A) Procurement owners R) All staff
Increase the number of Aboriginal businesses being awarded contracts longer than 24 months or which have the potential for long-term growth	A) Procurement owners R) All staff
Increase the engagement of Aboriginal businesses for the delivery of core business functions	A) Procurement owners R) All staff
Conduct specific tendering and buyer workshops for Aboriginal businesses to encourage upskilling for tender preparation, planning and writing	A) Procurement R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Engage with NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce to identify Aboriginal businesses to participate in procurement processes	A) Procurement owners R) Procurement and Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Seek feedback from Aboriginal businesses to share knowledge and experience following the engagement and procurement processes	A) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement R) Procurement
Provide points of contact that Aboriginal businesses can contact where they need assistance	A) Procurement owners R) Procurement
Apply minimum requirements for 1.5% Aboriginal participation in all contracts valued at \$5 million excluding GST where possible	A) Procurement owners R) Executive leadership team
Achieve a minimum of 2% of addressable spend directed to Aboriginal businesses and award 4% of goods and services contracts to Aboriginal businesses	A) Executive leadership team R) Procurement owners
Provide support to staff (including through external services such as NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce) participating in the process of successfully implementing this strategy	A) Procurement and Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement R) Executive leadership team

---

### 3. Systems and reporting

Action	Who is A) accountable and R) responsible
Implement effective reporting and identification of Aboriginal owned businesses. Engage an Aboriginal business to support the reporting system and to provide tailored support with implementing Aboriginal participation reporting tools, where appropriate	A) Procurement R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement
Implement a reporting process that effectively captures capability, capacity, location and conversion of tenders to work won and associated spend as a continuous improvement model	A) Procurement R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement, delivery groups and enabling functions
Report quarterly to identify performance against measures and tracking spend data, including reporting on staff training requirements and cultural and community engagements.	A) Procurement R) Delivery groups and enabling functions
Provide data to Aboriginal businesses to increase their awareness of the goods and services procured by the department and across which locations	A) Procurement R) Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement, delivery groups and enabling functions

## More information and support

---

Contact the Procurement team:

Email [procurement@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:procurement@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

Contact the Aboriginal Strategy, Policy and Engagement team:

Email [aspe@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aspe@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

