

Our Land Our Future

OUR LAND OUR FUTURE **PROGRAM HANDBOOK**



Australian Government
Indigenous Land Corporation



Our Land Our Future

This handbook is intended as a reference for Indigenous organisations, groups, government agencies, not-for-profit groups and other investors wishing to work with the ILC on land based projects.

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Part One: ABOUT US AND OUR STRATEGIC PURPOSE

1.1 About the Indigenous Land Corporation

The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) is a Corporate Commonwealth entity whose purpose is defined by the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005*. The ILC's purpose is to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to **acquire and manage land to provide economic, environmental, social or cultural benefits**, which are defined as long-term improvements in Indigenous wellbeing. Through its legislative purpose, the ILC is committed to supporting Indigenous people to achieve economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits from the **Indigenous Estate**. The Indigenous Estate comprises the assets held, or reasonably likely to be held, by or for the benefit of Indigenous people. These assets can include: lands and the resources located on them; property assets and infrastructure; cultural and intellectual property rights and traditional knowledge (e.g. arts, dance, music, language, cultural, environmental and bioscience practices).

Indigenous land ownership and land management is fundamental to a thriving Indigenous Estate delivering benefits to Indigenous peoples.

The ILC's vision is to be the trusted partner in growing and realising the potential of the Indigenous Estate. Its land acquisition and land management program *Our Land Our Future* is its primary vehicle for achieving the objectives of:

1. Growing, developing and protecting the value of the Indigenous Estate
2. Building the productivity and profitability of the Indigenous Estate, and
3. Maximising the social, cultural, economic and environmental returns from the Indigenous Estate.

Through the acquisition and management of Indigenous-held land, the ILC has the following priority outcomes for achieving Indigenous benefits:

1. Access to and protection of cultural and environmental values

The ILC recognises the importance of land to Indigenous people's cultural identity and is committed to assisting Indigenous people to acquire and/or manage land of cultural and environmental significance.

2. Socioeconomic development

The ILC assists projects that deliver social and economic outcomes for Indigenous people, including those that provide sustainable employment and economic development opportunities. The ILC believes that sustained employment creates a range of benefits for Indigenous people, including increased standards of living, income and improved health and wellbeing.



1.2 About *Our Land Our Future*

Overview

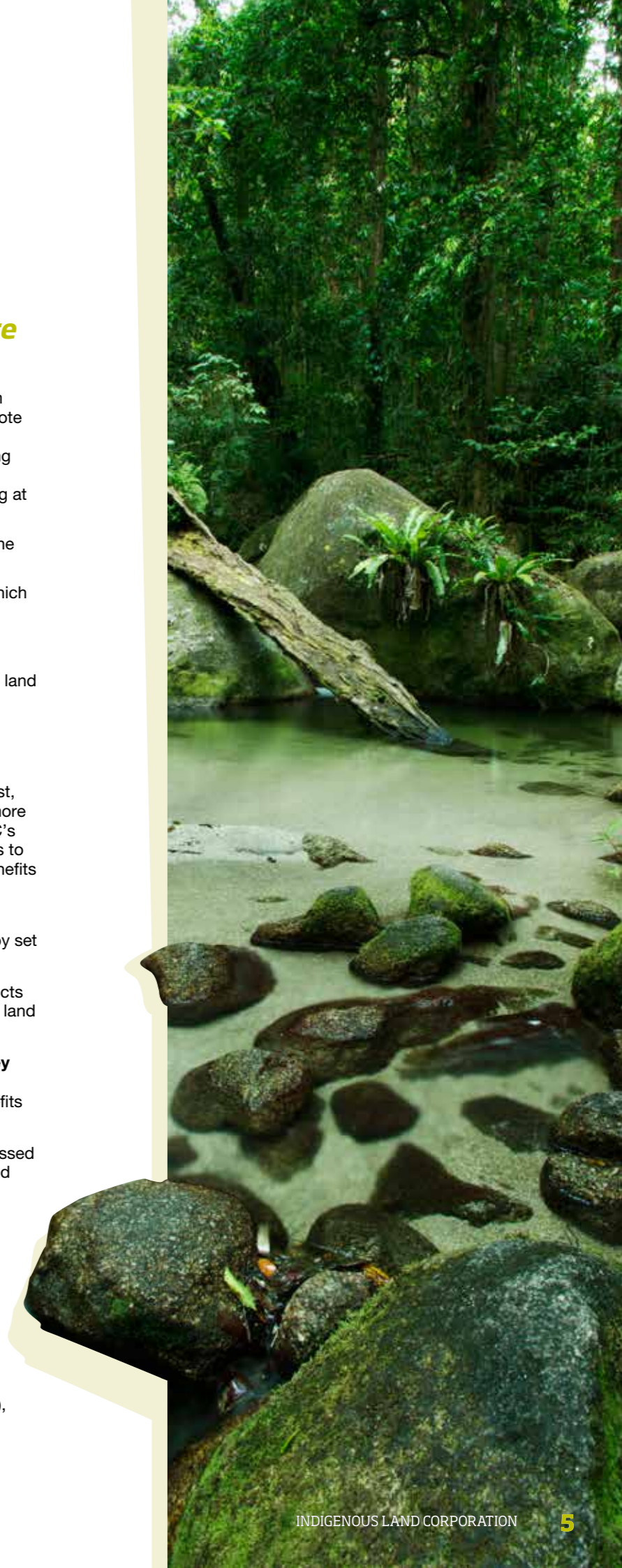
The *Our Land Our Future* (OLOF) investment program assists Indigenous people in urban, regional and remote areas to manage, use, care for, acquire and improve land to achieve Indigenous benefits. The ILC is looking for innovative and sustainable ways to invest in land acquisition and land management activities. In looking at investment partnerships, the ILC is seeking to:

1. Ensure its investment can go further and deliver the highest returns for the Indigenous Estate.
2. Facilitate opportunities with Indigenous people which can be derived from Indigenous land ownership, management and employment.
3. Develop deeper relationships and partnerships to achieve mutual goals with Indigenous groups and land holders to realise their land aspirations.

Key Features

The ILC believes that a strong sense of shared interest, commitment and shared benefits will better lead to more sustainable outcomes for Indigenous people. The ILC's OLOF program seeks to work with Indigenous groups to realise increased Indigenous land ownership, and benefits from such ownership, and includes:

- **Open Timelines** – ensuring opportunities can be harnessed when they emerge and not restricted by set funding rounds.
- **Flexibility** – providing a suite of investment products which can be tailored to meet the land needs and land management aspirations of Indigenous groups.
- **Sound Business Principles and Value for Money** – ensuring the ILC's investment decisions are sustainable, scalable and achieve maximum benefits for Indigenous people.
- **Competitive Approach** – all projects will be assessed against criteria and in relation to other projects and investment requests.
- **Developing Capacity** – focussed on building capacity and independence of Indigenous landholders.
- **Demand Driven** – driven by the needs and aspirations of Indigenous groups as well as market and industry opportunities.
- **Collaboration** – bringing together the collective efforts, knowledge and contributions of partners (including industry, commercial and philanthropic), land owners and other organisations.



Part Two:

HOW WE PROVIDE INVESTMENT

2.1 Our Investment Principles and Priorities

The ILC has limited resources to service a vast and growing Indigenous Estate. Our aim is to ensure our land acquisition and land management investment is delivered in a manner that protects cultural and environmental assets; maximizes social and economic returns; and builds the commercial returns from the Indigenous Estate. We also seek to partner with corporate and philanthropic investors, leveraging ILC investment to secure greater benefits for Indigenous Australians.

Our **Investment Principles** are a guide, articulating how the ILC will direct its land acquisition and land management investment:

- Increase the productivity, value and profitability from the Indigenous estate.
- Supporting new and emerging markets where evidence supports opportunity and sustainability.
- Any investment must present value for money focusing on cultural, social, environmental and or economic returns.
- The ILC invests in socially responsible, sound business, ethical and sustainable investments.
- Supporting Indigenous-held land to remain within the Indigenous Estate.
- Maximising Indigenous procurement and employment opportunities through sourcing Indigenous benefits through the supply chain.
- Protection of cultural and environmental assets and values.

The following **Priority Areas**, shape our investment activities:

- Providing protection and long term management of land with cultural and environmental values and assets.
- Developing and investing in land based enterprises that create training, employment and other significant benefits for Indigenous people.
- Maximising the productivity and use of Indigenous-held land that will deliver the greatest benefit for Indigenous people.
- Investing in land assets and enterprises that are economically sustainable, can leverage investment partners and take advantage of current and emerging markets and supply chain opportunities.





2.2 Our Investment Focus Areas

In order for the ILC to achieve its purpose and outcomes, and prioritise its investment, it seeks to focus its investment in key areas. We will actively invite and fund ideas from Indigenous groups in the following areas where there are: new and emerging markets to be harnessed or opened up; opportunities for significant Indigenous training, jobs and enterprises; opportunities to grow Indigenous property assets; and where the cultural and environmental value of the Indigenous Estate can be protected.

Agribusiness

- Agriculture (including cropping, aquaculture and horticulture), and food and fibre processing.
- Research and development leading to greater yields and profitability including:
 - New products, production methods, technologies and broad innovation.
 - Improving soils, water, and combatting endemic tropical and sub-tropical pests, diseases and weeds.
- Infrastructure to improve stocking rates, developing integrated supply chains to supply growing export markets and potentially commercialising processing and product technologies to improve cost.
- Scale livestock production on Indigenous-held land (eg. beef, lamb and goat)
- Dairy
- Wool
- Biofuels
- Carbon
- Water and irrigation

Tourism

- Tourism infrastructure and ventures, which: are land based; actively uses, cares for and improves the land; and which actively contributes toward cultural and environmental conservation, for example:
 - Eco Tourism
 - Cultural Tourism
- Tourism ventures which are scalable, sustainable and provide economic, cultural, environmental and social benefits to Indigenous people.

Renewable Energy

- Land based projects which:
 - Generate training, employment and enterprise opportunities.
 - Reduce energy costs and improve energy sustainability and security.

Niche Indigenous Products

- The commercialisation of sustainable wild harvest including bush foods.
- Niche protein sources such as kangaroo, crocodile, buffalo, goat, camel, emu, goose, feral animals, and seafood.
- Niche dairy products such as goat and camel milk.
- Plant and animal material for medicinal and/or cosmetic products (eg. bush soaps and creams) such as kakadu plums.
- Examining partnerships for increasing Indigenous groups in the supply chain for other products such as coffee, wood and leather.
- Growing Indigenous branded produce.

Urban Development

- Developing places to create cultural engagement, cohesion and celebrate living urban Indigenous cultures.
- Cultural enterprises (eg. tourism) which protect and promote Indigenous culture.
- Historical and cultural infrastructure preservation.
- Enhancing property assets to create service centers, community hubs, gathering places etc.
- Providing planning, feasibility and technical support to enable the development of property portfolios.
- Small enterprises connected to land-based industries and markets.
- Identify and prepare Indigenous assets for co-investment opportunities.





Our Land Our Future

2.3 Our Investment Framework

The below framework brings together our investment objectives, principles, priorities and focus areas. It is intended to support Indigenous organisations, groups and landholders to understand why and where we seek to partner.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

- Grow, develop and sustain the Indigenous Estate.
- Build the productivity and profitability of the Indigenous Estate.
- Support economic growth and prosperity.
- Drive economic, social and cultural wellbeing for Indigenous people.

INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES

- Supporting new and emerging markets where evidence supports opportunity and sustainability.
- Increase the productivity, value and profitability from the Indigenous Estate.
- Any investment must present value for money focusing on cultural, social, environmental and or economic returns.
- The ILC invests in socially responsible, sound business, ethical and sustainable investments.
- Supporting Indigenous-held land to remain within the Indigenous Estate.
- Maximising Indigenous procurement and employment opportunities through sourcing Indigenous benefits through the supply chain.
- Protection of cultural and environmental assets and values.

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

- Providing protection and long term management of land with cultural and environmental values and assets.
- Developing and investing in land based enterprises that create training, employment and other significant benefits for Indigenous people.
- Maximising the productivity and use of Indigenous-held land that will deliver the greatest benefit for Indigenous people.
- Investing in land assets and enterprises that are economically sustainable, can leverage investment and take advantage of emerging markets and supply chain opportunities.

INVESTMENT FOCUS AREA

- Niche Indigenous Products
- Agribusiness
- Tourism
- Renewable Energy
- Urban Development

2.4 Our Investment Products Guide

If you are interested in working with the ILC, we have a range of flexible investment products to assist in the acquisition of land and support for land management activities.

Where project ideas meet the OLOF criteria and priorities, and where funds are available, the following suite of products can be tailored to individual projects and groups. The suite of products range from grants through to joint ventures and equity partners. Each request will be assessed on a case by case basis, for the best investment product to be used.

GRANT INVESTMENT PRODUCTS		
Instrument	Parameters	Examples of how the ILC offer support
Small Land Management Grants (up to \$100,000)	<p>Infrastructure, plant and equipment assistance prioritised toward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural and Environmental Protection Urgent Health and Safety Business incubator/ start up and growth (in agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, niche markets or urban development) 	<p>Essential maintenance and repair to address urgent health and safety issues. Small land management projects under \$100,000 that may require funding in the initial start-up phase of a business operations that is linked to the ILC's key focus areas.</p> <p>For example the ILC funded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Wudicupildiyerr Ranger Group in NT for urgent assistance to replace their chemical storage facilities destroyed during a fire. The Carpentaria Land Council was provided with a small land management grant to fence off two culturally and ecologically significant wetlands and a burial site on Delta Downs Station, Normanton, Queensland.
Business and Property Development (up to \$100,000)	<p>Supporting Indigenous landholders to achieve better returns from their land through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property Management Plans Feasibility Studies Business Planning and Development Due Diligence 	<p>Funding for business plans and feasibility where Indigenous landholders are looking to ensure their land is more productive.</p> <p>For example the ILC funded the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre Aboriginal Corporation to develop a business plan to guide the future development of the Yirriman Wild Harvest Enterprise Initiative.</p>
Land Management Grants (over \$100,000)	<p>Larger Land Management projects prioritised toward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of Cultural and Environmental values and assets Business incubator/ start up (in agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, niche markets and urban development) Grant amount to value of Indigenous Benefits to be achieved Collaborative funding arrangement (co investment) <p><i>Grants over \$100,000 need to demonstrate value for money. Funding will be available commensurate with Indigenous benefits to be achieved. A mix of investment products may be used and will be tailored based on the project/investment.</i></p>	<p>Projects must always relate to the management of land and/or the development of Indigenous-held land. ILC support can be provided for infrastructure and capital development for land based enterprises that are within the ILC focus areas, such as renewable energy, niche Indigenous products, agriculture, tourism and urban development.</p> <p>For example the ILC funded the Wilcannia Local Aboriginal Land Council to upgrade fencing, water and stock handling infrastructure for the development and start up of their rangeland goat enterprise.</p>

GRANT INVESTMENT PRODUCTS		
Instrument	Parameters	Examples of how the ILC offer support
Land Acquisition and Grant (Divestment)	<p>Acquiring and granting Land which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects cultural and environmental values and assets Enables land-based enterprises in agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, niche Indigenous products or urban development 	<p>Meeting the costs of acquiring a property or land including purchase and settlement costs.</p> <p>For example the ILC purchased two of three allotments of Panatana a culturally and environmentally significant property on the Rubicon estuary in Tasmania. This acquisition has added to the Indigenous Estate, provides for Indigenous access to traditional country and enables Six Rivers Aboriginal Corporation to protect and manage the significant cultural and environmental values of the property.</p>
Repayable Grants	<p>Land management projects in priority focus areas (agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, niche markets and urban development) and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Business Incubator/ Start up/ growth To meet costs to support working capital Where enterprise has future profitability and ability to repay monies 	<p>Funding land management projects where the applicant has the ability to repay monies.</p> <p>For example the ILC can fund groups a mix of grant and repayable grant to commence land based enterprise with commercial returns. The ILC's investment package will provide a mix of grant (commensurate with the Indigenous benefits to be delivered) and repayable grant (commensurate with the projected profits and capacity of group to repay).</p>

EQUITY INSTRUMENTS		
Instrument	Parameters	Examples of how the ILC offer support
Joint Venture Equity Partner	<p>Large Land-based enterprises (where ILC investment is notionally over \$1m), and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which pursue agriculture, tourism, renewable energy, niche markets or urban development A positive economic return on investment is sought / warranted (via profit shares) on investments greater than 3 years Is of a scale that the ILC could participate and generate a return for further investment into the Indigenous Estate. Where the ILC can commit to a long-term venture Includes new or existing subsidiaries 	<p>The ILC can bring equity investment to a joint venture partnership. The ILC's contribution can be assets, financial investment and working capital. The ILC can tailor each JV to reflect the equity shares, capability and expertise of all parties and the longer term vision of the Indigenous landholder. The ILC can commit to long-term partnerships while always having an eye to the independence and financial success of the Indigenous landholder. JV business partnerships provide opportunity for the ILC and Indigenous landholders to generate profits from land, with the ILC's profits being re-invested into the Indigenous Estate. The ILC will aim to divest its equity share over time to its joint venture partner, leaving the Indigenous landholder with a sustainable land-based business.</p>

Part Three: THE INVESTMENT PROCESS, CRITERIA AND ELIGIBILITY

3.1 The three step process

Step 1:

Talk through your idea with the ILC

Having a strong idea is just a starting point. It often needs to be developed before it is ready to be implemented. If you've got an idea but don't know what the next steps are, working together, the ILC can support you to identify your land based aspirations.

The first step in the process is talking through your idea with an ILC staff member (see page 18 for your regional contact). This conversation allows the ILC to assess your idea against the program criteria. If the ILC agrees that your idea has merit, we will arrange to hold a project workshop with you to build your idea, discuss your vision for the project, develop a roadmap towards achieving your goal, identify project partners and most importantly, plan what needs to happen to progress your idea to the next step.

If your request for assistance is valued under \$100,000 you may be directed to our Small Land Management product. This is a simple, grant-focussed product and applications can come in at any time.

Assessment Process

If the ILC considers the project idea has merit, will meet the program criteria, shows value for money and will achieve the greatest impact for Indigenous wellbeing, further planning sessions or workshops may be held. The ILC recognises that for each project, idea or organisation, the development phase will be different. Because assessment is a competitive process, investment is not guaranteed even if your project idea progresses and meets program criteria. If your idea is not supported by the ILC we will be honest with you and advise you early.

Step 2:

Work with partners to co-design your project

Once the project vision is clear, potential partners are identified, a general plan is in place and the project has demonstrated its merit, the ILC can work with you through the development phase to ensure you will be ready to implement the plan and execute your project when the time is right. The ILC can bring together potential collaborators, investors and partners who may be interested in supporting or investing in your project idea. This stage will also involve the ILC's due diligence and feasibility assessment processes. Credit checks are conducted on the Directors and key personnel in your organisation. The ILC is bound by the Privacy Act and information about how the ILC will manage and use your personal information is available in the ILC Privacy Policy on our website.

Assessment Process

If projects require significant ILC investment they will be subject to further assessment which will assess alignment to ILC investment principles, return on ILC mandate, execution of risk and financial capacity, weighing up of Indigenous benefits against the cost of the project, and available budget.

Step 3:

Co-Implement monitoring and reporting

Having a great idea and the funding to implement it isn't always enough to ensure the long term success of a project. Depending on the nature of the project, the partners and the role of the ILC, the ILC can continue to work with you on the implementation of the project. This may also involve the formalisation of agreements and arrangement for the delivery of a project, including transferring ownership.

Post Grant Process

Regular monitoring and evaluation will be required to ensure the project is meeting required outcomes and impact.

For projects under \$100,000 a simple application process takes place.

For projects over \$100,000 a co-design process takes place

3.2 Criteria you need to meet for Land Acquisition or Land Management Assistance

Projects must:

1. Be aligned to OLOF objectives, priorities, principles and focus areas (see our Investment Framework on page 11).
2. Demonstrate that they can meet achievable, scalable, measurable and sustainable economic, environmental, social and/or cultural benefits for Indigenous people.
3. Include the active involvement and engagement in project development, implementation and management by an Indigenous landowner or group.
4. Be viable and economically sustainable in the long term.
5. Use sound land and environmental practices.
6. Satisfy Commonwealth, State and Territory legislation and regulation.
7. Address a need for land management assistance on Indigenous-held land or land ownership that cannot be met through the functions of other agencies.

3.3 Who is eligible?

Land Acquisitions

For proposals that include the acquisition of land, Indigenous controlled entities in Australia can work with the ILC toward the acquisition of a property. Organisations must be incorporated or in the process of becoming incorporated, must be able to legally enter into lease arrangements, hold title to land and be effectively governed and compliant with regulatory responsibilities.

Land Management

Indigenous landholders, government agencies and non-government organisations are sought to invest in land based projects for Indigenous-held lands. However, projects must relate to the managed use, care or improvement of Indigenous-held land and have the agreement of the Indigenous landholder(s).

3.4 Your Contribution

Your organisation will need to contribute:

- Administration costs
- Sitting fees
- Facilities hire or catering for planning meetings
- Travel by members of your group
- Operational costs (wages, rates, insurance, power expenses)
- Livestock
- Motor vehicles



3.5 If successful, what are your responsibilities?

For **Land Management** projects responsibilities include:

1. Entering into an agreement contract which includes a Work Plan, and describes how and when the funding and support will be provided and how the project will be implemented.
2. Carrying out project activities as agreed in the Work Plan.
3. Ensuring activities are conducted in accordance with sound environmental practices and do not negatively impact on environmental and cultural values.
4. Submitting Progress Reports to explain how you are implementing your land management project, achieving Indigenous Benefits and using ILC funds.

The ILC may also conduct field visits to inspect the progress of your project and verify information given to the ILC in Progress Reports.

In relation to the **acquisition of land**, your group must:

1. Be incorporated to be able to sign a lease and be granted the property. Your group must be an Indigenous-controlled corporation, and permitted to own property according to its constitution or rules of incorporation.
2. Not get involved in purchase negotiations. Purchase negotiations can be very sensitive and any contact between the group and vendor (or agent) may compromise the sale.
3. Implement the Work Plan agreed with the ILC including all reporting requirements. Half yearly Progress Reports will be required through the lease period and for five years after the property is granted.
4. Develop a Property Management Plan within the first six months of the lease.
5. Guarantee Indigenous people with traditional links to the property access to any culturally significant sites on the property.
6. Sign the ILC's standard Deed of Grant in order to be granted the property.
7. Be willing to enter into an ongoing relationship with the ILC to most effectively leverage the value of your land title to expand Indigenous economic development opportunities.



Part Four: CONTACT INFORMATION



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Anywhere in Australia Connect with the appropriate ILC Office

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Australian Government
Indigenous Land Corporation

Head Office

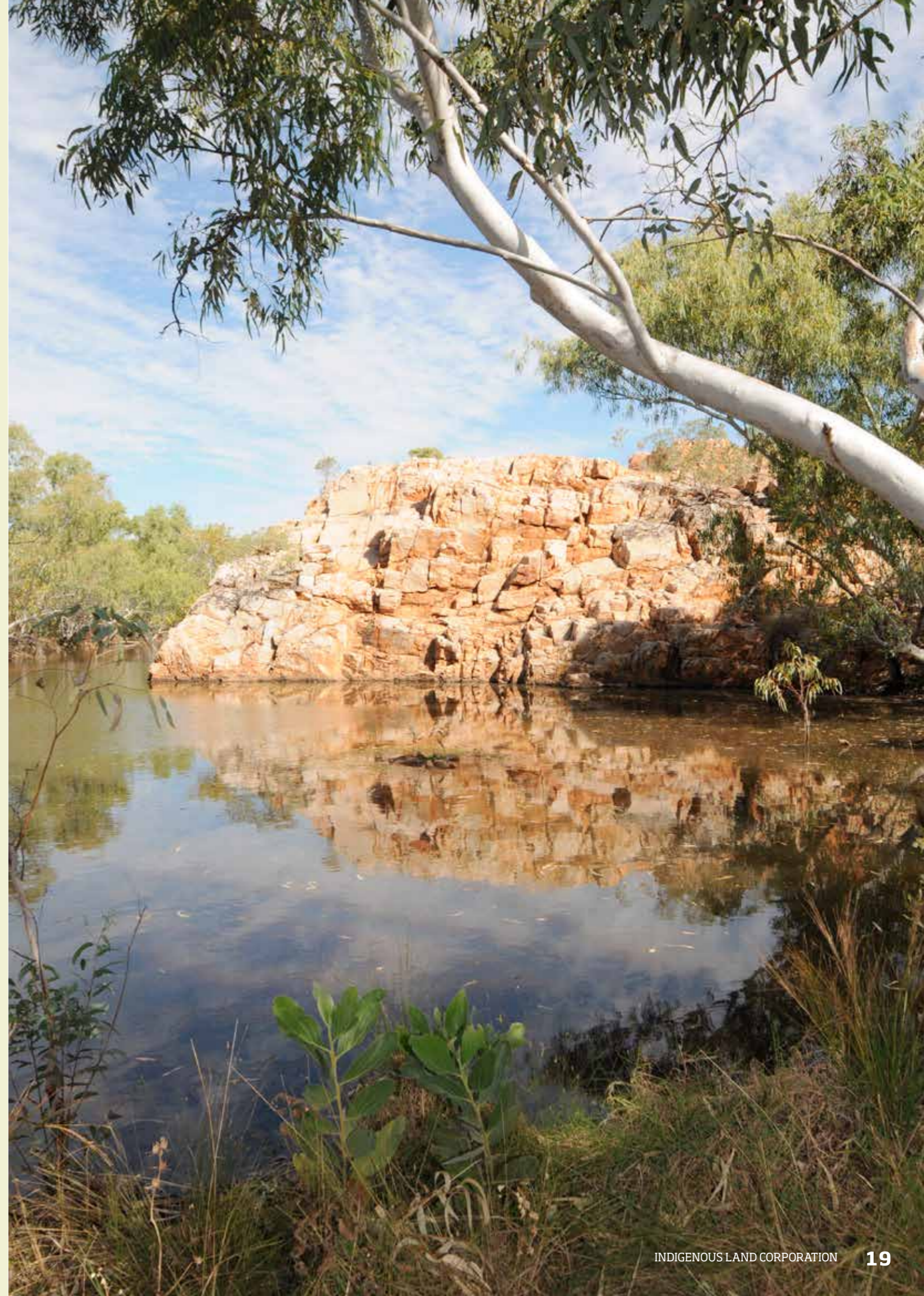
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