

## **Your Community, Country and Council First Nations Steering Committee**

### **Terms of Reference – 2022**

**The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region. We recognise their continuing connection to the lands and waters and pay our respect to their Elders, their community and all First Nations Peoples living across these lands.**

#### **1. *Your Community, Country and Council* (YCCC) Project Background**

The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) advocates for participation in local democracy that is inclusive and represents the diversity of the community.

The VLGA has facilitated projects over many years to increase the representation of Aboriginal Victorians in local government, both in elected representative roles and in active participation with decision-making processes. The VLGA recognises the right to self-determination as defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and outlined in the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*<sup>1</sup>. The YCCC project aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in local government elections by providing culturally appropriate content to support candidates, as informed by the Steering Committee.

The YCCC Steering Committee will inform a Project Plan that will attract, support, and increase the number of First Nations candidates for the 2024 local government elections and other decision-making pathways in local government.

Past projects of the YCCC in lead up to the 2020 elections included:

- Live Forums:
  - o Roles, Skills and Preparation
  - o The Media and Social Media
  - o Candidacy and Community Engagement
- Your Community, Country and Council Interviews: Facilitated by Charles Pakana
  - o Cr Dominic WY Kanak, Waverley Council (NSW)
  - o Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
  - o Steve Cooper, Civic Mind
  - o Dylan Clarke, Chair of Barenji Gadjin

The 2020 elections resulted in at least two identified First Nations Councillors elected to local government in Victoria.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://content.legislation.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/06-43aa014%20authorised.pdf>

## 2. YCCC Steering Committee Purpose

The Your Community, Country and Council Steering Committee's (YCCC SC) main function will be to provide a forum for the VLGA to engage a self-determined approach to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in local government.

The Steering Committee will:

- Review previous YCCC content and projects by providing comment and evaluation;
- Discuss issues, barriers and concerns and recommend ways forward to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation and participation in local government;
- Draw on their connections and experience from within their respective areas of expertise to generate ideas for how future YCCC workshops and events can be most effectively delivered;
- Inform the development and implementation of YCCC pilot workshop content, events, and project plan, that will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with increased capacity and knowledge to engage with local government in decision making roles as:
  - Councillors
  - Employees
  - Committee members
  - Active and informed voters/residents; and
- Act as advocates and actively support the YCCC intent and outcomes.

## 3. Criteria for Membership

Membership is open to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who live in Victoria.

The following skills and attributes will be considered in selection of the Steering Committee members from expressions of interest (EOI) \*:

- An understanding of the barriers and issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities in leadership and decision-making roles in local government or in a broader political context.
- Relevance of background and expertise to assist in the content and implementation of workshops and project plan, to address barriers and opportunities for increased leadership in local government.
- Ability to influence with the purpose of promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidacy and local government employment pathways.
- Ability to work collaboratively and constructively with the VLGA and other steering committee members.

\* At least one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person will be involved in the review of EOI received.

#### 4. YCCC Steering Committee Membership and Conditions

- The Steering Committee will comprise of six First Nations members and be co-chaired by the YCCC Project Lead and a First Nations Councillor (appointed by their fellow Steering Committee members).
- An expression of interest will be advertised seeking membership via the VLGA website, social media and direct email, including to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations throughout Victoria.
- Meetings will consist of 1 x Induction and 6 x meetings over a 10-month period.
- Steering Committee members will be provided with sitting fees (\$300 per meeting, including induction).
- Members are to cover their own expenses associated with attendance to meetings.
- Hybrid meetings (combined in person and via online attendance) will be made available. Meetings may be moved to online only according to COVID-19 regulations or at the request of members.
- Meetings will be held in culturally appropriate and safe venues according to the Steering Committee's recommendations.
- The YCCC Project Lead will administrate meetings including agendas, minutes and any documents required for the meetings.
- Members will be encouraged to discuss issues openly and clearly in a respectful manner with all members sharing equal opportunity to contribute to discussion.
- Initial term of membership is 12 months. The term may be extended by agreement and according to the project's ongoing implementation prior to the 2024 local government elections.

#### CONTACT

Donna Spiller – YCCC Project Lead  
donna@vlga.org.au