



ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY GIPPSLAND

Building on the legacy

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect Gippsland Traditional Owners as the original custodians of the land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of Culture and traditional practices.

We also acknowledge the contribution made by all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Gippsland, many of whom have lived in the region for many years and called it home. They have also made a significant contribution to land management, protection of the environment, caring for and promoting the health and wellbeing of Community, Aboriginal art, business, education and training and much more.

Art work

The artwork titled "Connecting to our Song lines" reflects the linkages that hold and connect us to Country. The dark lines are etched into the landscape and hold stories that stretch back in time and guided our ancestors as they travelled and moved across the land and waters.

The circles hold stories through the song lines that sit below the surface and link us to the past and provide us with a deep reservoir of ancient cultural knowledge systems that we can draw upon to influence and shape our collective and individual aspirations

The circles also depict gathering spaces where stories were shared and passed through the generations and ceremonial practices were carried out to reinforce our connections and responsibilities to care for Country and each other.

A legacy resides within the song lines and ask that when we sit on Country we must listen deeply, learn from each other, and heal together so we can build on the legacy of our ancestors and Elders.

Artwork gifted by Brian Stevens

Terminology

Throughout this strategy, Aboriginal is used to encompass both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Koori and Indigenous.

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Foreword

The Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy for Gippsland is the starting point towards ensuring a self-managed and self-determined future of the local communities.

Whilst GLaWAC is the host organisation for this strategy, it has been developed with a full invitation for the whole of Community, its organisations and Aboriginal business to contribute during the consultation phase. We recognise that not everyone would have contributed given the limitations during COVID19 and that is why we have developed a 'living strategy' that will grow and allow ongoing engagement with those wishing to contribute to the economic future of Aboriginal Gippsland.

The Strategy has been designed to explore partnerships, joint ventures and collaboration with and between Aboriginal businesses and the broader Community.

GLaWAC is proud of its work in forging key partnerships, employing over 40 Aboriginal staff and developing its Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Café businesses. We believe this Strategy should also profile other deadly work in these spaces.

It's about celebrating Culture and stepping forward to showcase our unique abilities, and to understand how to care for country while developing arts and cultural tourism businesses.

There will be support available to help navigate and overcome barriers for our youth and women to explore the concept of starting up family, Community and small business, as they will be able to access timely and culturally appropriate supports designed to mentor and coach them into successful business ownership.

The Strategy has been developed with an aim to support Aboriginal organisations to pursue Community enterprise aspirations when they become ready. The Strategy also focuses on the significance of working together to develop enterprise that can employ greater numbers of Aboriginal people across the region in addressing the historical and economic marginalisation.

The Strategy recognises the ever-changing dynamic of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) into the future with Traditional Owner corporations (TOC's) and future Treaty opportunities now significant contributors to this journey.

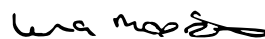
We would like to acknowledge all those that have shared their time to contribute to the development of this strategy and we especially look forward to implementing this strategy with the ongoing input and guidance from the Aboriginal Community of Gippsland.



Roger Fenwick
Chief Executive Officer



Troy McDonald
Board Chair



Lena Morris
Elders Council Chair

Strategy at a Glance

VISION

Aboriginal people throughout Gippsland engage in opportunities that enable them to live prosperous lives and make a significant impact on the economic development of the region.

VALUES

Honouring our Culture & Ancestors

Connection to Country

Inclusive & Culturally Safe

Self-Determination

Sharing Skills and Knowledge

Caring for Country

Cultural Tourism

Unique Strengths

Arts & Design

Food & Hospitality

FOCUS AREAS

Getting on with Business

Relationships & Connections

Business Support

Business Innovation & Growth

GOALS

- › Establish the infrastructure and resources needed to implement the strategy
- › Raise the awareness of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community about opportunities in business & entrepreneurship
- › Increase the knowledge and interest of young people in business ownership
- › Build the profile of Aboriginal businesses – private and Community enterprises - to the broader business sector and Community in Gippsland

- › Strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal businesses and Community with non-Aboriginal businesses.
- › Facilitate greater coordination of government, industry bodies, philanthropy, business, Traditional Owner Corporations & Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation investment and initiatives in Aboriginal business/ economic development.
- › Establish partnerships and collaborations with existing organisations/ enterprises who provide a range of supports to build business capability and success particularly in the Indigenous business sector

- › Provide a range of inclusive and targeted training / information sessions on business ownership for Community members exploring options and pathways to business ownership
- › Provide and facilitate access to culturally appropriate and informed support such as business planning, mentoring/ coaching, networking, seed and capital funding relevant to all stages in the business life cycle to enable businesses to build skills and grow
- › Support TOC's & ACCOs in building their Community enterprise capability

- › Support businesses to expand markets using e-commerce and other technologically based platforms
- › Establish an Aboriginal Business Innovation Fund to support businesses start or scale up in areas identified as contributing to the economic growth of Gippsland
- › Invest in demonstration projects in caring for Country, cultural tourism and creative arts

OUTCOME

- › An activated Aboriginal economy.
- › Significant growth in the Aboriginal business sector in Gippsland.
- › Aboriginal men, women and young people contributing to economic development across Gippsland.
- › Coordinated and connected Aboriginal business funding and support.
- › Economic development collaborations between Aboriginal organisations and Traditional Owner Groups.
- › Partnerships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses.
- › Strengthening existing and creating new enterprises & businesses.

Strategy Purpose

Aboriginal people throughout Gippsland will engage in opportunities to enable them to live prosperous lives and make a significant impact on the economic development of the region.

Opportunities for Economic Growth

The Strategy will facilitate and promote opportunities for the Aboriginal Community of all ages and throughout Gippsland to make a significant contribution to the economic development of the region, drawing on their vibrant cultural heritage and knowledge systems, encouraging Community connectedness, and establishing productive partnerships and collaborative ventures.

The skills and knowledge of Aboriginal people living in Gippsland will add significant value to the economic growth of the region particularly through key sectors such as Caring for Country, cultural tourism, environmental management, food and hospitality and arts and design.

Values

The Strategy has been developed based on the strengths of the Community and what is important to ensure its success:

- **Cultural knowledge and skills** about caring for the land belong to and are the exclusive domain of Aboriginal people - it is our inherent responsibility to look after Country – to heal it from the damage of the past and protect it for the future
- **Connection to Country** is fundamental to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people and their capacity to live prosperous lives
- **Inclusiveness and Cultural safety** are needed for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to heal the divides of the past and to work constructively and positively together to harness the potential to achieve their individual and collective aspirations
- **Self-determination** is central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people freely determining their political status and freely pursuing their economic, social and cultural development.
- **Sharing skills and knowledge** between Aboriginal people, organisations and traditional owner groups and non-Aboriginal people is critical to ensuring the benefits of economic growth across Gippsland are shared equitably



The purpose of the Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy for Gippsland is to facilitate and progress the economic development aspirations of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community and to support established businesses to grow and flourish.

Background

The importance of Economic Development

The purpose of the Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy for Gippsland is to facilitate and progress the economic development aspirations of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community and to support established businesses to grow and flourish.

The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC), whilst the auspice inspires through this strategy to extend the economic, learning and business development opportunities be extended to the whole of the Aboriginal Community of Gippsland.

A strong Aboriginal business sector is an important factor in empowering Aboriginal communities and contributes significantly to self-determination, wealth creation, and health and well-being. We are witnessing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led economic development across Australia in many forms through the establishment and growth of not for profit and profit driven Aboriginal and Torres Strait organisations. These organisations are managing traditional owned land and infrastructure, developing social enterprises, leading cultural tourism experiences, growing bushfoods for the hospitality industry, producing sought after art and other products as part of thriving creative industries and participating in joint ventures and partnerships in other industries such as construction, roads, renewable energy and digital and wireless technologies. In doing so they are also creating employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, building their skills, acting as role models and creating pathways, particularly for young people, to establish their own businesses. As businesses grow and develop, they allow the next generation of entrepreneurs to step forward. Over time, this strengthens the economic position of Aboriginal communities.

There are some unique challenges for Aboriginal people to establish and succeed in business (in whatever form that takes), primarily because of historic economic marginalisation, low intergenerational wealth transfer and lower rates of educational achievement, employment participation,

fewer role models and poorer health outcomes than non-Indigenous Australians. For example, it is well known that Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses have more limited access to financial and human capital than non-Aboriginal counterparts, with most being first generation business owners without significant assets (such as equity in a home) to leverage'.ⁱ

It is recognised by both Commonwealth and State governments that to make the mind-shift and transition from being an employee to business owner, many Aboriginal men and women will need access to information, a range of business supports and access to capital to establish and grow their businesses.

The situation in Gippsland is no different to many other places in Australia, however the geographical spread and the diversity of the Aboriginal Community provides some additional challenges to growing Aboriginal economic development in the region. As identified in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework there needs to be a priority focus on "Building work opportunities for Victorian Aboriginal young people, women, people living with a disability and those in regional areas is key to inclusive economic growth."ⁱⁱ

The success of this strategy will require the transfer of power and resources to communities through robust pathways that support school leavers to understand and support their future economic security and builds leaders who can step into all sectors to promote the value of Aboriginal contribution to economic growth. As identified in the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Strategy 2013-2020 a key focus is that "Young Aboriginal people complete education with the skills to gain employment and foundations to pursue successful economic endeavours".ⁱⁱⁱ

This in part will be achieved through local Community pathway initiatives but ultimately this transformation will occur through partnerships with mainstream services who are willing to commit to employment targets, succession planning and inclusive policies and strategies.

The Gippsland Region

The Gippsland region covers 41,556 sq Kilometres, and lies from the Eastern suburbs of greater Melbourne to the north of Bass Strait, to the west of the Tasman Sea, to the south of Black Allan Lane (this marks part of the Victorian/NSW's boarder), and to the east and south/east of the Great Dividing Range, that lies within the Hume region and Victorian Alps.



The Aboriginal Community in Gippsland

Baw Baw	Wellington	East Gippsland	Latrobe
For the 2016 Census in Baw Baw, there were 565 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Of these, 50.7% were male and 49.3% were female.	For the 2016 Census in Wellington, there were 638 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Of these, 50.2% were male and 49.8% were female.	For the 2016 Census in East Gippsland, there were 751 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Of these, 48.5% were male and 51.5% were female.	For the 2016 Census in Latrobe, there were 1438 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Of these, 48.5% were male and 51.5% were female.
In Baw Baw, the median age of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples was 20 years. Of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people 39.3% were children aged 0 to 14 years and 6.4% were people aged 65 years and over.	In Wellington, the median age of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples was 25 years. Of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people 30.6% were children aged 0 to 14 years and 5.4% were people aged 65 years and over.	In East Gippsland, the median age of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples was 25 years. Of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people 33.2% were children aged 0 to 14 years and 8.0% were people aged 65 years and over.	In Latrobe, 8.0% were people aged 65 years and over.
Of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in Baw Baw, 42.7% were attending an education institution. Of these, 38.5% were attending a primary school, 24.9% were attending a secondary school and 11.3% were attending a tertiary or technical institution.	Of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in Wellington, 44.7% were attending an education institution. Of these, 31.8% were attending a primary school, 19.0% were attending a secondary school and 8.7% were attending a tertiary or technical institution.	Of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in East Gippsland, 39.2% were attending an education institution. Of these, 42.8% were attending a primary school, 24.7% were attending a secondary school and 8.6% were attending a tertiary or technical institution.	Of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in Latrobe, # were attending an education institution. Of these, # were attending a primary school, # were attending a secondary school and # were attending a tertiary or technical institution.
Of people aged 15 and over in Baw Baw, 8.1% reported having completed Year 12 as their highest level of educational attainment, 17.2% has completed a Certificate III or IV and 5.7% had completed an Advanced Diploma or Diploma.	Of people aged 15 and over in Wellington, 10.6% reported having completed Year 12 as their highest level of educational attainment, 16.6% has completed a Certificate III or IV and 5.5% had completed an Advanced Diploma or Diploma.	Of people aged 15 and over in East Gippsland, 10.3% reported having completed Year 12 as their highest level of educational attainment, 16.7% has completed a Certificate III or IV and 4.0% had completed an Advanced Diploma or Diploma.	Of people aged 15 and over in Latrobe, # reported having completed Year 12 as their highest level of educational attainment, # has completed a Certificate III or IV and # had completed an Advanced Diploma or Diploma.

The survey undertaken as part of the development of this strategy provided insight into where Community members saw Aboriginal people engaged in employment and business in the region. The most common areas identified included Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services either directly in health or in family and Community services, land management, arts and crafts, cultural awareness training and support, cultural tourism and social enterprises. Less common responses included road and rail construction, retail and hospitality.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Gippsland is also relatively small with “an Aboriginal population of 4,173, the Gippsland region accounts for approximately 9% of Victoria’s total Aboriginal population”, with over half the population aged under 25.^{xv}

Where We Are Today

Community Participation in Economic Development

The growth and diversity of Aboriginal business are having a positive impact across a wide range of industries. It is widely acknowledged that the Aboriginal business sector is experiencing growth, and faster than the rest of the economy. But historical economic disadvantage exists which means that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are still three to four times less likely to be self-employed than the national average^v.

The burden of historical policies still restricts Aboriginal wealth, home ownership, business ownership and economic growth opportunities, as well as higher rates of incarceration, requires a collaborative approach to provide additional business support, access to information and access to capital to realise the outcomes of economic self-determination. As identified in the VAAF the Aboriginal Community still struggles to participate at some of the most basic levels, deterring aspirations of business ownership and self-management.

Fully participating in the economy provides Aboriginal Victorians with the resources they need to determine the future they want. Economic participation is therefore key to Aboriginal self-determination.^{vi}

Government Procurement - Purchasing from Aboriginal businesses

The Victorian Government has committed to a one per cent Aboriginal business procurement target and defines an Aboriginal business as:

- at least 50% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-owned
- undertaking commercial activity
- main business location is in Victoria^{vii}

The Tharamba Bugheen – Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017-2021, highlights that the sector includes for-profit businesses, Traditional Owner corporations, social enterprises and Community enterprises in metropolitan and regional areas.

The growth of Aboriginal business through Government procurement presents enormous potential and will require a shift in focus to support supply and ability to address market demand. The need for collaborative partnerships between levels of government and Aboriginal business including the private sector are the building blocks required to drive growth and ongoing potential.

The Social Procurement Framework identifies two social outcomes corresponding to this social procurement objective:

- Purchasing from Victorian Aboriginal businesses
- Employment of Victorian Aboriginal people by suppliers to the Victorian Government^{viii}



“Support the Elders to help the younger generation to transfer knowledge and skills. Getting young people involved can help steer them away from drugs and alcohol, link to exhibitions, get them to tell their stories, document them through film, use technology, teach them how to use technology to open up different lines of communicating.”

Community Member

Stakeholder Feedback

As part of the development of this strategy a comprehensive consultation process with a broad range of stakeholders including Community members, ACCOs, Aboriginal businesses in a range of sectors, government and local government was undertaken. Aboriginal businesses were asked about their aspirations, experiences in business including the challenges faced and the supports they thought would be useful to them and emerging business owners. Community members were asked about where they saw opportunities for Aboriginal business in Gippsland and what supports would assist Aboriginal people overcome barriers and become successful business owners. Other stakeholders were asked about their support for building opportunities for more Aboriginal people to pursue business ownership aspirations.

We need Aboriginal business in Aboriginal hands.^{ix}

The consultations highlighted the importance of Culture and moving away from the welfare deficit towards addressing trauma and healing to enable more Aboriginal people to determine their own futures through becoming successful business owners.

Likewise, employment opportunities beyond the Aboriginal Community sector are limited and as one Community Elder engaged in the consultation process identified “we have come to rely on our Community organisations and business is foreign to many of our families”.

The presence of the local Community in retail and mainstream employment is scarce, with racism and cultural safety an ongoing challenge across the Gippsland region, hence Community choosing in sectors where they feel culturally safe and able to express their Culture and identity

The consultations indicated that a long-term strategic investment is required to address low intergenerational wealth transfer and the ongoing impact of poor education, employment and health outcomes through the development of partnerships, business programs, access to information including access to capital to establish and grow businesses.

The consultation process also demonstrated the challenges for the existing businesses, along with the challenges in terms of expansion and growth of their product and workforce.

Access to Information

There is a lack of access to quality, timely and culturally relevant information about starting or growing a business. There are multiple agencies/ organisations providing information and the space is increasingly congested and difficult to navigate, ultimately impacting the quality of communication and Community engagement, resulting in missed opportunities to leverage funding and other important programs and service offerings.

These platforms are important but in times of crisis, like the recent bushfires and COVID19, the Aboriginal Community expressed concern about the coordination of and access to vital information that would help them in making decisions about establishing or growing Aboriginal businesses.

Business Support

Established businesses and start-ups highlighted the difficulties of accessing consistent and reliable sources of information to support their decision-making processes at the time they need it.

There are multiple agencies/organisations providing information about programs and business support offerings, but complex processes limit timely access and inhibits the level of uptake, resulting in missed opportunities that could support the establishment and growth of entrepreneurs and businesses.

There are businesses that have been able to access workshops, networking events and pursue training to grow and scale up. However, start-ups in particular need assistance to increase their knowledge of business through access to business mentoring and preparatory information if the expansion of the Aboriginal business sector in Gippsland is to be achieved.

The Aboriginal business sector and Community signalled that their knowledge of procurement and how it functions is limited. Feedback indicated that there is a limited understanding and awareness of how Government procurement operates, the role of Supply Nation, and ability to successfully respond to public tenders, while being cognisant of opportunities to grow and scale their business through the procurement process. This demonstrates missed opportunity that can easily be countered through readily accessible information for Aboriginal business operators.

A recent study carried out by ArcBlue, highlighted that the barriers for Victorian Aboriginal procurement is often seen as transactional and investing in relationships is not always an obvious consideration.^x

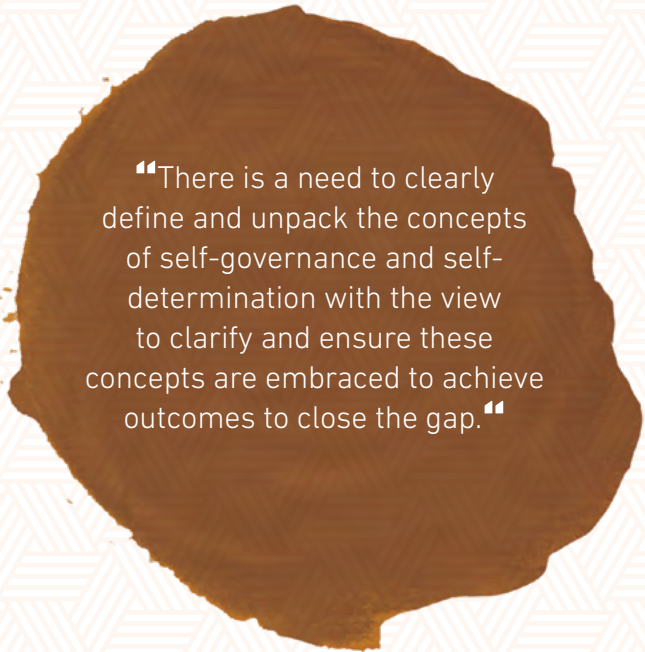
The challenges for suppliers include their ability to build relationships and partnering to forecast opportunities increasing supplier development and innovation to undertake additional commercial contracts. The challenges for buyers are often the perception of Aboriginal businesses in Australia and their ability to be able to perform or compete for mainstream contracts. They also recognise that the Aboriginal business sector is not visible, easily identified, are predominately small to medium size enterprises and their capacity and scale remain a challenge.

The Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) GROW have been delivering workshops and networking opportunities between Aboriginal businesses, Community and government departments, agencies and industry groups to promote and explore procurement opportunities. The ongoing delivery of these industry focused workshops are necessary to build relationships and awareness and must be designed in partnership with the Aboriginal Community and businesses to overcome factors that inhibit their ability to access potential procurement opportunities.

Capacity Building

A consistent consultation theme centred around capacity to respond to industry demand and ability to leverage economic opportunities. The historical legacy of Aboriginal communities across Gippsland clearly demonstrates a deep understanding of how to respond to the needs of their communities. The Elders past and present, lobbied and negotiated hard to establish many Aboriginal Community organisations and their legacy continues to address disadvantage while providing access to much needed health care, employment, housing, social justice and much more.


The Aboriginal Community has a long history of doing business in challenging and complex environments and adapted to a constantly changing landscape while adhering to governance processes that were in direct conflict to Aboriginal kinship and systems of cultural lore. Such strength has come from generations of resilience and the ability to apply a cultural lens to guide, influence and shape processes to support the day to day operations of ACCOs and TOs to continue the work of the Elders.



“There is a need to clearly define and unpack the concepts of self-governance and self-determination with the view to clarify and ensure these concepts are embraced to achieve outcomes to close the gap.”

Training and Development

Ongoing investment to upskill and support Community and entrepreneurial leadership including women and young people is an area that requires long -term commitment and support. A structured approach, showcasing business success and leaders will expose people to opportunities and explore career pathways into managerial and leadership roles, the trades, health and associated professions and other industries including business management and development to future proof the Aboriginal Community sector.



“Government have a knack of rolling out money for initiatives that don't fit the community.”

Government investment in industries such as civil construction, food and fibre and health care, is visible throughout the whole of Gippsland. The ability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to pursue employment and secure business within these industries are challenged due to a lack of industry networks and expertise, skills and an inability to successfully respond to procurement and tender processes.

The Aboriginal Community's capacity to successfully leverage opportunities is due to the wide socio-economic gap as was highlighted during the consultation process and the lack of joined up and whole of Community coordination, supported access of training and development programs, as this is evidenced through the data in (demographics).


An example of a collaborative partnership, which was established to support Aboriginal employment and training is the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between GLaWAC and Latrobe City Council (the Council), Indigenous Employment Program (IEP). The MoU was designed to allow both parties to work collaboratively to support the delivery of programs and projects for the benefit of Indigenous recipients across Gippsland.

The Latrobe City Council is recognised as a leading organisation for Indigenous employment and has demonstrated a track record of sustainable employment outcomes, establishing strong relationships with the Aboriginal organisations and all levels of government across the Gippsland region for well over 18 years and proceeded to explore the concept of an MoU with GLaWAC.

Since the establishment of the Latrobe City IEP, the number of placements achieved has continuously exceeded the targets set. Since 2003 more than 700 people have been employed in a diverse range of areas, averaging around an 80 to 85% retention rate.

The MoU, since its establishment in 2019, continues to build on the Council's body of work and has supported the placement of 93 Aboriginal people into employment across Gippsland.

The program is tracking at a 78% retention rate (participants being in a role for 26 weeks or greater) and going on to be employed in various roles with GLaWAC, such as NRM team, Land Care, administration and hospitality including other industries such as health, retail, local government and within the ACCO sector.




“An equal partnership to help close the gap, it's about partnerships and self-determination and equal access to the same information because information informs decision making, it's about equal distribution of power and having a seat at the table.”

Diversity and Inclusion

A diverse and complex range of challenges continue to impact on the confidence of Aboriginal women and youth and workplaces to recruit and employ. Thinking to date around Aboriginal Economic Development in Gippsland has focused on male dominated industry and professions such as roads and construction, the timber industry and land management. The data in relation to supporting youth to pursue further education is readily available however supporting women's entry or re entry to the workforce is less available and according to the May 2020 Australian Bureau of Statistic show 'that during the pandemic employment loss for women in regional Victoria was at a staggering 78 per cent^[i] This coupled with the barriers Aboriginal people already face therefore requires a targeted response through this strategy.

Women have historically held and continue to hold important leadership roles in family and Community. They occupy senior management and Board positions in Aboriginal Community-controlled organisations, throughout the health and Community services sector and increasingly in government and corporate sectors. While doing so, many women also hold down important jobs and where possible pursue interests utilizing their talent and skills in the arts, bush medicine, clothing and jewellery design, home wears etc. and their deep knowledge of Culture, history and language. Women manage a cultural load far bigger than men and as such their capacity to pursue full-time careers in business is often limited. They are also limited in opportunities in areas which are predominantly the "realm" of men with direct and systemic discrimination effectively excluding them from opportunities for example in industries such as land management, construction and road and rail – all of which are identified as areas expected to experience significant growth in the next 5 to 10 years. While this situation is gradually changing recent research by CAEPR has highlighted that '[g]iven the lower proportion of women going into business across the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, the Government should consider initiatives that address the glass ceiling'.^{iv}



“There is a lack of support for Women to get involved in community development initiatives, such as collective co-operatives to produce products that can be sold such as art and craft, bushfoods, events, catering and more.”

Community Member

Evidence demonstrates that the challenges and barriers are due to a range of systemic issues, intergenerational unemployment, justice related matters, low school completion rates and the impact of unresolved trauma stemming from the impact of historic economic marginalisation.

It is therefore important to not only encourage men and women with existing skills, but also to encourage young people to consider pathways to business and entrepreneurship. Currently, the concept of owning their own business does not form part of the day to day thinking of Aboriginal youth.

Young people need to be encouraged to consider business and entrepreneurship in order that they can become part of the pipeline to build Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander contribution to economic development. They are better educated, digitally advanced and connected than previous generations – their skills are important as the economy we live and work in changes rapidly. They need information and clear pathways to participate successfully as business owners and in the gig economy generally.

Opportunities – Unique Community Strengths

Over the past eight to ten years, there has been significant development of the Aboriginal tourism industry throughout Australia.

Nationally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture is often the primary focus and features a wide range of activities such as heritage tours, arts and cultural practice, performing arts and environmental experiences, these such opportunities abundantly exist for the Gippsland region.

Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is a unique product that Traditional Owners may wish to differentiate or combine with other tourism experiences. It allows the tourist to participate in local cultural activities, like festivals and rituals. As a result, the tourists can enjoy a genuine cultural exchange with the approved Traditional Owner facilitators, guides, and event managers.

The growth in cultural tourism provides an opportunity to deliver improved economic outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians through employment and business growth.

Tourism is an industry in which many Aboriginal people and their communities aspire to participate. This includes stand-alone experiences and as an integral component of broader tourism products.

For Gippsland and aligned to the Victorian Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2013-2023 aspirations align;

- Aboriginal Victorians will have greater opportunity to participate in and benefit from the broader tourism industry through business ownership, joint ventures, training and skill development and employment.
- Business ventures will enable Aboriginal tourism in Victoria to grow as a contemporary and accessible experience.
- The Culture and experience offered by Aboriginal Victoria is unique to other Aboriginal experiences in Australia and this has the potential to further differentiate Victoria's broader tourism offering.

- Sharing Culture and experiences through tourism is a means by which Victorian Aboriginal heritage and Culture can be preserved and fostered.^{xi}

Tourism is an important industry for Gippsland, generating an estimated \$1 billion for the local economy. The region attracted a record seven million visitors in the year ending March 2019. The tourism industry for Gippsland employed 8900 at end 17/18, with international tourism expenditure at 41M for the same period.^{xiii}

The Gippsland Aboriginal Community by location alone has an opportunity to progress cultural tourism both through the objectives of this strategy and through alignment with broader tourism strategies for the region and the state. The sector is primed and ready to provide a unique visitor experience resulting from Traditional Owners knowledge of Culture, heritage and caring for country and will add depth of value to the visitor economy.



Caring for Country

The term “Caring for Country” reflects the importance that Indigenous Australians place on traditional land management on lands unaltered by development or other land use such as agriculture. Simply put Caring for Country is ‘Indigenous Australian’s management of land and sea’. ^{xv}

Community members consulted strongly identified opportunities for business development in the areas where Aboriginal people have unique strengths and one area that presents a range of potential opportunities was the native plants and bush food sector (the food and fibre sector).

Aboriginal people have always had a strong connection to land and water and have accumulated a deep reservoir of knowledge of caring for Country. Aboriginal people cultivated the land and accessed resources to nourish and sustain them as they traversed the Country and water systems.

There were many areas identified for further exploration, including the idea of establishing sustainable enterprise and business within the bushfoods and horticulture environment. The biggest challenge rests with the need to protect the intellectual property (IP) of Aboriginal people’s knowledge of bushfoods and their medicinal qualities, access to infrastructure to facilitate large scale propagation and grow out facilities (nursery) and procuring of contracts to undertake land management and restoration of sites due to land clearing, climate change, roads and construction including the impact of bushfires.

The ability to establish collaborative and strategic partnerships in the interim period between ACCOs, TOs, industry and related sectors must be supported by government departments and agencies to increase capacity to operate and sustain enterprises within the native and bushfood sector. Furthermore, to grow and scale up to meet demand will require discipline and project planning to mitigate risk in order to realise what it takes to embrace longevity.

Creative Industries - Arts & Design

Creative industries include a diverse range of fields including arts and culture, design, games and screen. The creative industries are significant to Victoria’s culture, economy and society and central to its future.

Over the years, many Gunaikurnai people including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people residing in the region developed their artistic profiles and successfully participated in a range of business activities at the local, state and national arenas. Supported access to training, arts funding, networking and opportunities to be showcased and exhibit their art was the catalyst that established their profiles.

A consistent theme across the creative arts and cultural expression space is the need to invest in providing supports to develop a new wave of artistic aspirations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the communities across Gippsland.

Aboriginal art, crafts and cultural practice such as dance and storytelling are widely recognised as contributing to positive health and wellbeing and was used to transfer cultural knowledge to Aboriginal people over countless generations.

“There’re so many opportunities for the communities to really start thinking about how they create those platforms in terms of access to cultural knowledge and how you can work together and pull down some of those barriers in terms of understanding the impacts of history.”

Community Member

“Fire has damaged and ravaged the landscape and there are so many opportunities to explore within this space. Such as recovery of the sites, regeneration – we need to look more deeply into and explore opportunities that we wouldn’t normally explore – we can build an economy out of that as well.”

Community Member

Food & Hospitality

According to The Australian Institute of Food Safety “Food businesses in Victoria are divided into different food industry sectors - retail, hospitality, health and community, food processing, and transport and distribution. The hospitality food sector includes hospitality businesses that prepare and sell food in the same location - for example, restaurants, cafés, hotels, caterers, bars and pubs.”

Reference: <https://www.foodsafety.com.au>

There is also a growing interest from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seeking to be trained in hospitality with the view to gain employment within the sector. The Bush Café at GLaWAC has raised awareness through and profiling the value of using native foods that complement and diversify food products and other offerings such as catering for events and functions.

The café is also showcasing success through the availability of employment and training opportunities whilst stimulating interest as an area where Aboriginal Community are able to seek employment and potential to operate and provide catering services to the broader Community.

Other areas of interest identified were

- Bush medicine, wellbeing products
- Aquaculture/seafood including yabbies
- Bushfire recovery and fire management
- Consulting e.g., cultural programs, projects, compliance
- Aboriginal health, aged care, NDIS

“Our mob lived off the land for thousands of years and know what plants (tucker) can be eaten and how they were used for medicine.”

Community Member

Native Plants and Bushfoods

Traditional Owners have cultivated and managed Country for millennia – developing processes for sustainable food and medicinal plant production, as well as holistic cultural and ecological land management.

The level of interest pertaining to native plants and bushfoods and working in hospitality was an area of interest that arose constantly throughout the consultation feedback process. The Community were able to clearly identify that the bushfood sector is growing and the demand for native foods are becoming highly sought after within the broader food and hospitality sector.

A range of ideas were identified where businesses could be developed to leverage off cultural knowledge of the flora and fauna but requires more detailed exploration to assess viability, necessary skills needed and financial supports (start-up funds) to operate and carry out business within this particular industry. The sector has the potential to provide opportunities for family enterprises, small business operators, community enterprise or a co-operative model to take hold to cultivate, collect and grow native foods for the hospitality sector. There are other potential opportunities to add value through the research and development of medical/wellbeing products such as essential oils which are highly sought after.




Strengthening the Legacy

Prior to the impact of colonisation, Aboriginal people were successfully conducting commerce and trade over countless generations through trading routes that traversed a diversity of geographical landscapes.

They exchanged natural resources, such as stone tools, ochres, wooden implements, technology and innovative ideas and much more. Some of these goods were highly sought after and travelled hundreds if not thousands of kilometres from their place of origin. Stone artefacts have been found in locations in central and northern parts of Australia. Trade gatherings formed part of larger gatherings and ceremonies to trade and exchange material and pass along information about food sources, medicinal plants, land and water along with sacred ceremonies, dance and song.

Because of the impacts of colonisation, the ability to gather, trade and exchange was abruptly disrupted, therefore the concept of business and independent income is relatively new to Community. Historically many Aboriginal people were forced into situations where there was no choice but to rely on the Community sector for support and employment. As such, whilst there is a need to focus on supporting business development and growth, there is a fundamental need to increase Community knowledge and understanding of the concept and language of business, highlight the supports available and raise aspirations and expectations of rightful opportunities and pathways to business ownership.



“We have a lot of opportunities if we work together as strong people with strong voices. [We need] to promote it to show and teach the young ones how to obtain their goals and work together with stakeholders to achieve better outcomes for our people.”

Community Member

Exposing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the board with targeted information, advice and support around the possibilities and opportunities business can offer in terms of self-determination, economic security and wealth creation is crucial to fostering a pipeline of future entrepreneurs and business owners.

Key Action Areas

Getting on with Business

The success of this strategy will be underpinned by investment in resources to support the aspirations of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community and the economic development related activities included in the strategy. An inclusive governance structure will be established to oversee and champion the strategy supported by a dedicated Business Support Officer to drive implementation.

Action Area	Activities
Establish the infrastructure and resources needed to implement the strategy	<p>Establish a Steering Committee inclusive of representation from GLaWAC, the ACCOs of Gippsland, Aboriginal business owners and Community members. Composition should include Elders, young people and gender balanced representation.</p> <p>Recruit a Business Support Officer to work with key stakeholders and partners to drive the implementation of the strategy.</p>
Raise the awareness of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community about opportunities in business and entrepreneurship	<p>Provide a range of timely and targeted information about supports available to Community members operating or interested in establishing businesses.</p> <p>Regularly promote success stories utilising a range of communication channels including dedicated social media platforms, print media, partner/stakeholder websites, collaborative webcasts, forums, newsletters and flyers and targeted training and information sessions.</p> <p>Coordinate the design and delivery of pre-business planning workshops, targeting Youth, Women and other members of the Aboriginal Community with a focus on the *regions potential as areas of interest to Community including food and hospitality, cultural tourism, arts and design, civil construction, health care, and education and training.</p>

Action Area	Activities
<p>Increase the knowledge and interest of young people in business ownership and entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Work with the Department of Education through the Marrung – Aboriginal Education Plan, the Wurreker Strategy and the Toorong Marnong Accord to expand careers planning and pathway opportunities to include business ownership.</p> <p>Encourage and support the Koorie Academy of Excellence Gippsland and the Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal Health East Gippsland (CEAHEG) to include activities and events about business ownership and enterprise development in their programs for students.</p> <p>Support partnerships, initiatives and programs that enable young people to consider and experience what it is like to be a business owner in various industries.</p> <p>Connect young people with Elders to strengthen their cultural connection and knowledge and build their confidence to carry forward the stories of the unique Culture and history of the region.</p>
<p>Build the profile of Aboriginal businesses – private and Community enterprises - to the broader business sector and Community in Gippsland</p>	<p>Support and work with existing initiatives/ programs to increase the awareness of the business and broader Gippsland Community about Aboriginal businesses.</p> <p>Provide and or source training and information to non-Aboriginal businesses about the skills and strengths of connecting and collaborating with Aboriginal business to enhance and create new products and service offerings to residents and visitors to Gippsland.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a directory of Aboriginal businesses and Community and social enterprises in Gippsland and servicing the Gippsland region and distribute them widely to businesses, local governments, government agencies and Community members.</p>

Relationships and Connections

Investment and commitments to support and stimulate Community enterprise and business growth must be made to improve the coordination and connectedness of State, Commonwealth and local governments, private industry and ACCO led programs and initiatives aimed at increasing employment and economic development opportunities for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Gippsland.

The improved coordination and effective targeting of employment and business information will positively impact Community and business confidence, resulting in greater uptake of opportunities and interaction with new and existing stakeholder networks that are available to the broader Community.

We will establish ways to support joined up approaches that are easy to access and navigate by Aboriginal people who are seeking pathways to business ownership and development of Community enterprises to:

Action Area	Activities
Strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal businesses and Community with non-Aboriginal businesses.	<p>Identify and support opportunities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ streamline and enhance promotional information campaigns (print and online), ■ forums that showcase individual business and collaborative initiative successes, and ■ create and provide targeted business networking events for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business owners.
Facilitate greater coordination of government, industry bodies, philanthropy, business and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation investment and initiatives in Aboriginal business/ economic development.	<p>Establish mechanisms to ensure Traditional Owners (custodians of the land) inform the establishment of partnerships between non-Aboriginal businesses and organisations and Aboriginal businesses to improve the capacity and capabilities of Aboriginal people to grow and scale their businesses within tourism, food and hospitality, and arts and design.</p> <p>Establish partnerships with local, state and national industry bodies such as, Destination Gippsland, Victorian Tourism Council, Tourism Australia, Visit Victoria to strategically position Aboriginal tourism as a premium and reputable product that adds value to local, state and national economies.</p> <p>Work specifically with Destination Gippsland to ensure Gippsland focused Tourism Operators are aware of and can connect with Aboriginal organisations and businesses with cultural, historical and language skills that could enhance the Gippsland visitor experience. In doing so we will explore the value of an "accreditation" scheme to identify tourism operators who are endorsed by Traditional Owners and the wider Aboriginal Community as providing an authentic and inclusive cultural tourism experience.</p>
Strengthen understanding, knowledge and capability of non-Aboriginal businesses and organisations to work successfully with and support Aboriginal business	<p>Facilitate access to and provide Cultural Awareness and Cultural Safety training to non-Aboriginal businesses/ organisations to improve knowledge, challenge existing perceptions, examine systemic discrimination and address unconscious bias to facilitate greater understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal Culture, communities, organisations and businesses.</p> <p>Assist Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interested in working together to identify opportunities to invest in and grow new businesses to create "safe spaces" to explore possibilities and form productive and positive relationships.</p>

Business Support

Aboriginal entrepreneurs and businesses (including Community enterprises) face challenges during start-up and scaling phases that are not dissimilar to those faced by mainstream entrepreneurs and businesses in the Gippsland region, while also experiencing unique challenges due to their self-limiting beliefs resulting from the impacts of colonisation as well as limited access to business related programs and supports.

The barriers are particularly critical at the early stages (idea and start-up) of the business life cycle when culturally appropriate professional advice is hard to find and a reluctance to pursue mainstream opportunities such as training and programs such as the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS) due to access and equity issues.

The business landscape is dynamic, and entrepreneurs and businesses need to be agile in times of rapid change, to be able to compete and take advantage of opportunities to grow and conduct business in different ways. To respond to market opportunities, businesses require access to timely information, professional advice, and mentors and coaches to enable them to successfully prepare tenders, negotiate contract agreements and mitigate risks associated with doing business.

Effective communication and engagement with existing and potential Aboriginal business owners will increase knowledge and confidence in decision making and risk management and contribute to the achievement of Aboriginal economic self-determination.

“Almost any business can thrive – it is about what support is available for them to get into business and be sustainable. [You] need to go in with knowledge and passion knowing it will be difficult and won't return you a million bucks quickly.”

Community Member

Action Area	Activities
Provide a range of training / information sessions on business ownership for Community members exploring pathways and options for business ownership	<p>Design and deliver programs to increase awareness on how to access training and support programs that lead to employment and business development opportunities in Gippsland.</p> <p>Engage in discussions with women, young people and other marginalised groups within Community to ensure we understand aspirations and barriers to business ownership so we can respond appropriately to and provide the supports they need.</p> <p>Partner with Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce (Kinaway) and other relevant organisations to ensure the design and delivery of bespoke information and training sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Targeted to specific groups – young people, women, disability, LGBTQIA+ – addressing the opportunities available ■ Focused on specific industries that are of interest and relevant to Aboriginal Community members in Gippsland e.g., cultural tourism, creative arts, land management, food and hospitality, professional services, health



Action Area	Activities
Establish partnerships and collaborations with existing organisations/ enterprises who provide a range of supports to build business capability and success particularly in the Indigenous business sector	<p>Support the development of an MoU between GLaWAC and Kinaway and work with them to deliver business advice, training and support that is timely, easily accessible and suitable to their specific needs and stage in the business life-cycle (growth and scaling up).</p> <p>Establish formal relationships with Commonwealth, State and Local Government agencies providing funding and related support to Indigenous businesses to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Gippsland are informed of and have access to up to date information on relevant opportunities.</p>
Provide and facilitate access to culturally appropriate and informed support such as business planning, mentoring/ coaching, networking, and seed and capital funding relevant to all stages in the business life cycle to enable businesses to build skills and grow.	<p>Ensure Aboriginal people and businesses in Gippsland are provided with easily accessible and seamless support, through investing in established organisations such as Kinaway, GLaWACs business hubs, Local Government business support programs and aligned to the work of the Victorian State Government Aboriginal Employment and Economic Council who already have the skills, knowledge and infrastructure to develop the courses, mentoring and industry networking to be delivered locally.</p> <p>Provide training and supported access to identify employment and business pathways to leverage procurement and employment programs and initiatives.</p> <p>Include in our suite of Aboriginal business supports, cultural strengthening programs targeting a wide audience with a dedicated focus on Aboriginal youth to build resilience and improve long term succession and career development pathways.</p> <p>Establish mentoring and networking programs including specific programs for young people and women, linking them with successful role models in business and Aboriginal leaders, supporting their access to culturally appropriate youth leadership programs.</p>
Support ACCOs to build their Community enterprise capability.	<p>Support cooperation between the ACCOs in the region to ensure all have access to the potential economic and Community benefits that can be derived from establishing Community enterprises that leverage the particular strengths of the communities they serve.</p> <p>Actively seek to work with Commonwealth (Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation) and State Government agencies, GLaWAC and Kinaway as well as private groups such as Social Traders to ensure Aboriginal economic development within Gippsland is guided by the principles of collaboration and self-determination.</p>

Business Innovation and Growth

In rapidly changing times forced upon us by bushfires and a global pandemic, we have seen incredible business innovation including new product lines, production methods and delivery channels.

Many businesses adapted quickly to conducting their operations and sales on-line. New businesses have popped up with products specifically developed to address emerging demands from people, communities and businesses.

Businesses quickly adapted their operations to operate anywhere using digital technology – opening up new markets and no longer being confined to operating “locally”. Small businesses have been able to establish themselves “from home” with low start-up and operating costs. Hobbies have turned into profitable businesses in unheard of short timeframes.

It is expected this era of innovation will continue, because it can and for this to bring many opportunities for young people and women in particular who are likely to face barriers limiting their capacity to access capital and/or dedicate the hours needed to operate a full-time physically based business.

Action Area	Activities
Support businesses to expand markets using e-commerce and other technologically based platforms	<p>Provide information and advice as well as connect Aboriginal business owners to supports to enhance their e-commerce capabilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establishing and/or increasing on-line sales capability and reach ■ Expanding distribution channels including partnering with 3rd parties ■ Sourcing alternative supply channels <p>Support Professional services e.g. consulting, training, accounting and coaching to enhance their business profile and presence through the provision of services, information and advice on-line.</p>
Establish an Aboriginal Business Innovation Fund to support businesses start or scale up in areas identified as contributing to the economic growth of Gippsland	<p>Establish two annual funding programs to support those businesses requiring capital to start or grow.</p> <p>Start-up businesses with sound business plans will be eligible for \$5,000 to \$10,000 to meet the costs of establishing a business such as purchasing office equipment, establishing a website, producing marketing material, purchasing computer software or meeting the costs of a business premises lease.</p> <p>Businesses which have been successfully operating for 2 years and have a sound business plan in place for growth will be eligible for \$10,000 to \$20,000 to embark on significant expansion activities e.g., employment of staff, website improvements, increasing e-commerce capability, legal costs.</p> <p>Work with Kinaway , GLaWACs Community benefits funds and others to identify other complimentary supports that may be available through State, Commonwealth and Regional funding programs that support businesses with the costs associated with start-up and growth.</p>



Action Area	Activities
Support Aboriginal businesses and ACCOs to explore joint venture opportunities to create innovative businesses, Community enterprises and unique culturally based consumer experiences	<p>We will identify potential investors in Aboriginal businesses in the region and establish a database of suitable businesses and investors that could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Considered as a joint venture partner and/or investor to create new opportunities or enterprises. ■ A source of professional advice to Aboriginal businesses to minimise the risks of joint ventures / proposed investment by a third party.
Invest in demonstration projects in caring for Country, cultural tourism and creative arts	<p>Develop a strategy to establish and support cultural tourism experiences and a network of artists across the region to develop a strong brand, increase the profile and optimise the capacity of Gippsland Aboriginal tourism activities and artists to promote and market associated product offerings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leverage learnings from the previous Gippsland Aboriginal Arts Co-operative model, establish links with Wurinbeena Studio Gallery in Lakes Entrance to strengthen the GLaWAC Gov Hub art arrangement and support emerging and established artists to showcase their arts and Culture across Gippsland, Victoria, nationally and internationally. ■ The Bataluk Cultural Trail was established back in the mid 1990's with full authorisation of Traditional Owner Elders. As articulated through the consultation process, <i>"our Elders set us up for financial prosperity"</i>. Revising and investing into the trail as a 'quick win' in terms of cultural tourism in the area signifies a willingness to invest in growing a profile in the tourism sector and business opportunities for Aboriginal people. ■ The GKTOLMB in partnership with the Victorian Government as identified in the Joint Management Plan, July 2018, a range of economic activity designed to guide and jointly manage the ten parks and reserves that have been granted as Aboriginal title to the Gunaikurnai people. ■ Caring for Country – Rangers Program, land care restoration, Sperm Whale Head, Buchan Caves and Knob Reserve.

What will be Achieved?

It is acknowledged that there is a long journey ahead, a journey that needs a long-term commitment and investment in realising the potential of the Community to participate successfully in the business sector.

The delivery of this strategy will be underpinned by the resourcing and establishment of a Steering Committee and Business Support Officer.

The strategy is inclusive of all Aboriginal people, organisations and Traditional Owners within the Gippsland region and particularly recognises the potential and contribution to be made by young people and women as entrepreneurs and business owners. Through the implementation of the Strategy over the next 10 years there will be:

- An activated Aboriginal economy across the Gippsland region.
- A clearly defined path to prosperity for the Gippsland Aboriginal Community
- Widespread recognition of the social, cultural and economic value of the contribution of Aboriginal men and women, heritage and enterprise to the Gippsland region.
- Clear strategies focused on increasing the participation of all Aboriginal people in ventures and businesses where they make a unique contribution and in all areas of the economy that are expected to experience significant growth including agriculture and tourism sectors.
- Strong collaborations between Aboriginal organisations and Traditional Owner groups to leverage knowledge and skills to maximise opportunities for economic development and wealth creation for all, while minimising unnecessary competition for limited resources.
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal players competently and confidently creating and supporting innovative businesses and consumer experiences.

The Strategy cannot and does not stand alone and seeks to complement and strengthen the impact of key strategies aimed at increasing the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in employment and economic development. This must involve a commitment from all stakeholders involved in encouraging and supporting Indigenous people to participate and succeed in business to work together to ensure the pathways and building blocks to economic growth – information, training, support for business planning, business start-up and growth, partnerships and collaborative ventures, procurement and access to finance – are better co-ordinated, targeted and accessible.

- **Commonwealth** – The Indigenous Business Sector Strategy 2018-2028, Indigenous Procurement Policy, Indigenous Entrepreneurs Capital Scheme, Indigenous Business Australia
- **State** – Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework, Tharamba Bugheen – Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017-2021 (and the anticipated next version), Victorian Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2013 -2023, Self-Determination, Treaty, Victorian Government Social Procurement Framework
- **Regional** – Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan, GROW, Destination Gippsland, TOLMB Gunaikurnai & Victorian Government Joint Management Plan, The Gippsland Regional Plan 2020-2025

These strategies provide opportunities and platforms that enable Aboriginal community to establish, build and grow their own businesses.

Focus Areas	Goals
Getting on with Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish the infrastructure and resources needed to implement the strategy. ■ Raise the awareness of the Gippsland Aboriginal women and men about opportunities in business and entrepreneurship. ■ Increase the knowledge and interest of young people in business ownership. ■ Build the profile of Aboriginal businesses – private and Community enterprises – to the broader business sector and Community in Gippsland.
Relationships and Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal businesses and community with non-Aboriginal businesses. ■ Facilitate greater coordination of government, industry bodies, philanthropy, business, Traditional Owner Corporations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation investment and initiatives in Aboriginal business/ economic development. ■ Establish partnerships and collaborations with existing organisations/ enterprises that provide a range of supports to build business capability and success particularly in the Indigenous business sector.
Business Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a range of training/information sessions on business ownership for Community members exploring pathways and options for business ownership. ■ Provide and facilitate access to culturally appropriate and informed support such as business planning, mentoring/coaching, networking, seed and capital funding relevant to all stages in the business life cycle to enable businesses to build skills and grow. ■ Support TOC's and ACCOs in building their Community enterprise capability.
Business Innovation & Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage and broker joint ventures to create innovative businesses and Community enterprises and unique culturally-based consumer experiences ■ Support businesses to expand markets using e-commerce and other technologically based platforms. ■ Establish an Aboriginal Business Innovation Fund to support businesses start or scale up in areas identified as contributing to the economic growth of Gippsland. ■ Invest in demonstration projects in caring for Country, cultural tourism and creative arts.

Traditional Owners & Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) represents Traditional Owners from the Brataualung, Brayakaulung, Brabralung, Krauatungalung and Tatungalung family clans, who were recognised in the Native Title Consent Determination 2010, and the new Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010, the first such agreement under that Act.



GLaWAC represents all of these voices and is the Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) for the Gunaikurnai people and claim area, as outlined in the agreement, providing joint management of 10 parks and reserves within the State. GLaWAC is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the Gunaikurnai claim area, as decided by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, 2006. GLaWAC has a membership of more than 600 Traditional Owners.

GLaWAC are involved in a range of businesses and provide services as a result of RAP status to manage cultural heritage site monitoring, deliver educational programs via the Cultural Hub, care for Country through land management protocols and agreements with a range of land management agencies, oversee planning and management of the 10 parks and reserves through a partnership agreement with the Traditional Owner Land Management Board (TOLMB) and Natural Resource Management enterprise that provides employment and training for Gunaikurnai members.

GLaWAC have developed partnership agreements with Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (GKTOLMB) Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DEWLP), Parks Victoria, Water and Catchment Authorities (through the Gippsland Environment Agency partnership) and a range of other Government Depts and Agencies, including Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJRP), Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) via GROW. that must continue to work together to stimulate economic and employment pathways.

Moreover, GLaWAC is committed to explore and where applicable, work in parentship with other TOC's to adopt a strategic and collaborative approach to enable progress of economic activity that will contribute to the sustainability of the respective TOC's and their members aspirations.

Gippsland is also home to five Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations providing primary health, family and Community support services. These are Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation in Sale (Central Gippsland), the Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative (GEGAC), Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association (LEAHA), Lake Tyers Aboriginal Health and Children's Services (both in East Gippsland) and Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc. in Orbost (Far East Gippsland). At the time of consultation there were no Aboriginal Community-controlled organisations currently operating in the Latrobe Valley or South Gippsland.

A number of the ACCOs have also entered into social and Community enterprises. The Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, while not currently running any business has, in years past, been successful in a number of areas including brick manufacturing, hospitality, cattle, butcher, dairy, fruit and veggies. The members of the Lakes Tyers Trust aspire to develop enterprise and welcome the opportunity to establish partnerships with organisations to assist in growing their capacity to create employment opportunities through the development of Community led ideas and initiatives.

“We educate people about the environment, and how to manage land, but we can actually use that as a business for Aboriginal people to actually build themselves in their own way and provide for families instead of relying on income from government.”

Community Member



Strategic Alignment

This strategy clearly links to the principles of the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF) (2018-2020), a whole of government strategy in terms of progressing self-determination and the key principles became notable;

- Prioritise culture
- Address trauma and support healing
- Address racism and promote cultural safety
- Transfer power and resources to communities

The Strategy also aligns to the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy (VAES) (2013 to 2020) - with the key objectives aligned to the aspirations of the Gippsland Community and acknowledging the barriers to achieving Community prosperity iii.

There are Victorian and Commonwealth Government strategies aimed at growing strong and vibrant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and communities including:

Victorian Government

- Victorian Government Social Procurement Framework
- Kinaway Chamber of Commerce Victoria Ltd
- Victorian Cultural Fire Strategy
- Parks Victorias Manage Country Together framework
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018 – 2023
- Tharamba Bugheen – Victorian Aboriginal Business Strategy 2017-2021 (and the anticipated next version)
- Victorian Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2013- 2023
- DEWLP Aboriginal Inclusion Plan 2016 – 2020
- DEWLP Aboriginal Procurement Strategy 2018
- Self-Determination
- Treaty

Commonwealth Government

- The Indigenous Business Sector Strategy 2018-2028
- Indigenous Procurement Policy
- Indigenous Entrepreneurs Capital Scheme
- Indigenous Business Australia (IBA)
- Supply Nation

There is also a myriad of regional initiatives including programs to address serious disruptions to the Gippsland economy due to the closure of coal mines and the 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. While not specifically targeted to Aboriginal people, organisations and communities they have been promoted widely and there has been a reasonable uptake of opportunities offered to support their business operations. These include:

- Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan
- Growing Regional Opportunities for Work (GROW) Gippsland Regional Action Plan 2018
- Destination Gippsland
- East Gippsland Fire 2019 – 2020 (Culture and Healing Sub-Plan)
- Nation Building funding and initiatives through Treaty preparedness.

This strategy focuses on maximising the strengths and talents of the Aboriginal Community in Gippsland to ensure they participate in and make a significant contribution to the economic growth of the region. It addresses how to break down the barriers, take advantage of the existing strategic and practical policies, frameworks and funding programs available and create new opportunities and pathways for Aboriginal men, women and young people to pursue business ownership.

GLaWAC Natural Resource Management (NRM)

The NRM is core pillar of business for GLaWAC and drives substantial financial growth for the organisation and provides training and employment to many Gunaikurnai people and other Aboriginal people.

Challenges and Objectives

The NRM team was formed in 2012, originally supplying firewood to Community. The original team had up to 10 employees, delivering between 8-12 loads of firewood per day.

The challenges presented to the organisation were:

- Expenditure often outweighed income
- Limited management expertise
- High staff turnover impacted on the program

The challenges prevented the NRM team from growing.

The GLaWAC went through an organisational restructure, resulting from special administration and a shift in business focus/function was recommended to ensure economic sustainability of the NRM.

The following recommendations were implemented to grow and sustain the operations of the NRM enterprise.

- Provide training opportunities to up- skill the team successfully secure future contracts
- Build partnerships with Parks Vic, Greening Australia and other major stakeholders
- Investment into the NRM infrastructure
- Develop a program to increase employment opportunities
- Submit tenders to secure more contracts

These focus areas, particularly partnerships will allow for greater work diversity and encourage employees to become more involved in different aspects of caring for and working on Country, and

successfully secure more contracts to grow the business of the NRM team.

Results

From 2012, the NRM team has grown from ten employees to sixteen in 2021, a total of fifteen staff are Gunaikurnai. The team have successfully secured and delivered major projects:

- Wetlands at Jones' Bay (planting out 120,000 plants)
- Sperm Whale Head (Erosion Control)
- Greenhills (Weed Control)
- Projects for Greening Australia (planting 40,000 plants per year)

The team currently operates multiple crews from Forestec and coordinate delivery of projects across Gippsland such as:

- Large scale planting
- Woody weed control
- Herbicide weed control
- Road-side and National Park site maintenance
- Riparian site maintenance
- Remote area site maintenance
- Fox baiting
- Tractor slashing and machine operations
- Landscape construction

Future Plans

GLaWAC plans to focus its efforts in the following areas of NRM:

- Expand tractor slashing contracts
- Expand landscape construction contracts
- Continue to provide key training opportunities for future growth
- Continue to grow NRM staff numbers

Showcasing Success – Regional Achievements



Ngara Warendj

Ngara Warendj is local Aboriginal business based in Churchill, operating for over 20 plus years, producing high quality contemporary Indigenous Art, using designs based on traditional symbols from South-East Australia . For more detailed information, <https://ngargawarendj.com>



Steps to the Future Indigenous Employment Program

A joint initiative of the Australian Government and the Latrobe City Council, working across the entire Gippsland region for over 20 years. Steps to the Future is the only local Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC) C that has a strong understanding of local Indigenous job seekers and a broad knowledge of the local employment scene in the region.

Forging industry partnerships to collaborate and support Indigenous people to become gainfully employed - closing the gap, stepping toward economic prosperity.



Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc.

Will be developing 40acre property into a nursery that will encompass a cultural walk to provide a space where Community can come and connect with the land and Culture. The new site will comprise of areas to sit, reflect and heal from the recent fire events and other troubles that people encounter throughout their life Journey. A range of native plants will be planted out and seeds will be collected to re-establish areas that have been damage through fires. The nursery will be open to all members of the Community allowing them to come and learn about native plants and will also be available for purchase. The aim of the nursery is to provide employment and training opportunities and provide participants with opportunities to gain knowledge of how to take care of country and the environment. An area of the walk will be devoted to teaching people about our ancestors and supporting Elders to share their knowledge and wisdom through storytelling and will be a place where school and other interest groups can come and engage with the Aboriginal Community.



Wurinbeena Studio Gallery

Wurinbeena Studio Gallery located in Lakes Entrance has a goal to share and celebrate the strength, richness and diversity of Aboriginal Culture through their exhibitions and Community art projects. Wurinbeena has a local imperative to ensure Aboriginal Culture in East Gippsland is visible and positively represented, and a global aspiration to showcase Aboriginal arts and Culture across Victoria, Australia and beyond. For more about products and service offerings. For more detailed information, <https://www.gunyah.org.au>

By MHJ, Hollie Johnson

“My passion is to share and showcase my learnings within the Arts and Creative Sector and extend this into a business involving Indigenous history, culture and language.”

Hollie Johnson



Hollie Johnson is a young entrepreneur with a passion for photography and jewellery making and operates a business called “by MHJ”.

Hollie has been working on her business for well over five years and aspires to excellence in photography and a desire to travel. Hollie recognises the valuable contribution of delivering workshops to schools and childcare centres about Indigenous history and Culture and teaching Gunai Kurnai language across Gippsland. Similarly, she understands the importance of sustainability and the need to nurture and cultivate her creative abilities to make jewellery if she is to achieve her goal of operating a business in Melbourne and support other fellow First Nations Creatives.

The vision for MHJ is to showcase the rich Culture and many aspects of First Nations People through photography and to preserve and educate others of the immense natural resources located in this Country through the making and showcasing of jewellery.

Hollie was prompted to develop a business after attending a school camp at Wilson Promontory where she then decided to study photography and concluded that there were not many Indigenous people operating in the space other than Indigenous photographers, Tracey Moffatt and Wayne Quilliam.

Hollie wanted people to see, understand and respect Indigenous Culture by what they could learn through her photography which set her on a path to develop skills and work alongside other like-minded people to showcase the amazing diversity of Indigenous Culture and people through the lens of a camera.

Hollie's message to other Aboriginal youth thinking of starting up a business:

“Do it, starting small and slowly building up are still wins and as long as you're progressing forward in your business you will get there in what you want to do and be. Ensure you surround yourself with the right people and you will learn who they are as you grow and learn yourself and there is support out there of people who are willing and wanting to help”.

Contact details: pbymhj@gmail.com

Dylan Dukakis



Dylan Dukakis has been in the electrical trade for over 10 years and knew he wanted to work in the industry when he was still at secondary school. In that time, he has worked on residential, commercial and industrial projects. He has travelled for work and has been exposed to many areas of his trade.

With a passion for quality work, Dylan now serves his local Community by providing Precision Point Electrical for their needs.

As a local electrical service to the Wellington Shire and Gippsland surrounds, Precision Point Electrical are available to provide a professional service for all residential and commercial needs as well as industrial maintenance.

Contact detail: www.precisionpointelectrical.com.au

“I decided to go and do my contractor’s license online and then COVID-19 kicked in, so I did it all online, I applied for my license, then started to work out how to set myself up in the business. On reflection, I would have liked more time to work through things but it’s all starting to pan out now.”

Dylan Dukakis

“There are big challenges in the beginning stage of setting up a business, and this is where I need help. There is a lot to learn about the business side of things for example, how to book clients and not overload your schedule to the point where you can’t deliver on time. I just love my work and what I want to do is provide a high quality, professional and reliable service and a fast response time.”

Regional Activity - Aboriginal Organisational Sector


Discussions with the local Aboriginal Community Organisations within the region, it was clear that many, if not all have economic aspirations, aligned to achieving sustainability and self-determination. Such aspirations align to the work of the VAAF, self-determination.

"We have heard from Community that Aboriginal self-determination encompasses a spectrum of rights that are necessary for Aboriginal Victorians to achieve economic, social and cultural equity, based on their own cultural values and way of life"....^{xiv}

However, acknowledging the challenges of the region in terms of over representation in the child protection, family violence, drug and alcohol and poor employment and education outcomes, the core focus of these organisations remain paramount to supporting the local communities in terms of socio-economic challenges.

This is a key aspect for consideration for the region and therefore the current position and circumstances of the local Community must be acknowledged to ensure the foundation of the strategy is inclusive and can confidently engage with the whole of Community and its various stages of readiness.

A number of Gippsland ACCOs and associated organisations for example, are at a stage where considering, planning for and implementing economic initiatives is a current focus, however for other Aboriginal services, economic development initiatives, whilst aspirational are preliminary in nature and must be considered as contributors to ensure success and longevity of the strategy.



"The mob need to be able to talk openly about cultural knowledge and feel safe to share what we know and how we go about building on the knowledge base."

Community Member

GLaWAC's operating footprint and expansion into Latrobe Valley and surrounding districts is ideally placed to contribute to the economic recovery and growth resulting from the Native Title Determination as identified in the Whole of Country and Corporate plans.

Leveraging Government investment of industries across the region within the civil construction (Rail projects), arts and cultural tourism, infrastructure and environmental management requires champions and sector wide relationships to improve employment outcomes, support entrepreneurs and businesses across the business life-cycle to flourish and support their families and communities.

Kinaway Presence in Gippsland

The Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce Pty Ltd (Kinaway) has an active and respected presences within the region as was evidenced during the consultations. The brand is well known and ideally positioned to support businesses and entrepreneurs as their core business is to deliver and provide access to business related programs, support services and information.

Kinaway is supported by well-established industry partners, sponsors and networks across all levels of government including the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and their peak bodies.

Partnerships – Two Way Learning


There are many opportunities for businesses to assist mainstream organisations to increase their knowledge of how the Aboriginal Community functions. The current environment is primed whereby information about Aboriginal history, Culture and Community is highly sought after to break down barriers and establish business and Community partnerships.

It is widely recognised that collaborative partnerships that are prepared to invest, have an ability to stimulate economic opportunities while breaking down barriers and acknowledge that two-way learning presents opportunities to shift perceptions and dismantle stereotypes to address systemic issues, and unconscious bias within workplaces and Community settings.

The range of government departments, agencies and mainstream organisations operating and engaging in strategic planning, program delivery, business and economic activity within the region are challenged by expectations of how the Aboriginal Community functions.

They recognise that they are not always in alignment with the principles and values of Aboriginal Community obligations and decision-making processes, invariably resulting in divergent views and expectations that now require a shift in awareness to support Community aspiration of self-determination and economic prosperity.

The ability to provide Cultural Awareness and Safety Training presents a range of business and employment opportunities to educate and increase knowledge of Aboriginal history and the impacts of colonisation and the subsequent marginalisation of Aboriginal people.



“We can contribute, we don’t need help, view us as important/valuable contributors to the planning and development process. It’s time to stop seeing us as having problems that need to be fixed, bring us to the table at the beginning.”

Community Member

The Bush Café



The Bush Café, at GLaWAC's corporate headquarters in Kalimna West, is the latest initiative to promote Gunaikurnai Culture and Indigenous food as well as provide employment and education opportunities for Gunaikurnai people.

The Head Chef of the Bush Café is Kevin Murray is a proud Gunaikurnai man who has over 25 years' experience working in hospitality and completed his Chef's apprenticeship at the former Orbost and District Hospital and running his own successful café in Orbost. Under the guidance of Kevin, the Bush Café has designed an exciting menu that introduces people to the Indigenous flavours that the ancestors experienced in the past by bringing those flavours to modern tastes.

The Bush Café provides catering for in-house meetings and events held at GLaWAC and promotes these services to the broader Community to grow the Community enterprise while providing opportunities for Gunaikurnai people to have access to employment and on-the-job training in the hospitality sector.

"Everybody has to eat, and my ancestors had healthy diets and thrived by eating fresh meat and fish, cooked simply using Indigenous flavours from plants and spices such as Salt Bush, Mountain Pepper, Wattleseed and Bush Tomatoes."

Kevin

The corporate headquarters at Forestec, Kalimna West has two Boardrooms that can seat up to 20 and 15 people as well as an Auditorium that seats up to 80 people.

"Our passion is to bring Bush Tucker to the table and encourage people to try something different and eat healthy foods, while building a team that can work front of house with our customers as well as back of house in the kitchen learning how to run a commercial hospitality business."

The Bush Café is open Monday to Friday from 9.30 am – 3.00 pm for breakfast, morning and afternoon tea and lunch, offering fresh, local produce featuring bush tucker and Indigenous flavours. The cafe seats up to 40 people.

Centre of Excellence for Aboriginal Health in East Gippsland Limited

The Centre of Excellence for Aboriginal Health in East Gippsland Limited (CEAHEG) is a group of Aboriginal Elders and Community members living in East Gippsland who have worked for 10 years to achieve a sustainable Aboriginal health workforce to support the Community to stay healthy and live vibrant lives.

CEAHEG is focused on developing and nurturing a local and practical program to help Aboriginal students to complete their schooling and do well enough to enter medicine, nursing and other health professional training potentially to return to work in Gippsland in a health setting and/or run their own practices.

CEAHEG works in partnership and collaborates with a range of organisations including Monash University East Gippsland School of Rural Health, the Monash University Gukwonderuk Unit, School of Nursing and Health Sciences, Dr Jane's Place, a local GP practice in Bairnsdale (a branch of Cunninghame Arm Medical Centre in Lakes Entrance), the Department of Education and Training and local schools, Bairnsdale Regional Health Services, Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association (LEAHA), the Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Corporation (GEGAC), Rotary Sunshine and Ambulance Victoria.

CEAHEG's objectives include:

- Providing relevant health career information, advice and experience from an early age at school, at the Regional Clinical School and in health settings in East Gippsland.
- Increasing student confidence through cultural strengthening activities in the Community and in school.
- Supporting Aboriginal students in tertiary education settings including financial support (scholarships), assistance with accommodation, tutoring, mentoring and relevant learning experiences.

Since 2016, CEAHEG has been running a range of programs called *Just Looking@Careers in Health*. They include camps (*Camp Marook*) run twice in each year, and *Hands On Health*.





CEAHEG has also delivered a comprehensive program over 12 weeks, called Dala Mala Malung, - Little Doctors program with support from the local primary and secondary schools, Monash University, East Gippsland Rural Clinical School and Malpa.

The success of this initiative has led to the establishment of an ongoing program called *Hands On Health* that is run in Bairnsdale for secondary school students in conjunction with Monash University every year which introduces students to health careers.

An important step is for CEAHEG's programs to be embedded in the overall health service system aimed at improving health outcomes for the East Gippsland Aboriginal Community.

For more information, contact Tammy Bundle - Chairperson: TBundle@moogji.com.au

“Our vision is to work in partnership and collaborate with a range of organisations that bridge the gap for young Aboriginal people to become health professionals.”

Implementation and Governance

Gippsland's Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy - Steering Committee

The success of the strategy will require a sound governance structure to ensure compliance and maintain delivery of activities to reflect the aspirations of Aboriginal entrepreneurs, businesses and Community.

The Steering the Committee will allow for ongoing engagement with the Aboriginal Community and stakeholders in its delivery.

The strategy develops and agrees on principles to guide the work of a Steering Committee comprising of members as outlined below.

The Committee is tasked with the responsibility to monitor and guide the development of key actions and Strategic priorities and to guide the course of action.

The Committee will have Aboriginal Co-Chairs who are:

- Appointed through an expression of interest process aligned to criteria in relation to the key actions of the Strategy.

The Committee Members be paid for their expertise and time and aligned to the Gunaikurnai Traditional Owner Land Management Board (TOLMB) model.

Membership

The membership of the Committee must be inclusive, diverse as well as merit and skill based from across the Gippsland region. It is important as highlighted throughout the final report that the membership base is majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- A minimum of 6 members, with no more than 10 members;
- At least 2 Traditional Owners supported by GLaWAC;
- At least 2 Aboriginal members representative of regional ACCOs;
- At least 2 Aboriginal business operators;
- A DJPR representative;
- At least 2 Young Aboriginal members (preferably business owners); and
- A gender balance is essential.

In addition to the members, the Committee may invite individuals to provide specific skills or expertise as required from time-to-time. These individuals may provide input into decision making, but do not have voting rights.

Membership of the Committee will be reviewed at least once every three years.

The success of the strategy and to support the functionality of the Committee, resources will be required to establish the operational framework and foundations to implement the actions of the Strategy.

Secretariat

The Business Support Officer will provide secretariat support to the Committee and will be responsible for actioning outcomes and providing progress reports.

Additional Actions

The Steering Committee will scope the feasibility of a dedicated facility (Business Hub or similar) and if applicable, adopt the concept to support long term investment to achieve Aboriginal economic self-determination and delivery of activities associated with the Strategy.

Appendix attached - Proposed Terms of Reference, roles and responsibilities and governance processes.

Next Steps

The Business Development Officer will be responsible for developing a work plan for the implementation of the key actions of this strategy. This will also include the establishment of the Steering Committee whose role will be instrumental in prioritising key action areas and in supporting the Business Development Officer in the implementation of the Strategy.

Conclusion

The Strategy has been developed as a living document to meet the continual and changing needs of the Gippsland Aboriginal Community. The challenges from the 2019-2020 bushfires followed by COVID19 demonstrates how major events can impact the region and in particular tourism and small business.

This Strategy is developed as a reflection of the current Aboriginal Community aspirations and based on Aboriginal small business, TOC's and ACCOs capacity to consider growth and economic development.

A flexible strategy allows for the timelines and actions to shift inline within the communities' aspirations and readiness and to adapt based on successful funding injections to meet the actions within the plan.



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- ^{xi} <https://www.ecotourism.org.au/assets/Resources-Hub-Indigenous-Tourism/VIC-Victoria-s-Aboriginal-Tourism-Development-Strategy-2013-2023.PDF>
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- ^{xiv} State Government of Victorian, Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023, Melbourne 2018 available at <https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-09/VAAF%20FINAL.pdf> page 24
- ^{xv} <https://www.aboriginaljustice.vic.gov.au/in-my-region/gippsland>

Acronyms and Terminologies

Aboriginal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigenous Australians First Nations people First Australians	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Indigenous Australians, First Australians, or First Nations people are people who identify as and are descendants of Aboriginal Australia. These terms are commonly used and interchangeable.
Aboriginal/ Indigenous business	The Victorian Government definition of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business is defined as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ at least 50% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-owned ■ undertaking commercial activity ■ main business location in Victoria
Community and Social Enterprises	A social enterprise is a business that applies commercial strategies to maximise improvements in human and environmental wellbeing, rather than maximising profits for external shareholders.
Creative Industries	Creative industries include a diverse range of fields including arts and Culture, design, games and screen. The creative industries are significant to Victoria's Culture, economy and society and central to its future.
Cultural Tourism	Cultural tourism is a unique product that Traditional Owners may wish to differentiate or combine with other tourism experiences. It allows the tourist to participate in local cultural activities, like festivals and rituals. As a result, the tourists can enjoy a genuine cultural exchange with the with approved Traditional Owner facilitators, guides, and event managers.
Caring for Country	The term "Caring for Country" reflects the importance that Indigenous Australians place on traditional land management on lands unaltered by development or other land use such as agriculture. Simply put Caring for Country is 'Indigenous Australian's management of land and sea'. ^{xv}
GLaWAC	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
Procurement	The Commonwealth and Victorian Procurement are defined by rules that govern how entities buy goods and services, and are designed to ensure the Government and taxpayers get value for money
TOG or TOs	Traditional Owner Group Traditional Owners
TOLMB	Traditional Owner Land Management Board
Creative Industries	The DJPR defines creative industries as an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, design, publishing and advertising. They cover disciplines as diverse as game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, performing arts and publishing, architecture and advertising, media and music, comedy and craft. Reference: https://djpr.vic.gov.au/priority-industries-sectors/creative-industries
Native Plants & Bushfoods	Traditional Owners have cultivated and managed Country for millennia – developing processes for sustainable food and medicinal plant production, as well as holistic cultural and ecological land management. These approaches to cultivation and management have been successful and sustainable because they are holistic – reflecting an enduring, deep connection to Country through complex kinship associations that are physical, spiritual and economic. That deep connection is reflected in Indigenous Ecological Knowledge, which is the foundation of Australia's native foods and botanicals industry. Protection of that knowledge as Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property (ICIP) is critical.

Resources

Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018 - 2023

<https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-affairs-framework-2018-2023>

Aboriginal Tourism Development Plan 2013 - 2023

<https://www.ecotourism.org.au/assets/Resources-Hub-Indigenous-Tourism/VIC-Victoria-s-Aboriginal-Tourism-Development-Strategy-2013-2023.PDF>

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Gunaikurnai and Victorian Government Joint Management Plan

https://www.gunaikurnai.com.au/assets/files/2018/Gunaikurnai_JMP-v2.pdf

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Victorian Traditional Owner ‘Native Food and Botanicals Strategy’

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b337bd52714e5a3a3f671e2/t/60778f7fbfb70473438a1a2b/1618448272384/FINAL+FVTOC+Native+Foods+Strategy.pdf>

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Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) refers to all tangible and intangible aspects of Indigenous peoples' culture that is communally owned. ICIP includes but is not limited to traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expression (such as stories, designs and symbols), performances and cultural objects.



Phone: (03) 5152 5100

Fax: (03) 5152 1666

Email: admin@glawac.com.au

Website: www.glawac.com.au