

Your Community, Country & Council **VLGA Receives Funding to Boost First Peoples' Participation in Local Government**

The Minister for Local Government, the Hon Shaun Leane MP has announced a grant of \$50,000 from Local Government Victoria (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) to continue the important work of the Victorian Local Governance Association's (VLGA) project, *Your Community, Country & Council* (YCCC) for the 2021-22 year.

A meaningful increase in Aboriginal representation and active participation with Victorian local governments requires a concerted effort. Over the next 3 years, *Your Community, Country and Council* plans to address the chronic underrepresentation of First Nation peoples in Victorian local government and increase trust in local government decision-making and processes.

In the first 12 months of the project, the VLGA will revisit and evaluate the 2016 & 2020 programs and develop a detailed project plan and content for delivery ahead of the local government elections in 2024. Key elements of the 2021-22 project include:

- Employing an Aboriginal-identified Project Lead who will see the project from scoping through to implementation
- Establishing a YCCC Steering Committee
- Outreach to past and future participants of the program
- Development of workshop content and content review
- Interest and knowledge-building sessions
- Project Plan for 2022-24

In 2016 & 2020, the VLGA received a small grant from the Victorian Government to deliver the YCCC project ahead of the Victorian local government elections.

The 2020 YCCC project was led by Charles Pakana of *Connection Matters Radio* on behalf of the VLGA, with the primary objective to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to nominate as candidates in the October 2020 Victorian local government elections.

A meaningful increase in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander representation and active participation within Victorian local governments will require a concerted effort over the next four years. The VLGA welcomes this funding announcement which will enable YCCC to continue its important work.

ENDS:

Media Release



Quotes attributable to VLGA Chief Executive Officer, Kathryn Arndt:

A key objective of the VLGA is Good Governance Leadership. Part and parcel of this is working to attract and support good calibre councillor candidates reflective of the community they serve.

A meaningful increase in Aboriginal representation and active participation with Victorian local governments requires a concerted effort.

The VLGA is looking forward to continuing this important work with our project, Your Community, Country & Council and welcomes the support of the State Government.

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