



Australian Government  
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation



The ILSC GROUP

PEOPLE. COUNTRY. OPPORTUNITY.

# Returning and managing Country 2022-23

The activities we fund are leading to change for Indigenous people.



“

*I love [the Purple House social enterprise hub]...do anything you want there because it's a big space. Language group, activities, cooking tails, parties, meetings, telling patients in language what we do. We're going to learn cooking there too...*

Selina Bob, Purple House Patient Mentor

”



## Unlock your change story

The stories in this publication showcase how the activities the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) funds are leading to change for Indigenous people. Talk to us about how we can help generate change for your community: call 1800 818 490.

## Acknowledgement of Country

In all our activities we pay our respect to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, waters and skies on which we live and work. We honour the resilience and continuing connection to Country, culture, and community of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. We recognise the decisions we make today will impact the lives of generations to come.

Diana's Basin, palawa Country, Tas  
Image credit: Andy Townsend and  
Tasmanian Land Conservancy

Front cover photo: Purple House Bush Balm  
staff Kianah and Tamara, Alice Springs,  
Arrernte Country, NT  
Image credit: Purple House



*Growing the  
value of Country*



*Owning and managing  
Country sustainably*



*Driving policy  
and opportunity*



*Preserving and  
protecting culture*

These are the four long-term outcomes, or *pathways of change* we aspire to for Indigenous communities as we work together to grow Country – land and water – and unlock the Indigenous knowledge and culture collectively held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

**In *Returning and managing Country*, our annual highlights report, we:**

- profile some of the Country we returned and the management projects we funded in 2022-23
- return to two previously funded Indigenous corporations to ask 'What changed as a result?'
- summarise how we're broadly tracking in delivering positive change for Indigenous people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this publication may contain the names or images of people who have passed away.



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### **We plant the seed together, you harvest the fruit**

We buy Country to give back to Indigenous groups. Our selection of project profiles show how the return of Country can lay the foundation for positive change for Indigenous communities.

38

### **27 years supporting positive change**

Since 1995, the ILSC has worked to redress dispossession, providing for a more prosperous and culturally centred future for Indigenous people. Our numbers tell the story.

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### **From little things, big things grow**

Our smaller investments can lead to big things too. Here we profile some of our less told stories which are driving change for Indigenous communities.

41

### **Partners in change**

We partner with Indigenous groups across the broad diversity of Indigenous Australia from cities to regional and remote areas, and from inland to coastal environments.

29

### **What changed as a result?**

We regularly ask our proponents how they are tracking and the changes they are seeing emerge from their funded activities. Here we ask two proponents 'What changed as a result?'

42

### **How we are tracking**

Are we delivering 'good value for money'? Find out in this snapshot of our annual performance.



Aboriginal Australian and Native American artwork decorate two satellite dishes at the Landsat International Cooperator Ground Station, Alice Springs, Arrernte Country, NT  
Image credit: Geoscience Australia  
- LandSat Facility Alice Springs





**8 PROPERTIES  
ACQUIRED  
(2022-23)**  
\$14m\*/529 ha  
\* purchase price

**9 PROPERTIES  
GRANTED  
(2022-23)**  
\$19m\*\*/780 ha  
\*\* valuation at grant

## Returning Country

Since 1995, we have been using our funding to buy Country to give back to Indigenous people.

This is our highest profile activity working towards redressing Australia's historic dispossession of Indigenous people through the restoration of an Indigenous land and water base.

We prioritise acquisitions that can be immediately granted to Indigenous titleholders enabling benefits to quickly flow to Indigenous people.

If required, we also offer an initial leasehold period to prospective titleholders, devising a plan for granting the property while building experience, capability and expertise in property management.

Increasingly we are helping broker large partnerships between Indigenous corporations and existing commercial enterprises which can unlock new markets, capital, capability and capacity, and expand business potential for Indigenous products and services.

The return of Country – whether it be through the purchase of a large pastoral lease or a building in an urban or regional centre – is an intensely emotional experience. The financial security inherent in ownership of Country can often lead to the development or expansion of enterprises, improved Indigenous employment, strengthened communities and cultural practices, and better protection of Country. This critical economic, cultural, social and environmental capital continues to generate over time to benefit future generations.

We are proud that over three quarters of the land and water assets that we have purchased are under the care and control of an Indigenous title holder.

The following project profiles capture the diversity of our land and water acquisitions and demonstrate how the return of Country lays the foundation for positive change for Indigenous communities.

**We plant the seed together,  
you harvest the fruit**





Fibre art dresses on display in a section of the new retail space and gallery, Coffs Harbour, Gumbaynggirr Country, NSW  
Image credit: Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance / And the Trees Photography



Lake Condah, Gunditjmara Country, Vic  
Image credit: Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation / Tyson Lovett-Murray

PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Preserving and protecting culture

Driving policy and opportunity

Leading Indigenous art centre moves into new Coffs Harbour home, NSW

*The new premises are a wonderful fit for our organisation, providing an amazing office environment to work, with ample room to grow. The ground floor gallery, workshop and retail space will allow us to support a larger number of Aboriginal artists from within our region to become more self-sufficient.*

**Rick Gonsalves, General Manager, Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance Aboriginal Corporation**

A leading, contemporary Aboriginal art and culture organisation now has a permanent home in Coffs Harbour, NSW from which to grow its operations on behalf of the four Aboriginal nations it represents.

Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance Aboriginal Corporation (SWFW) officially opened its new headquarters on Gumbaynggirr land in August, where it will continue to promote artists and makers from the Worimi, Biripi, Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr nations.

Since 2012, SWFW have been strengthening the culture of these Mid North Coast, NSW nations through the delivery of cultural and community-focused programs (including the annual Saltwater Freshwater Festival) by providing economic opportunities for artists and performers; and through its commercial enterprise, the National Aboriginal Design Agency (NADA), which provides ethical design, licensing, and commissioning services to Aboriginal artists Australia-wide.

The consolidation of its operations in the new, fit-for-purpose building is a great triumph for SWFW.

The organisation's growth had previously been hampered by reliance on hired venues and the inability to deliver programs and set up specialised workspaces within its own facility.

Located in Coffs Harbour's central business district, the ground floor of the new headquarters houses a gallery, workshop and retail space showcasing Aboriginal art within the region. The upper level includes offices for SWFW and NADA staff.

The relocation will boost employment, with four new positions bringing the number of SWFW Indigenous staff to 10. Every year these employees support over 300 Aboriginal artists, cultural practitioners, and contractors, in addition to providing licensing and commission services through NADA.

From its new headquarters, SWFW will share Worimi, Biripi, Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr culture with the Mid North Coast community, allowing for additional gallery sales and increased access for Indigenous people to participate in SWFW cultural and arts programs.

The acquisition was commemorated in August with a divestment ceremony held on Gumbaynggirr land, which included a Welcome to Country, Smoking Ceremony, a traditional Welcome Dance, speeches and a tour of the new gallery and office space.

**ILSC investment:** \$2.2m

**Partners:** Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance Aboriginal Corporation; New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council

PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Preserving and protecting culture

Driving policy and opportunity

World famous Budj Bim Cultural Landscape to be further protected, Vic

*GMTOAC value the ILSC's support in enabling Gunditjmara to acquire new properties along the Budj Bim Lava Flow, ensuring we continue to protect the legacy of our Gunditjmara ancestors through delivery of our many on-Country programs. These acquisitions will likely be included within the World Heritage-listed Budj Bim Cultural Landscape into the future.*

**Donna Wright, Chair, Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation**

The Budj Bim Cultural Landscape in Victoria, world famous for its early evidence of traditional aquaculture, is to be further protected thanks to the acquisition of three new properties.

Located on Gunditjmara Country in south-west Victoria, the three properties form an essential part of the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape.

Comprising over 300 stone dwellings and a network of channels, dams and weirs, the Landscape shows how, for thousands of years, the Gunditjmara people made a permanent economic and social base on Country, manipulating floodplains and water flows to trap and harvest kooyang (eels).

In 2019, 9,935 hectares of this Country was World Heritage-listed as one of the largest and oldest aquaculture networks in the world.

The acquisition of the three properties – collectively 527 hectares – by Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) will address fragmentation; support the maintenance of the water flows and hydrology of the aquaculture system; and help preserve the cultural and environmental significance of the landscape.

The new properties are expected to improve Gunditjmara access to, connection to, and activities on Country; further raise the profile of Indigenous culture and Budj Bim as a World Heritage-listed site; increase opportunities for Indigenous training and employment; and enable the expansion of tourism facilities and offerings.

The ILSC have previously contributed to Gunditjmara ownership and management of the cultural landscape, acquiring and divesting five properties to GMTOAC between 2004-2013.

**Investment:** \$5.4m

**Partners:** Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation





A painting gifted by SKHKAC to the ILSC at the Sister Kate's divestment ceremony  
 L to R: Alta Winmar (SKHKAC), Tjalaminu Mia (CEO, SKHKAC), Colin Slattery (ILSC), Deanne Tann (SKHKAC), Paul Willaway (ILSC), Clint Uink (ILSC), Glenn Pearson (Chairperson, SKHKAC), Ian Hamm (Chairperson, ILSC)  
 Artist: Collaboration of ILSC and SKHKAC staff - Deanne Tann



Kingston, Tanganeakald Country, SA  
 Image credit: Getty Images

#### PATHWAYS

- Growing the value of Country
- Owning and managing Country sustainably
- Preserving and protecting culture
- Driving policy and opportunity

### Secret meeting place for Stolen Generation now in Indigenous hands, WA

*We are not going to let what happened to us define us. We are building a place that is dear to us where we can heal and heal our families.*

**Tjalaminu “Tj” Mia, CEO, Sister Kate’s Home Kids Aboriginal Corporation**

The handover of land in south-east Perth to the Sister Kate’s Home Kids Aboriginal Corporation (SKHKAC) marked the first step in turning it into a Place of Healing for the Stolen Generations. Located in the suburb of Queen’s Park, the two-hectare parcel of land known as the ‘Bush Block’ is opposite the former Sister Kate’s Home for Aboriginal children who were taken from their parents between 1934 and 1975. The Bush Block was a secret meeting place for Aboriginal children where they could briefly reunite with their visiting parents. With the land now back under Aboriginal ownership, SKHKAC can move forward with plans to turn the land into a cultural centre and place of healing as well as develop fee-for-service activities to sustain operations.

The ILSC bought the land in 2008 from the Uniting Church with the intention of returning it to SKHKAC for the benefit of members of the Stolen Generation who had lived at Sister Kate’s, as well as their families and the wider Noongar community. The ILSC have granted SKHKAC up to an additional \$500,000 for capital works and other costs, and SKHKAC have also secured Lotterywest funding to commence redevelopment of the site. An official divestment ceremony was held in August 2022.

**ILSC investment:** \$1.5m

#### PATHWAYS

- Growing the value of Country
- Owning and managing Country sustainably
- Preserving and protecting culture

### Land next to significant burial site saved from development in Kingston, SA

A block of land adjacent to an Aboriginal burial ground in South Australia’s south-east has been safeguarded from future development after its June purchase. Located in the coastal town of Kingston, the 991 square metre housing estate block was bought on the open market by the ILSC on behalf of the Kungari Heritage Association (KHA) after the group expressed serious concerns about the cultural and archaeological implications of its sale to a private developer. Since 1989, the KHA volunteers have been caring for the neighbouring Kingston Burial Ground – just 34 metres from the purchased property – when it was registered under the SA *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988*. At least 18 individuals are documented as buried in Kingston Burial Ground, but it is likely that the site’s footprint extends past the current registered boundary.

Traditionally known as Tangelung, the Kingston area is known to be rich in cultural heritage. There are also two other registered burial and campsites located in the town and, in 2004, an Aboriginal burial was discovered during the construction of a street on the housing estate, just one block away from the Kingston Burial Ground. The region’s Aboriginal people have retained an unbroken connection to the Kingston Burial Ground since colonisation, and descendants of the Bunganditj and the Meintangk people continue to nurture and protect their culture through KHA’s caretaker efforts. The south-eastern Aboriginal community will be the primary beneficiaries of the acquisition, protecting an important piece of land from development while providing access to Country. The ILSC will work with the heritage association over the coming months towards a successful divestment.

**ILSC investment:** \$120,000





New Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation headquarters, WA



Cans collected through the ABC Foundation's 'Containers for Change' program

#### PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Preserving and protecting culture

Driving policy and opportunity

## Wilinggin to expand its operations from new Derby-based home, WA

*The acquisition comes at a time of essential need for a solid base to do Wilinggin's operational and governance work for the betterment of the Ngarinyin people and Country.*

**Nelson O'Reeri, Chair, Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation Board**

After an extensive search for suitable office space, the Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation (WAC) now have a new headquarters for its operations in Derby, Western Australia.

Over the past four years WAC have grown as an organisation from two permanent staff to 24 staff – 75 per cent of them Aboriginal – responsible for 63,000 square kilometres of Wilinggin Country, the traditional land of the Ngarinyin people.

With its growing staff base, and further expansion on the horizon, WAC had been searching for a fit-for-purpose building to meet its needs in a regional and remote market which often lacks suitable and affordable office space.

The new headquarters will allow WAC to expand to manage its growing responsibilities and support its various ranger, Indigenous Protected Area and carbon programs.

While Derby is not on Wilinggin Country, support for the acquisition was given from the two traditional owner groups, Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation and Warrwa People Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC.

**ILSC investment:** \$1.2m

**Partners:** Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation

#### PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

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Driving policy and opportunity

## Aboriginal conservation and social enterprise finds new home in Carnarvon, WA

*The Carnarvon acquisition has provided for our primary headquarters and a secure hub to deliver our On-Country Enterprise businesses, profits from which are invested into our Future Fund. Suitable land is not easy to find in Carnarvon and the new home ensures we can continue to deliver the Containers for Change program, providing local jobs and services to the community.*

**Helen Slater, CEO, Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Ltd**

A majority Aboriginal-owned social enterprise which delivers a range of social and environmental programs on remote and regional Country has acquired a new property in Carnarvon, WA for its headquarters.

Established in 2016, the Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Ltd (ABCFL) is based in Carnarvon and works across WA's Pilbara and Mid-West regions, with the ability to operate nationally.

The new fit-for-purpose Carnarvon property will be used for ABCFL's headquarters as well as to deliver its Containers for Change enterprise – which provides critical revenue for ABCFL to support its community-led programs and services – Food for the Mob program, and other services.

In Carnarvon, the ABCFL is also focussed on building the capacity of the local Mungullah Community Aboriginal Corporation to deliver its own programs and services to the nearby Mungullah Community of 150 people, many of whom are children.

With the majority of ABCFL's staff located in Carnarvon – and many of them from the Mungullah Community – a permanent headquarters will provide additional security, save on rental expenses, and permit the organisation's further growth.

**ILSC investment:** \$427,540





The new AFLS headquarters  
Image credit: Agora Property Group

#### PATHWAYS

Growing  
the value of  
Country

Owning and  
managing Country  
sustainably

Preserving  
and protecting  
culture

Driving  
policy and  
opportunity

## New home for Aboriginal family law service to strengthen its Perth operations, WA

*We now have a Head Office that reflects the size and scope of our service, provides a professional work environment and is suitable to deliver training, corporate and client facing functions. This critical infrastructure puts our organisation in a prime position to continue our growth and ensures the ongoing sustainability of our service delivery for victims of family and domestic violence across Western Australia.*

**Corina Martin, CEO, Aboriginal Family Legal Services (AFLS) Western Australia**

The Aboriginal Family Legal Services (AFLS) Western Australia is shoring up its Perth presence and expanding its service delivery to the metropolitan area with the acquisition of a permanent home for its head office.

AFLS WA is Western Australia's largest provider of Aboriginal legal representation and community education in family and sexual violence.

Supported by its existing Perth-based corporate office, the organisation delivers its services across the state from six offices: in the West Kimberley (Broome), East Kimberley (Kununurra), Gascoyne (Carnarvon), Midwest (Geraldton), Goldfields (Kalgoorlie), and Pilbara (Port Hedland), with outreach services extending to over 30 remote townships and Aboriginal communities.

Funding to acquire a commercial building in Rivervale for its permanent Perth head office will enable AFLS to consolidate its corporate functions; better coordinate service delivery across Western Australia; and extend service delivery to Aboriginal people in the Perth metropolitan area.

Across the state, AFLS currently employ 58 staff – over half of them Aboriginal – and serviced nearly 800 clients in 2022.

Savings from AFLS' existing rental accommodation in Perth will enable the employment of new legal and support staff in Perth, at least four of them Aboriginal, who will be able to provide vital legal services to an additional 300 Aboriginal people in the area.

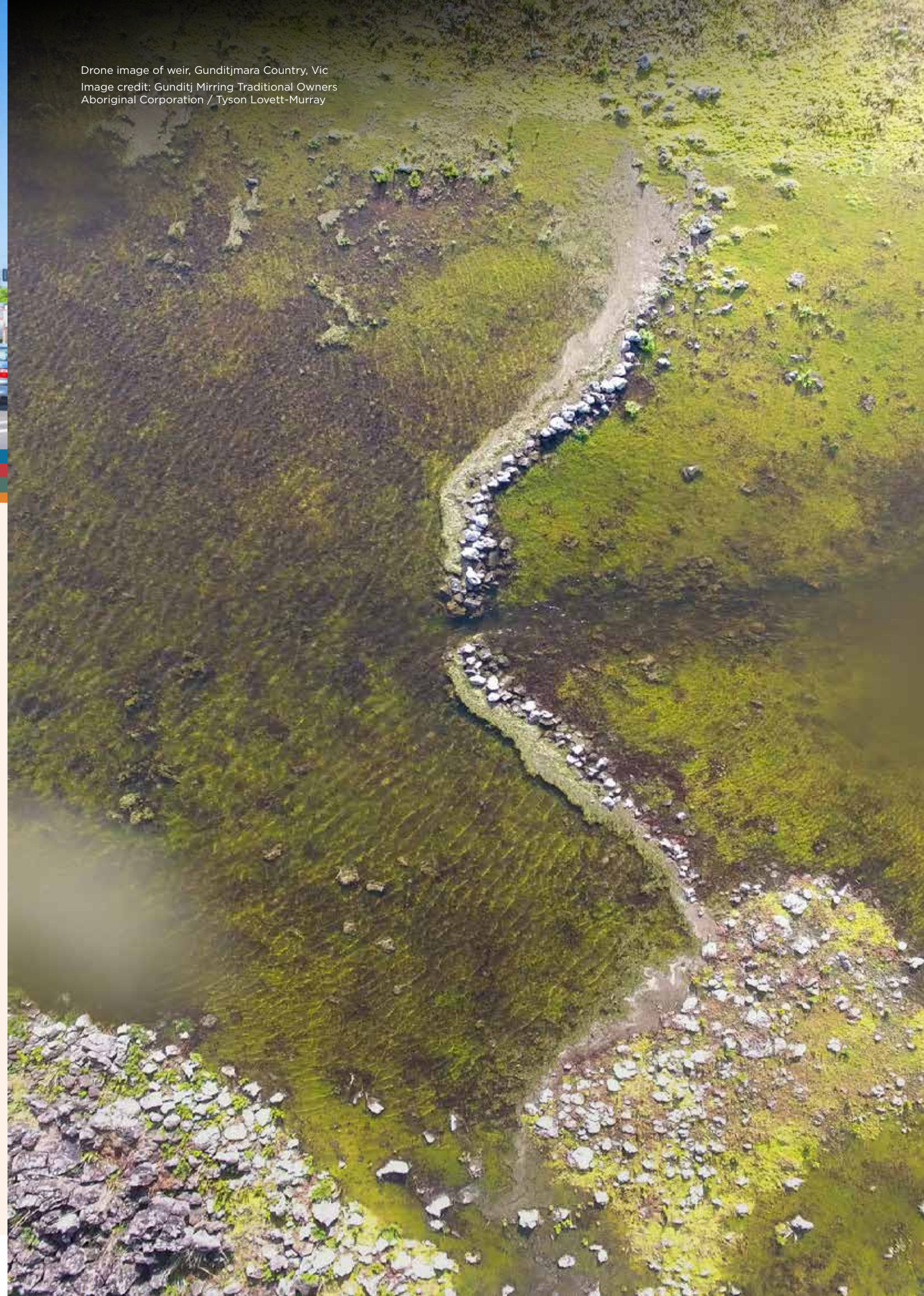
The building's fit-out will be fit-for-purpose, allowing the privacy and discretion required for servicing clients, and for hosting stakeholders including the WA Government and other legal providers.

Having ownership of a permanent headquarters will raise the profile and awareness of AFLS programs; allow for currently outsourced and off-site training programs to be delivered in-house; and provide for additional revenue opportunities, including through the leasing of excess space and from an existing lease agreement for a telecommunications dish on the roof.

This additional income will be directed into increasing staff and service levels.

**ILSC investment: \$3.5m**

Drone image of weir, Gunditjmara Country, Vic  
Image credit: Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners  
Aboriginal Corporation / Tyson Lovett-Murray





# Returning and managing Country 2022-23

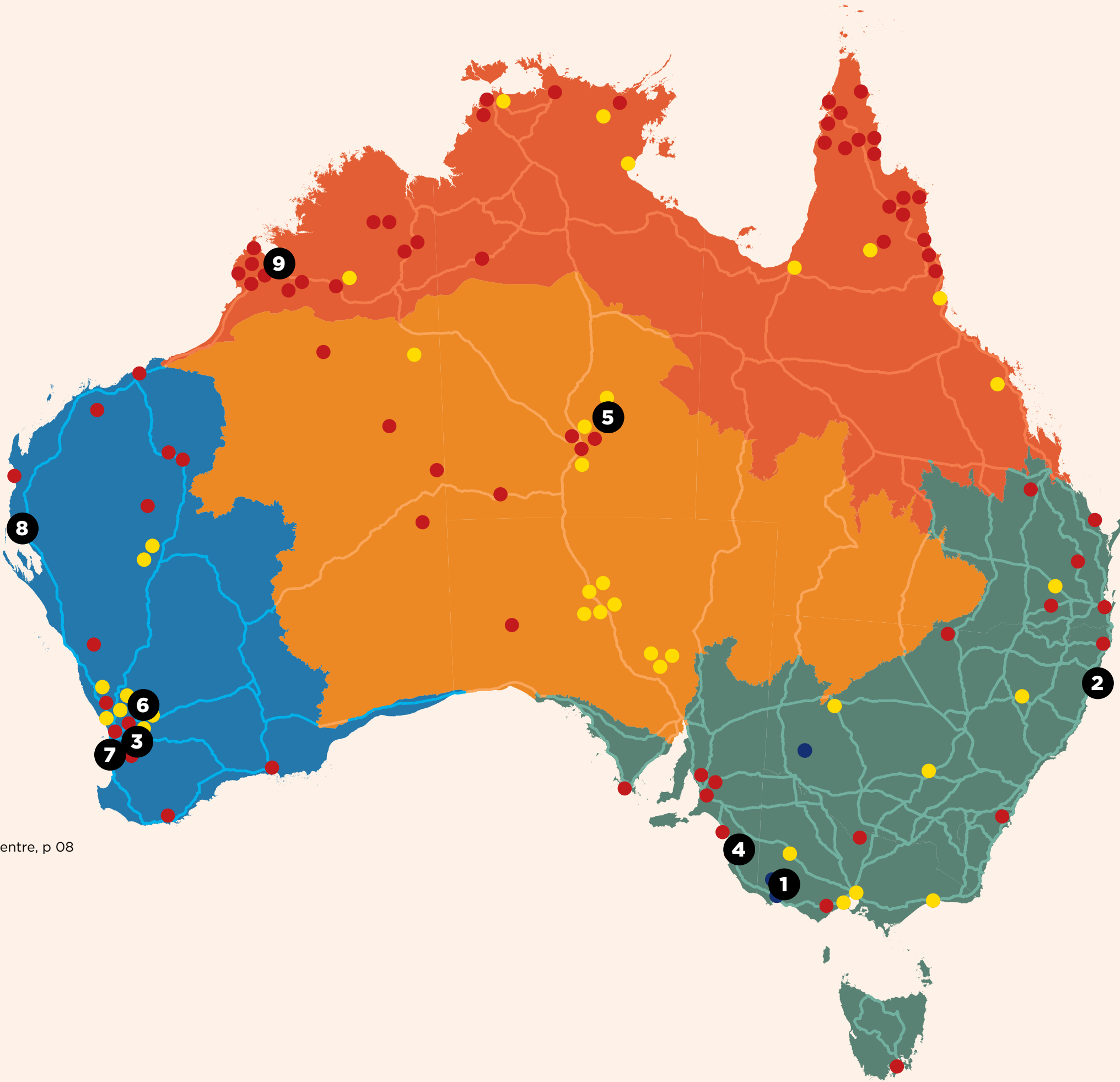
- Active management projects
- New active management projects
- Granted properties

## ILSC regions

- Northern
- Australian Desert
- South-East
- South-West

## Project profile and case study locations 2022-23

- 1 Budj Bim Cultural Landscapes, p 09
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**MANAGEMENT  
PROJECTS**

**(2022-23)**

(including 36  
new projects)

## Managing Country

We also assist Indigenous people to manage their assets and realise their aspirations by investing in a huge variety of management projects from kindergartens, schools and childcare to aged care; social enterprises; community gardens; art and cultural centres; farming equipment; solar panels; and numerous business cases and feasibility studies. Often involving smaller investments, these projects can lead to big things.

Funds for a tractor, for example, can deliver greater productivity from an agricultural enterprise, in turn leading to revenue which can be driven back into a business.

Likewise, a simple investment in solar panels can both deliver on sustainability goals and drive down electricity costs freeing up precious funds for re-investment and business growth.

The following snapshots are all excellent examples of how a simple ILSC investment can lead to the generation of significant social, cultural, economic and environmental capital that will continue to deliver for future generations.

**From little things...  
big things grow**



## PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Preserving and protecting culture

Driving policy and opportunity

## Supermarket brings fresh food and jobs to remote Gulf Country town, Qld

*All people in Normanton and visitors have benefited by purchasing fresh food and vegetables and other supplies from our new store...and from the employment of 26 local Indigenous people.\**

A brand new Indigenous-owned supermarket in Queensland's Gulf Country is already making an impact on its local community who now have regular access to fresh groceries and fuel – and at affordable prices.

Funded in September 2022 and officially opened 12 months later, the 1,000 square metre Foodworks is located on Indigenous-held land in Normanton, a small town on the lower Gulf of Carpentaria where over half the population are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

With Normanton's residents previously having to travel long distances for fresh, affordable groceries, the long-awaited store is an outcome of a partnership between the Gulf Regional Economic Aboriginal Holdings Limited and Bynoe Community Advancement Cooperative Society Ltd.

The largest of its kind in the region, the store is already proving a significant provider of Indigenous employment, and employees will be able to further upskill through training. Plans are also underway for a new in-store bakery.

**ILSC investment:** \$2m

**Partners:** National Indigenous Australians Agency; The Trustee for Gulf Regional Economic Aboriginal Trust; Bynoe Community Advancement Co-operative Society Ltd



Normanton Foodworks staff members Clarence and Cassandra at the supermarket's official opening

## PATHWAYS

Owning and managing Country sustainably

## Carbon offers potential new income opportunities for outback properties, SA

Three Indigenous-held properties in South Australia's rangelands – together encompassing 1.1 million hectares – now have new information to help them decide whether carbon projects are a viable new income stream to pursue.

AMY Nominees – a subsidiary of the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation which explores business opportunities for its member groups – secured funding to employ a consultant to conduct a carbon feasibility study and land use assessment on Mt Willoughby, Mt Clarence, and Mabel Creek Stations.

It was estimated that the three grazing properties have the potential to collectively generate 879,000 carbon credits valued at \$14 million, using a carbon farming method for managing and restoring rangelands vegetation that complements Caring for Country activities while being compatible with livestock grazing.

The ILSC have been keen to ensure SA's Indigenous landholders are informed about opportunities to develop and capitalise on carbon projects on their Country prior to being approached by carbon developers. This project followed a high-level assessment of carbon opportunities on Indigenous held land in SA funded by the ILSC in 2020-21 in anticipation of the SA Government opening up pastoral lands to carbon farming, which has now occurred.

**ILSC investment** \$54,439

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Driving policy and opportunity

## Ranger groups explore alternative revenue opportunities, NT

*East Arnhem ranger groups now have the information and analysis of opportunities of interest to them, presented in a feasibility report format. Ranger groups can use this information to determine if these opportunities are of interest to them and are of benefit to pursue.\**

Five Yolŋu ranger groups operating across East Arnhem Land, NT – an area of nearly 100,000 square kilometres – have fresh information to help them decide whether to pursue new revenue-generating opportunities on Country.

Prepared by Social Ventures Australia (SVA), the feasibility study explored the commercial potential of five, ranger-identified, alternative revenue sectors: carbon markets, biodiversity markets, tourism, fee-for-service compliance and research activities, and partnerships with tertiary institutions.

With the ranger groups currently almost entirely dependent on government funding, if pursued, the alternative commercial revenue streams have the potential to generate additional ranger employment and untied funding, ultimately building Yolŋu financial autonomy and self-determination.

The SVA study was developed using funding provided to Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL), an independent not-for-profit company which has been working with the Yolŋu rangers. DEAL have engaged with the National Indigenous Australians Agency, Northern Land Council, and Northern Territory Government to share in the findings and to explore investment and economic development opportunities in East Arnhem. Funding was also provided for the development of high-level implementation plans for the opportunities the ranger groups decide to pursue.

**ILSC investment:** \$93,611

**Partners:** Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet (NT); DEAL; Karrkad Kanjdji Trust



Dhimurru Rangers, Nhulunbuy, East Arnhem, Yolŋu Country, NT  
Image credit: Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

Preserving and protecting culture

## Bundundea explore economic potential of pastoral properties, WA

Bundundea Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) will soon have a fresh understanding of its pastoral properties' economic potential after securing funding for a Property Management Plan for Belele and Buttah Stations. Located in the Murchison region of WA, an area dominated by large sheep and cattle stations, the plan will provide an assessment of the adjoining properties' natural resources, infrastructure, and economic potential for grazing, as well as new opportunities such as carbon farming.

With the two properties sub-leased since 2009, the plans will provide essential data, a clear vision, and realistic pathways for BAC to achieve its goal of blending cattle and carbon enterprises. The PMP will also inform the BAC/Yullela Aboriginal Corporation ranger program, identifying opportunities to complement pastoral business activities with land management training and environmental and cultural maintenance projects.

**ILSC investment:** \$50,000

**Partner:** Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (WA)

## St George building to transform into new Indigenous wellbeing centre, Qld

The Indigenous community of St George in south-west Queensland will soon have access to a new wellbeing centre to access health services.

Since 1994, Goondir Health Services have been delivering culturally appropriate, holistic health care to over 4,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients across four regional clinics – in St George, Chinchilla, Dalby and Oakey – covering an area of approximately 72,000 square kilometres. Having purchased a disused building in St George in 2018, Goondir now have the necessary investment to develop it into the St George Community Wellbeing Centre.

The new centre will offer a range of new and existing holistic health care programs and activities, which complement the existing clinic services; enable Indigenous training and employment; provide new revenue raising opportunities for Goondir; and contribute to improving the health, social and emotional wellbeing of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

**ILSC investment** \$2m

**Partners:** Goondir Health Services; Department of Health (Qld); Feed Appeal; Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (Cth)



PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

## Aboriginal community service plans for new permanent facility in Perth, WA

*This project will enable the purchase of a central office for the organisation. This office will allow the expansion of services and permit more Aboriginal community members to access services.\**

A new business plan is expected to pave the way for the acquisition of a new headquarters for a Perth-based service providing support to local Aboriginal people.

Located in the city's northern suburbs, the Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation (EAC) have been providing family and community services for over 50 years including in-home support to Aboriginal families, family domestic violence support and counselling, youth crime prevention, and an employment program for ex-prisoners. However, recent growth and expanding services have seen the organisation outgrow its current leased office space and staff spread across multiple sites.

The Business Plan will incorporate the planning for the growth of services outlined in EAC's Strategic Plan and provide the due diligence for the group to acquire a new head office which centralises all staff and services, improving efficiencies and enhancing the group's profile for community, partners, and other stakeholders.

**ILSC investment:** \$40,000

## New art centre for Coober Pedy's Umoona Community, SA

The Umoona Community Arts Centre Aboriginal Corporation has been funded to realise its long-held vision for a permanent and sustainable art centre in the Umoona Community of Coober Pedy, SA. Currently Umoona's 60 artists must paint from their own homes, Umoona Community offices when vacant, the Umoona basketball court, or the APY Art Centre Collective Aboriginal Corporation studio, 750 kilometres away in Adelaide.

The new art centre will provide a vibrant, safe and inclusive hub for the Umoona artists and other community members to paint, teach, learn and share their stories and culture, while pursuing culturally and commercially successful careers as artists and art workers. It is expected to drive independent income and employment opportunities for Indigenous people of all ages in the remote community.

**ILSC investment:** \$433,445

**Partners:** APY Art Centre Collective Aboriginal Corporation; Department of Premier and Cabinet (SA)

## New building to provide kindy lifeline for Lake Tyers families, Vic

*We held a 'diversity dash' colour run...on the grounds of our new kindergarten...an opportunity for community to have a tour of the new building. The staff, children and families are all very excited to see our new kindergarten finally open very soon.\**

A new building will provide the community of Lake Tyers, Victoria with a much-needed, safe, and permanent facility for their kindergarten program, the only accessible kindergarten for many families living in the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust (LTAT).

After outgrowing the premises it shared with the early learning service, the Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services (LHCS) has been operating its kindergarten program for 3- and 4-year-olds from the organisation's board room.

With no adequate outdoor play space, children must be transported daily by bus for outdoor play time, putting additional pressure on staff in providing transport and meeting the daily occupational health and safety assessments required for 'excursions'. A new purpose-built facility located behind LHCS's existing health service on land securely leased from LTAT will provide a permanent home for the program; provide staff with additional time to focus on education; and enable local families to continue to send their children to a culturally-appropriate, nearby kindergarten.

**ILSC investment** \$274,312

**Partner:** Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services



The new Lake Tyers kindergarten

PATHWAYS

Growing the value of Country

Owning and managing Country sustainably

## New farming infrastructure next step towards developing cattle grazing enterprise, NSW

*The new cattle yards, laneways and fencing have been critical in achieving WHS standards for cattle management on the property. Prior to the work being undertaken, the vet was unable to treat a sick animal due to the lack of a secure holding pen, and [there was a] risk when loading cattle due to the poor condition of the old yards.\**

Infrastructure upgrades on Trelawney Station, a 751-hectare property near Tamworth, NSW, are a key part of developing the property into a sustainable, high-quality, farming enterprise.

Owned by Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council (TLALC), Trelawney Station has a diverse agricultural capacity that, on paper, should support up to 200 breeding cattle. However, poor infrastructure and the inability to truck and handle cattle safely, combined with overgrazing and noxious weed issues, had reduced the carrying capacity to zero.

With ILSC support for supplies and installation, TLALC now have upgraded cattle yards and equipment; a laneway system that connects all paddocks to the yards; and smaller paddocks to improve erosion and weed control, and facilitate rotational grazing for pasture regeneration.

Together these are expected to enable a cattle enterprise to be successfully operated on the property, facilitate low stress handling practices, and meet Workplace Health and Safety requirements.

**ILSC investment** \$173,442

**Partners:** Judd's Park; Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council



New cattle yards

## New infrastructure for cattle grazing property improves sustainability, Qld

*The ability of the business to provide further pastures for the cattle as well as protect the riparian areas has created greater efficiency in cattle management, and stocking rates.\**

The significant cultural and environmental values of a 65,690-hectare pastoral property in central Queensland are now better protected – and income opportunities now expanded – thanks to a series of property management activities to improve grazing control and land condition.

Located in cattle grazing country north-west of Mackay, since 2013 'Urannah' has been managed by the Urannah Properties Association (UPA) on behalf of the Birra Gubba Aboriginal Corporation. The property holds important sacred and ceremonial sites and is part of the Broken River sub-catchment which feeds into the Great Barrier Reef.

Traditionally used as an extensive cattle breeding property, the UPA's focus for the property has been on sustainable land management and to provide employment and training opportunities and a cultural and economic base for the Wiri and Birri people.

The group currently generate an income by agisting the property to a third party and has a long-term goal to run its own cattle on the property.

The ILSC funding towards the new fencing, piping, troughs and tanks contribute to larger projects to spread grazing pressure on the property while restricting cattle access to the river, reducing erosion and sediment loss and, ultimately, improving the land quality and carrying capacity of the land.

**ILSC investment:** \$116,756

**Partner:** North Queensland Dry Tropics Ltd

\*from ILSC Progress Report



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## Indigenous health service to become more accessible in western NSW

Wilcannia residents will soon have improved access to Aboriginal health and community services with the construction of a health centre in the remote, western NSW town.

Centrally positioned and adjacent to the Wilcannia Hospital, the new Wilcannia Health and Wellbeing Centre will provide the Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation (Maari Ma) the flexibility, future capacity, and culturally appropriate spaces it needs to service its clients.

Situated in Broken Hill but servicing Aboriginal people and their families across nearly 500,000 square kilometres, Maari Ma has previously rented two buildings in Wilcannia for delivering its services in this area.

The new, purpose-designed and built Centre will be community-controlled, while remaining integrated with the Wilcannia Health and Community service system. It will provide comprehensive primary care services, including clinical services such as GP, allied health, and chronic disease management; and non-clinical care such as health promotion, outreach, cultural and community programs, and child and family services. The new Centre is expected to increase employment and training opportunities and become a community hub.

**ILSC investment** \$1.5m

**Partners:** Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation; Department of Health (Cth); Department of Regional NSW; NSW Ministry of Health



Wilcannia Health & Wellbeing Centre

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## Kimberley group plan for new headquarters and cultural and wellbeing centre, WA

The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC) is taking the first step in a staged approach to developing a new administration, cultural and wellbeing centre that will support its expanding operations.

One of the oldest peak regional Aboriginal bodies for the Kimberley region of WA, KALACC has been nationally recognised for its work in strengthening and maintaining culture and become a focal point for cultural research and program delivery in the Kimberley. Despite this, the group have been housed in temporary or rental premises since the centre's founding in 1984.

Funding will support business planning that will develop a staged approach to realising the organisation's long-held vision for a Cultural and Wellbeing Centre. The first stage is likely to be the construction of a new fit-for-purpose administration and office building on the existing Fitzroy Crossing site, with the Cultural and Wellbeing Centre development forming subsequent stages.

**ILSC investment:** \$118,000

## New farm vehicle for state's first Aboriginal-owned cattle backgrounding business, WA

*With the new vehicle, staff have been able to proudly represent the corporation and promote its services professionally both on and off the property. The vehicle has also allowed staff to carry passengers comfortably and safely.\**

The Beemurra Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) – owners of the first Aboriginal-owned cattle backgrounding business in Western Australia – has helped secure its long-term sustainability with the purchase of a new farm vehicle.

Yallalie Downs is a 1,242-hectare property located in WA's wheatbelt where a reliable vehicle is required for fire management, servicing property infrastructure, inspecting and moving livestock, maintaining perennial pasture, and transporting farm merchandise.

With the old, second-hand vehicle finally breaking down after 10 years, BAC had resorted to borrowing the Chair's personal vehicle, restricting the group's flexibility in planning and managing farm operations.

Since the group's 2016 establishment, BAC have been maturing the business and was able to contribute funding to support the vehicle replacement. The new vehicle will save on costly repairs and support the group's efforts to increase the farm's sustainability and profitability and to employ an Indigenous Farm Manager.

**ILSC investment:** \$50,000

**Partner:** Beemurra Aboriginal Corporation

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## New Alice Springs hub for Aboriginal health service, NT

The largest Aboriginal community-controlled health service in the Northern Territory has been funded to develop a new Alice Springs-based health hub that will service 2,000 Indigenous clients per year.

Through the purpose-built Mparntwe Health Hub, the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation (Congress) will bring together its existing public health, social and preventative health programs, staff training facilities, and corporate services – currently split across three ageing and costly sites.

With dedicated divisions and physical space for services including allied heath, mental health, child, youth and family services, NDIS, public health, and health promotion, the new Hub will house 180 of Congress's clinical and administrative staff and service 2,000 clients each year.

One of the largest employers of Aboriginal people in the region, Congress's vision is for a contemporary building that strongly identifies with the local Aboriginal community; instils a sense of pride and achievement for staff, clients and community; and delivers services that contribute to improved Indigenous health and self-determination.

**ILSC investment** \$3.25m

**Partners:** Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation; Department of Health and Aged Care (Cth)

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## Traditional Owners to take on new native rainforest fruits enterprise, Qld

The Girringun Aboriginal Corporation (GAC) – representing nine Traditional Owner Groups from Qld's Wet Tropics region – is being supported to establish seven orchards of native rainforest fruits across traditional lands.

The project – which will also involve the redevelopment of the Girringun Native Plant Nursery – will see GAC partner with Rainforest Bounty, an established producer and seller of native rainforest fruits and native trees, through the creation of a joint venture called Wabu Jananyu (meaning 'rainforest plant cultural use').

Established in 1996, eight of nine Traditional Owner Groups that comprise GAC have now achieved Native Title determinations. With GAC's role increasingly leading and coordinating projects across the landholdings, the Wabu Jananyu project is expected to demonstrate how multiple Traditional Owner Groups can collaborate and work with a commercial partner to create a viable enterprise that provides jobs, training, and knowledge and culture-sharing opportunities.

**ILSC investment** \$940,000

**Partners:** National Indigenous Australians Agency; Rainforest Bounty

## Indigenous training provider looks to farming future, NSW

An experienced social service and training provider in the Condobolin, NSW district, Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation Limited (WCC) is turning its sights to farming after securing a mixed farming operation from a mining company.

Evolution Mining's 2022 return of the 647-hectare Galari Farm to WCC under an 18-year lease agreement has provided the corporation with the opportunity to build its farming skills and extend its local Indigenous youth training and employment services to the agricultural sector.

Galari Agricultural Company (GAC) – an enterprise formed by WCC and Evolution Mining to run the sheep and wool focussed enterprise – have already commenced redeveloping the farm, purchasing livestock, plant and equipment, and are providing administration and managerial support to the farming operation.

The ILSC have committed funding for WCC to prepare a Property Management Plan to confirm the farm's productivity and value and to assist the group to make informed decisions about the property towards its goals, including eventually leasing additional land from the mining company.

**ILSC investment** \$23,000

**Partner:** Many Rivers Microfinance

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\*from ILSC Progress Report



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## New dialysis clinic for remote Balgo to keep Elders on Country, WA

Members of Balgo’s Aboriginal community with kidney disease will soon be able to undergo life-saving treatment on Country rather than travelling hundreds of kilometres for treatment. Situated in WA’s East Kimberley and home to some 1,000 people from several language groups, the Balgo region is one of the most remote in Australia. People requiring dialysis often must relocate long distances away from family and Country in Broome, Perth or Kununurra, depriving the community of many people important to cultural wellbeing.

Through the Wirrimanu Aboriginal Corporation (WAC), the construction of a long-awaited, four-chair, renal clinic in Balgo will mean Elders requiring dialysis can remain on Country ensuring culture stays strong. With the new clinic able to cater for 30 people annually, it is estimated that between 15-25 of the 40 people currently living away from Country may be able to return. The clinic will also provide local employment opportunities.

WAC is the lead community organisation for Balgo, providing municipal and other services to the wider region. It has partnered with Purple House, an Aboriginal-owned organisation that currently operate 18 clinics in remote communities.

**ILSC investment:** \$683,000

**Partners:** Wirrimanu Aboriginal Corporation; Granite Mines Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation; Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (Purple House)

## New community hub for 40-year-old Indigenous health service, Vic

The Indigenous population of Victoria’s Wimmera region will soon have access to a new community services hub in Horsham thanks to funding secured by the Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative Limited (GGAC).

GGAC is an Aboriginal community-controlled health organisation that, for 40 years, has been delivering high-quality health, welfare, and family services to over 800 Indigenous people in the local area. GGAC currently employs 57 staff – 22 Indigenous – to deliver its existing health and community services. An increase in clients and clinical services has seen GGAC outgrow its existing Horsham facility, and led to its 2019 purchase of a large, nearby warehouse which will now be renovated and fit out to create the ‘Dalki Ghuli’ community services hub.

‘Dalki Ghuli’ will enable GGAC to expand its services; grow a range of culturally appropriate programs; and provide for a variety of Indigenous training and employment opportunities. Creating a central meeting place where community feel safe and empowered is ultimately expected to improve local Indigenous health and wellbeing, enhance community engagement and cohesion, and strengthen families.

**ILSC investment:** \$1m

**Partners:** Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative; Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (Vic)

## New machinery to help return grazing to outback pastoral properties, SA

*Kokatha Pastoral has improved its efficiency by minimising machinery hire costs which had previously been a significant direct cost.\**

Degraded land is being rehabilitated and prepared for return to pastoral production in South Australia’s far north thanks to investment in new machinery.

Kokatha Pastoral Pty Ltd (KP) – a subsidiary of Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC – own and operate Purple Downs, Roxby Downs, and Andamooka Stations. It was established in 2015 to build the capacity of Kokatha people to preserve and sustain country, support culture, environment, people and land management, and be a sustainable standalone business.

The new machinery – a grader and skid steer with trailer – is helping KP to reduce machine hire costs when undertaking soil conservation, erosion rehabilitation, and road and track maintenance across the three properties, which collectively cover more than 500,000 hectares in northern South Australia.

KP’s vision is to re-establish sustainable grazing operations on the former sheep/cattle grazing properties, build an economic base for Traditional Owners, and provide training and employment opportunities in the region’s dominant pastoral and mining industries.

**ILSC investment:** \$386,000

**Partner:** Kokatha Aboriginal Corporation

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## Renowned Utopia artists to build their first Indigenous-owned arts centre, NT

The homeland area of Utopia in the Northern Territory – home to one of Australia’s most revered and oldest Indigenous art movements – will soon have its first wholly Indigenous-owned and directed arts and cultural centre.

Situated 250 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs, Utopia Art Centre will be located in Arlparra on land leased by the Urapuntja Aboriginal Corporation (UAC).

UAC represents the interests of approximately 600 Aboriginal people living on the 16 Utopia homelands, an area of approximately 3,250 square kilometres, with most services located in Arlparra. The new centre will support Utopia artists and broader cultural engagement and opportunities for residents from across these homelands.

Despite being part of a commercially successful art movement that dates back to the early 1980s, Utopia artists have never had a community art centre.

The new Centre is expected to dramatically improve access to ethical trade and establish clear provenance and transparent processes for artwork promotion and sales. Artists and the broader community will also benefit from training, employment, and new income pathways leading to general improvement in health and wellbeing and reinforced cultural identity, pride and expression.

**ILSC investment:** \$500,000

**Partners:** Aboriginal Benefit Account, Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support; Desart

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## Koorie culture to take centre stage in the heart of Melbourne, Vic

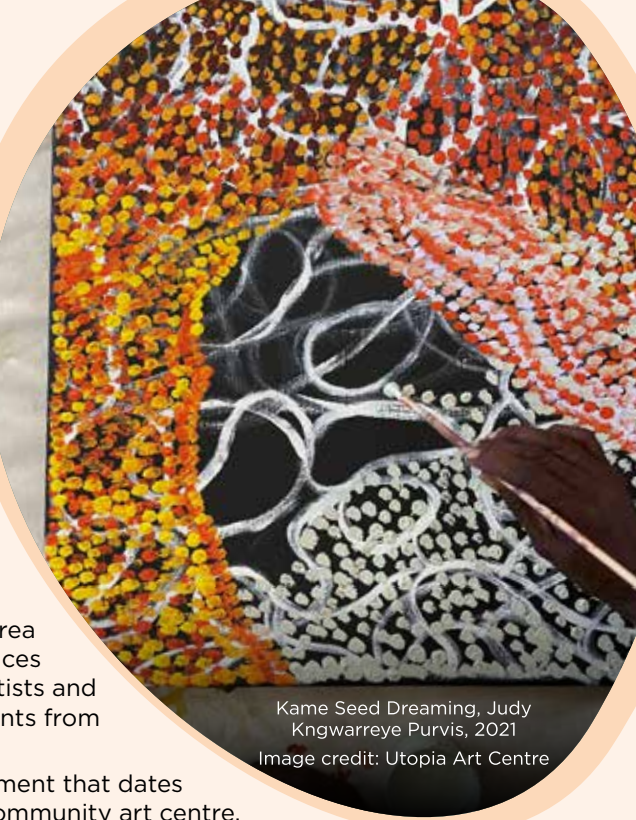
Melbourne’s tourist icon, Federation Square – for thousands of years a sacred meeting place – is set to significantly enhance its place as a destination for Victorian Aboriginal (Koorie) culture and pride.

The Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) has expanded its existing Federation Square footprint on Level 1 and 3 of the Birrarung (formerly Yarra) Building to take up Level 2, thereby creating the first, stand-alone Aboriginal cultural centre of its kind in the heart of Melbourne’s cultural precinct. KHT promotes the continuing journey of Victorian Koorie communities, delivering a range of programs, services and exhibitions which directly benefit Koorie communities, including members of the Victorian Stolen Generation, Indigenous artists, Elders, and youth.

With additional gallery space, training and meeting rooms, storage space, and a larger retail space, KHT will be able to increase its revenue and employment opportunities; increase its exhibitions, events and support of Aboriginal artists; improve storage and access to collections for Elders, Koorie community members and visitors; and increase training and education activities. The interior design was a collaboration between KHT, First Nations architect Jefa Greenaway of Greenaway Architects, and Lyons and Architecture Associates.

**ILSC investment:** \$1m

**Partners:** Koorie Heritage Trust; Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (Vic); Fed Square Pty Ltd; Melbourne Arts Precinct



Kame Seed Dreaming, Judy Kngwarreye Purvis, 2021  
Image credit: Utopia Art Centre



Birrarung Building interior  
Image credit: James Henry

\*from ILSC Progress Report



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## Indigenous tech company looks to expand its Space Precinct, NT

An Indigenous-controlled, not-for-profit company providing technology solutions for Indigenous communities is looking to take advantage of a growing international space industry and Australia's increasing reliance on satellite technology.

The Centre for Appropriate Technology (CfAT) is a leading science and technology business that has been operating from Alice Springs since 1980, providing fit-for-purpose technology solutions to infrastructure challenges across remote and regional Australia.

Its work includes securing reliable power and water supply; sanitation; digital connectivity; built infrastructure such as housing; training and workforce development; and supporting opportunities for economic development and employment.

CfAT is now looking to expand its existing Space Precinct – where it already hosts several satellite ground stations – onto neighbouring land and was supported to develop a business plan considering the feasibility of expansion options.

**ILSC investment:** \$120,594



The space precinct, Alice Springs, Arrente Country, NT  
Image credit: Centre for Appropriate Technology

## Building a national hub for First Nations' access to clean energy opportunities

The First Nations Clean Energy Network (FNCEN) is cementing its position as a national hub for ensuring Indigenous people share in the benefits of Australia's renewable energy transition.

Australia is experiencing the world's fastest roll-out of renewable energy per capita, and the majority of large-scale renewable projects need access to Indigenous-held land, waters and resources.

FNCEN's goal is to ensure Australia's renewable energy transition happens in partnership with First Nations people, providing communities with cheap, reliable power, secure jobs, steady income, industry partnerships, opportunities to participate in and benefit from renewable energy projects, and ultimately the power to choose what happens on their Country.

FNCEN is the only organisation in Australia providing this national coordination.

Funding has been provided to support FNCEN to complete foundational strategic and business planning and for its first year of strategy implementation which is expected to include events, a membership drive, and other processes supporting business incorporation and establishment.

**ILSC investment** \$1.1m

**Partners:** Original Power, World Wide Fund of Nature Australia, Sunrise Project

## What changed as a result?

Large or small, we want all ILSC investments to generate long-term positive outcomes for Indigenous people. We regularly check in with our proponents to ask them how they are tracking and the changes they are seeing emerge from their funded activities.

In the following case studies, we chat to two proponents about how the projects we funded in previous years are bringing change to their communities.



The Granites Aboriginal Statue, Badamia Country, WA

Image credit: Badamia Land Aboriginal Corporation





Boola Boornap Tree Farm seedlings ready for sale, Noongar Country, WA  
Image credit: Jesse Collins

### Noongar Land Enterprise Group – Australia’s first Aboriginal grower group

The Noongar Land Enterprise (NLE) Group is a social enterprise, not-for-profit alliance of Noongar\* landholders based on Noongar Boodja Country, WA’s south-west region.

Australia’s first Aboriginal grower group, since 2014, the group has been leveraging its skills and knowledge in running land-based enterprises to create opportunities for local Noongar people that promote economic independence and strengthen Noongar connection to Country and culture.

NLE Group members boast an array of innovative Aboriginal-led enterprises – including a native tree farm, honey, cattle, bushfoods, sandalwood, carbon farming and cultural tourism – and employ over 30 Aboriginal people.

#### NLE’s new Strategic Plan identifies five impact areas that it will focus on to 2029:

**First Nations agriculture** – bush produce which can also be processed to improve positioning in the value chain

**Regenerative agriculture** – livestock, aquaculture, crops, viticulture and other farm produce produced in a way that is healthy for Country

**Land restoration and conservation** – restoring and conserving sea/water/ landscapes and bringing back biodiversity

**Agri-cultural tourism** – linking agriculture with Aboriginal culture and tourism

**Building natural assets** – carbon farming, nature repair market, natural capital accounting, renewable energy and ESG

Initially supported by the WA Government and ILSC, the NLE were incorporated in 2017.

\*An Aboriginal person from south-west WA



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## Aboriginal-owned tree farm puts down roots in carbon industry, WA

*Purchasing the native tree farm (Boola Boornap) was NLE’s first foray into having a major business that was truly culturally appropriate and commercially sustainable and in doing so allowed us to heal boodja and heal people.*

**Madeline Anderson, Chairperson, Noongar Land Enterprise Group**

**In November 2020, the Noongar Land Enterprise (NLE) Group purchased a two-hectare tree farm located about 100 kilometres north-east of Perth, outside the town of Northam in the Avon Valley. Three years later, we talk to its Chief Executive Officer, Alan Beattie, about how the farm is faring in becoming a commercially sustainable business and the broader benefits to the Noongar and Aboriginal community in WA.**

In 2020, NLE was exploring avenues for extending its land restoration efforts and taking advantage of carbon farming – an industry where First Nations’ people’s interests are under-represented.

Finding a decommissioned tree farm on the market in Noongar Boodja Country proved fortuitous.

The previous owners had been trying to sell the property for several years and were in the process of selling off equipment.

“NLE have two mottos the tree farm fitted with – ‘Heal Country, Heal People’ and ‘culturally appropriate, commercially sustainable,” explained Alan.

“We could get commercially involved in land restoration but also heal Country by providing our members and the broader community with seedlings to restore their land.”

Cautious that this was a niche new area for the group, NLE engaged consultants to conduct a commercial analysis and due diligence.

The resulting recommendation to proceed with the property purchase was primarily based on its potential for tapping into carbon farming opportunities.

But the NLE was also mindful it would need expertise to run a tree farm.

“Our chairperson at the time, Oral McGuire, had done extensive land restoration on his property – over 600,000 seedlings – but he wasn’t a botanist.

“We were fortunate to find a local Northam person with extensive experience working with Greening Australia, and Dave Collins is still our Operations Manager today.”

So, with the help of funding sourced from philanthropic organisations based in Europe (COMON and Commonland), the Group became the new owners – rebranding the farm ‘Boola Boornap or ‘place of many trees’ in Noongar language – and very quickly set about bringing the farm back into operation.

With the purchase of the business taking place in the middle of growing season, and the farm in desperate need of repairs, there was a lot to do.

Alan reflects on that first planting season:

“Normally seeds go into trays between September and December, but seeding was delayed while we upgraded basic infrastructure.

“That first season, we planted about 500,000 seedlings using manual seeding and an unreliable semi-pneumatic seeder.”

When NLE approached the ILSC, it had been operating the tree farm for 10 months.

The philanthropic organisations had provided some working capital to support the growing business; Boola Boornap’s customer base was building, with projected orders of up to two million seedlings by 2024-25, generating income of around \$2 million; and NLE had also applied for a WA Regional Economic

Development (RED) Grant to upgrade the property’s fixed infrastructure and expand the tree farm.

In December 2021, the ILSC funded a new delivery truck, fitted out so it could carry seedlings; a drum pump seeder; a tractor for maintaining the property roads and transporting composted soil which also included a forklift for moving palettes; and a 4WD ute for seed collection, customer liaison, small deliveries and general transport.

The new drum seeder proved a game-changer – once it finally arrived from Italy:

“COVID meant it took eight months to get here but it made a huge difference – we now had the capacity to do in half a day what would previously take a week.”

A few months later, a successful RED Grant saw NLE commence replacing the entire watering and reticulation system – much of it leaking or in danger of failing – and growing the capacity of the farm to around 1.5-2 million seedlings.

And this increased capacity is driving the NLE to further grow its customer base.

The tree farm produces plants that are native to Noongar Boodja Country – from shrubs and ground covers, through to large trees like salmon gums and other eucalypts.

Its customer base started with a sandalwood producer inherited from the previous owner, and grew to include landcare clients like Greening Australia and local farmers doing revegetation.





Nursery equipment maintenance  
Image credit: NLE Group



Ready to plant the seedlings  
on a NLE member property  
Image credit: NLE Group

But now NLE is seeing the carbon farming opportunities it was seeking start to emerge.

“In year one, we didn’t have one carbon-related customer; by year two it was roughly 20 per cent and now it’s about 70 per cent.

“That’s a reflection of the large carbon industry developing on Noongar Boodja Country.

“Next we want Noongar people involved in the entire supply chain: collecting the seed, growing and planting the seedlings, and overseeing the maintenance of those carbon plantings.”

Meanwhile, Boola Boornap’s other major customer – the local sandalwood industry – is throwing up both opportunities and challenges with its variable seedling requirements.

“Sandalwood organisations are few but their projects are large scale – from 500,000 to 1,000,000 seedlings.

“Some years they place a huge order; other years, nothing.

“A few large clients ordering large quantities is great because it fills your book up, but if some of those clients pull out at the last minute – which we’ve experienced – it has a massive cash flow impact.

“So it’s about striking a balance of both customers, and those larger and smaller orders.”

And there is plenty of opportunity on Noongar Boodja Country emerging from the new enterprise – including for local Aboriginal people.

NLE is committed to creating local employment opportunities through its various enterprises – and Boola Boornap is no different with the business currently employing 20 people, with about 65 per cent of them Aboriginal.

“Over our three seasons, we’ve employed roughly 50/50 Aboriginal people and sometimes greater than 70 per cent.

“Young people might work with us for three months, a year, or a season, build their skills, expertise and confidence, and then gain further employment – and we’re happy to provide that pathway.”

And it seems that word is spreading amongst the local community with Aboriginal females increasingly taking up roles on the farm.

“Initially the local Aboriginal people we employed were largely male but now we’ve a 50/50 male/female split and that’s mostly due to word of mouth.

“If our female Aboriginal workers have a good experience, and they’re feeling both culturally and workplace safe, they’re doing our promotion for us.

“If we weren’t viewed as an organisation that’s good to work with people wouldn’t work with us – we’re not a mining company offering 30-50 per cent more wages than other local employers.”

Another early plan the NLE had for Boola Boornap – to take on work release prisoners from a nearby low-security prison – is also bearing fruit.

“Several inmates have worked with us during their last six-months of incarceration, pre-release work program and we’re planning to hire our first Aboriginal employee from this process; he’s exceptional.

“So again, we are providing a pathway for people who may not have a pathway into employment.”

Alan puts this down to the NLE’s ‘Heal Country, Heal People’ motto.

“Working on Country heals Country, and it heals people.

“We’ve got several staff who have been able to get (or regain) a driver’s licence, or own a vehicle – another has bought a house – things much of society take for granted.

“This is a huge motivator for those of us in management, the NLE Board and NLE members; to know you’re healing Country while also making real changes to people’s lives.”

It’s clear that in three short years, NLE is well on the way to making Boola Boornap a profitable commercial enterprise generating positive outcomes for Noongar people.

And the future is looking bright.

The NLE have received a WA Government grant to trial five different native grasses – a key traditional Noongar food source – on several member properties over the next three years.

If it proves successful, it could both be the start of getting native grasses back onto Noongar Boodja, and a commercial crop and bushfood supply chain that connects Noongar landholders with culture and their traditional harvesting practises.

Meanwhile, additional WA Government funds to establish an Aboriginal ranger team, will see NLE take the next step in positioning Aboriginal people as a major player in the carbon farming supply chain.

“This funding for three rangers will allow us to take on other contracts and build our workforce so that, in three years, we might have a ranger team – or teams – working on projects across Noongar Boodja.

“And not just establishing and maintaining carbon plantings; we currently have three contracts with Main Roads WA out of Northam to keep areas clean and tidy, and other local shires have indicated they’ve work for us too.”

With NLE being the first Aboriginal grower group and the first Aboriginal owned and led tree farm, it’s no surprise that other communities are looking to learn from their experience with Boola Boornap.

“We don’t see ourselves as being the sole player in this area – we might see Indigenous owned and controlled tree farms popping up all over the state.

“Last week we had a conversation with a Kimberley Aboriginal organisation looking to establish a small nursery – about 2,000 seedlings a year – associated with a mine rehabilitation project.

“And we’ve spoken with Aboriginal organisations in New South Wales and Queensland.

“We’re happy to share the expertise we have gained to help others get started.”

Alan leaves his final word for the Board.

“Taking on something like this requires courage and leadership, and the NLE Board should be commended for its vision and willingness to go down this path.

“When NLE took on the native tree farm there was scepticism from a lot of people who said ‘wonder how long that will last’.

“But I think we’ve demonstrated our capacity to do these enterprises and we’re now seeing the benefits in growing our ranger program and the native grasses trials.

“And the other huge thank you is to the local staff and their willingness to pitch in and use it as an opportunity to grow as individuals.

“In particular, Dave Collins, but also Genevieve Russ, an Aboriginal woman who is one of our supervisors; she will end up managing the place.”

**ILSC investment** \$277,195

**Partners** Allens; Commonland Foundation; COMON Foundation; Stul Family Foundation; WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development



Seedling delivery  
Image credit: NLE Group



David Collins, Boola Boornap  
Operations Manager with the  
nursery’s first seedling delivery  
Image credit: NLE Group





Selina Bob picks bush medicine  
Image credit: Purple House

Purple House – 20 years improving Indigenous health and wellbeing

In 20 years, Aboriginal dialysis patients in Central Australia have gone from having the worst kidney disease outcomes in Australia to the best, including longer life expectancy, reduced hospitalisations, and improved quality of life. This is, in good part, thanks to the work of Purple House.

In the 1990s, Pintupi Luritja people from the Western Desert of Central Australia were being forced off Country to access dialysis, separating families, disrupting the handing down of knowledge, and reducing community and patient wellbeing.

In response, funding raised by the famous Papunya Tula Artists, led to the 2003 establishment of the Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation, which would later be known as Purple House.

Today, Purple House is a large organisation that continues to be governed by the Pintupi communities of the Western Desert and its mission remains the same: *to improve the lives of people with renal failure, reunite families and reduce the impact of kidney disease in our communities.*

Purple House now operate permanent dialysis clinics in 19 remote communities in NT, WA and SA (with six more on the way); two Purple Trucks for mobile dialysis; social support, primary health, aged care and NDIS services in Alice Springs; and aged care programs in Yuendumu and Mt Liebig, NT.

It employs 200 staff (25 per cent Indigenous) servicing over 300 patients, including more than 200 patients on dialysis out bush.

Its headquarters (including a dialysis unit), primary health and social enterprise hubs are in Alice Springs.



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Purple House Social Enterprise Hub a source of community pride and wellbeing, NT

*The ILSC’s investment has enabled a vibrant, culturally safe space for Indigenous employment, wellbeing and cultural learning for people from across Australia. What happens in that space is transformational.*

Sarah Brown AM, CEO, Purple House

It’s been nearly three years since the Indigenous-owned and operated Purple House opened its social enterprise hub at Lindsay Avenue, Alice Springs. We chatted to Kate Clark (Communications and Engagement Manager) and Sarah Holder (Social Enterprise Manager) to find out how renovating a 1,500 square metre property has helped improve the lives of Aboriginal people living with kidney disease.

Purple House’s decision to purchase and renovate a third Alice Springs property came during a period of significant growth.

In 2018, it was operating out of two residential properties but the kitchen providing meals for its Alice Springs dialysis patients could not cope with the demand.

Meanwhile, its burgeoning Bush Balm social enterprise was making do with cooking bush medicine from a laundry or shed.

They both needed a commercial kitchen solution.

With no let-up in demand for its services, Purple House had become a victim of its own successful model in building grassroots Aboriginal healthcare, and desperately needed room to expand.

Then came the 2018 Federal Budget announcement that Medicare would cover dialysis treatment in remote areas from November 2018.

Kate paints a picture for us at that time:

“The Medicare item number for remote dialysis meant we had a sustainable model that could be significantly expanded across more communities – and it came as we were already expanding our footprint, including into aged care and the NDIS.

“We were also expanding Bush Balm, and we saw many opportunities to leverage that in terms of employment and sharing culture.

“When people need to be in Alice Springs for treatment, we want them to have a home base and the support and wellbeing structures in place for them to stay as healthy as possible.

“But people’s interest in visiting Purple House itself and hearing our story just kept increasing. We needed to find a balance in not burdening our patients in their safe space.”

Purple House purchased 15 Lindsay Avenue, East Side in August 2018.

A former pilates studio and café, the block’s two separate buildings were ideal for setting up a third Purple House campus to deliver and expand the organisation’s social enterprise ventures, and its Wellbeing Program.

Armed with ILSC funding and plans from an Indigenous architect, work to refit the premises got underway in 2019 – and soon ground to a halt.

COVID-19 and NT border controls made access to trades difficult while supply chains slowed down or stopped completely.

But Kate reflects that the pandemic was actually a silver lining.

“It gave us time for soft launches that tested how the site worked, and through that process we identified some gaps.

“Commercial kitchen equipment is expensive and COVID-19 gave us time to secure a Coles Nurture Fund grant that paid for the majority of that equipment.”

In September 2021, the site formally opened with purpose-designed spaces for the Bush Balm and Purple Shed catering and events enterprises, and the Wellbeing Program for dialysis patients.

For the Bush Balm enterprise – an arm of Purple House established in 2008 to provide no cost bush medicine for dialysis patients – the new space has been transformative.

The retail and wholesale space is now better set up, annual production has doubled, and Purple House now offer on-site bush medicine workshops.

And that’s all having a knock-on effect, expanding the organisation’s reach and exposing its mission to new sectors.

“We have an incredibly diverse range of groups coming through,” said Kate.

“From local school kids, to community and rotary groups, to corporates, even a European Union trade delegation; they’re all keen to hear the broader Purple House story, and understand and celebrate traditional knowledge by learning about bush medicine.”

Residents of Purple House’s aged care facilities in the remote communities of Yuendumu and Mt Liebig are also enjoying a steady supply of Bush Balm.

“Now we have the resources and infrastructure, we are sending our patient tubs through our remote aged care program giving those older clients access to the bush medicine so important to them.”



Meanwhile, Purple House's new social enterprise, Purple Shed, is providing patient meals from the new commercial kitchen, while also offering a venue for local organisations to hold events.

Clients also have the option to add cultural workshops and catering (with bushfood elements) to their booking.

These events are driving extra foot traffic to the Bush Balm retail store, but also helping Purple House forge new relationships and opportunities.

"Many of Purple Shed's clients are organisations working in important frontline community services and we often find opportunities to 'cross-pollinate'," explained Kate.

"Often we end up with a better understanding of their services and how we can access them for our patients."

But perhaps it is the Wellbeing Program that has been the real triumph.

This aspect of Purple House provides renal patients with a vibrant, culturally-safe space where they might do arts and crafts, watch a movie, or enjoy a barbeque.

It has also been used for health promotion, NAIDOC Week celebrations, language groups, men's days, women's days, and simply meeting up with family visiting from the desert.

Social Enterprise Manager Sarah describes what makes this space special:

"Purple House is a genuinely grass roots, ground-up organisation, and our patients and directors feel at home here.

"There's a really strong sense of ownership because the space was developed in response to our patients' and directors' needs."

And the Bush Balm creation, Sarah continues, is a large source of community pride:

"Dialysis is such a terrible burden on a person, so invasive.

"This is a really healing and nurturing, light filled space with beautiful bush medicine smells.

"Our patients see the young women who are making, stocking and selling the bush medicine and they see so much care being taken with honouring this ancient, traditional knowledge and turning it into products.

"That's what Purple House does: creates a dignified space that treats that knowledge with the respect it deserves – and this is so closely linked to wellbeing."

While the social enterprise hub has not been immune to the nation's skills shortage, it has created jobs; about 80 per cent of the social enterprise hub's employees are Indigenous.

"The young women who make the bush medicine have leadership and professional development pathways, and our stable team speaks volumes about Purple House as an employer," said Sarah.

"There can be very significant barriers that some young women have to employment – things like housing insecurity and driver's licences – and so we have a wrap around approach to working with our staff to help address these things."

Kate continues:

"We also have an experienced Indigenous staff member leading the Purple Shed, along with Indigenous women that work with her in the kitchen, so that's quickly fulfilled our aspiration for that side of the business.

Other sectors of the community are seeing benefits too.

"We pay community members and Traditional Owners to pick bush medicine on Country, buying by the kilogram," said Kate.

"They tend to be from communities that we've built relationships with, so harvesting the plants contributes to their income and values their knowledge of Country.

"Our retail shop also stocks products from other Indigenous-controlled organisations who employ artists from remote communities.

"And we're selling our patient tubs of bush medicine at half the retail price to other community members for whom access to bush medicine is deeply important."

Purple House Social Enterprise Hub entrance  
Image credit: Purple House



Some of the renal patients are showcasing their creative talents thanks to the Wellbeing Program – offering them some additional income.

"Some of our female patients do ceramics here each week through Charles Darwin University and it's very like working with clay; so therapeutic," said Sarah.

"It's a source of great joy, pride and wellbeing and also an opportunity for them to share their stories and culture – you see it in the artworks that they create.

"Last year we started doing some small exhibitions in the Bush Balm shop and selling the patients' ceramics – they're ridiculously popular!"

So what of the future?

"We want to improve the efficiency of some of our processes so that we can grow the business' wholesale side and connect to more stockists," said Kate.

"And we want to look at cultural tourism as an avenue for engaging with central Australian communities and getting bush medicine to more remote communities.

"The Purple House model has always been to share our knowledge and expertise – we often support other communities who want to make bush medicine and start their own social enterprises and we expect that to increase."

As a growing organisation, Purple House also recognise they need to think about their sustainability.

"Some of our bush plants are very difficult to grow," explained Sarah.

"One is only found in certain parts of Central Australia and it's susceptible to bushfire and drought, so we're mindful of operating in ways that don't lay waste to the land and minimise our footprint."

But, as they politely bat away interest in their products from a big corporate, it seems this organisation remains firmly grounded by its roots.

"We've had some interesting offers since we moved in here from corporates," Kate said.

"Earlier this year we were invited to bid for a large contract that would supply toiletries to premium airline customers.

"But it would have meant producing at a rate that was essentially small factory style, and that is not who we are, or what we're interested in.

"We are about handmade, artisan, sustainable, ethical products, and we're in a good position to be able to say when something isn't aligned with our values or business model."

**ILSC investment** \$547,438 for architecture plans, development approvals, renovations and fit-out.

NAIDOC Week event, 2023  
Image credit: Purple House



Purple House Social Enterprise Hub opening, September 2021  
Image credit: Purple House



Serving coffee at the Purple Shed Social Enterprise Hub  
Image credit: Purple House





# 27 years supporting *positive* change

Since our establishment in 1995, \$1.29 billion has been invested through 1,334 projects. This includes 1,019 management projects and 315 acquisition projects. The acquisition projects have led to the purchase of 283 land interests covering 6.4 million hectares, and four water interests.

We have supported Indigenous people to bring products and services to market – this includes a supermarket (Normanton p 20); health and wellbeing centres (St George p 20, Wilcannia p 24, Fitzroy Crossing p 25, Alice Springs p 25, Balgo p 26 and Horsham p 26); family, community and legal services (Ebenezer p 22, Aboriginal Family Legal Services p 14 and Lake Tyers p 22); commercial arts ventures (Saltwater Freshwater p 8, Utopia p 27 and Umoona p 22); and bushfood enterprises (Girringun p 24).

We have also supported the preservation of locations with significant ecological and cultural values such as Budj Bim (p 9) and Kingston (p 11), as well as promoted sustainable agricultural enterprises (Kokotha p 26, Beemurra p 25, Galari Farm p 24, Urannah p 23 and Trelawney p 23); property management planning (Bundundea p 20); conservation programs (ABC Foundation p 13); and feasibility studies exploring carbon farming opportunities in northern SA (p 21) and alternative revenue streams for ranger groups in East Arnhem Land (p 21).

And we have assisted Indigenous people to strengthen culture and share knowledge through the Koorie Heritage Trust Federation Square expansion (p 27); as well as to improve knowledge and drive opportunity through the First Nations Clean Energy Network (p 28).

Between 2018-23, ILSC projects have enabled 658 Indigenous people to be employed on average per year.

Between 2011-23, our projects have enabled 4,579 Indigenous people to participate in capability building activities (e.g. training, planning and traditional knowledge sharing), with 2,115 training courses completed on average per year.

In the same period, on average per year through our projects, the environmental and/or heritage values of almost 5.5 million hectares of Country have been managed; 8,533 Indigenous people have improved access to Country; 636 culturally significant sites have been managed; and 10,610 Indigenous people – and 4,107 non-Indigenous people – have participated in 706 cultural events on Country.

*All data is based on information supplied by proponents for ILSC Project Reports.*



**1,334**  
projects

- 315 acquisition projects
- 1,019 management projects



**658**

Indigenous  
people  
employed\*



**283**  
properties  
acquired

- 6.4 million hectares
- 4 water interests acquired
- 83% under Indigenous care and control

**706**

cultural events\*\*

- 10,610 Indigenous participants
- 4,107 non-Indigenous participants



**8,533**  
Indigenous  
people

with improved  
access to Country\*\*

**4,579**

Indigenous people participated  
in training, planning and cultural  
knowledge sharing\*\*

**2,115** training courses completed by Indigenous people\*\*



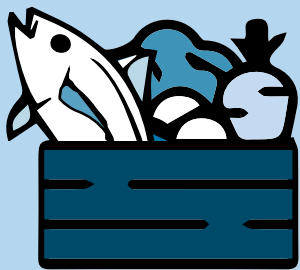
**5.5** million  
hectares

with environmental or  
heritage values managed\*\*



**636**  
culturally  
significant sites  
managed\*\*

\*on average/year, 2018-23  
\*\*on average/year, 2011-23  
Unmarked total, 1995-2023



**136**  
majority  
owned

Indigenous  
enterprises created  
and/or improved\*\*



**35,956**  
Indigenous  
people

accessing culturally  
appropriate services\*\*

Divestment ceremony for the new  
Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance  
Aboriginal Corporation headquarters, Coffs  
Harbour, Gumbaynggirr Country, NSW  
Image credit: Saltwater Freshwater Arts  
Alliance / And the Trees Photography





Divestment ceremony for the new Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance Aboriginal Corporation headquarters, Coffs Harbour, Gumbaynggirr Country, NSW  
Image credit: Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance / And the Trees Photography

## Partners in change

We partner with Indigenous groups to deliver projects across the broad diversity of Indigenous Australia and the Torres Strait Islands, from cities to regional and remote areas, and from inland to coastal environments.

In 2022-23, the ILSC contributed over \$27.9 million for new projects involving 30 Indigenous applicants through *Our Country Our Future*, our core acquisition and management funding program. Fourteen of these applicants contributed nearly \$20 million of their own funding towards their projects.

In addition, 27 third party project partners - including government, NGOs, industry groups, consultancies and private organisations - contributed nearly \$39 million towards projects plus in-kind contributions.

### 30 Indigenous groups funded (2022-23 new projects)

- ABC Foundation Ltd
- Aboriginal Family Legal Services Western Australia
- APY Art Centre Collective Aboriginal Corporation
- Beemurra Aboriginal Corporation
- Bundundea Aboriginal Corporation
- Bynoe Properties Pty Ltd as trustee for the Bynoe Properties Unit Trust
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation
- Centre for Appropriate Technology
- Developing East Arnhem Land
- Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation
- Giringun Aboriginal Corporation
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Goondir Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Corporation for Health Services
- Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre Aboriginal Corporation
- Kokatha Pastoral Pty Ltd
- Koorie Heritage Trust Inc
- Kungari Heritage Association
- Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services Association Inc
- Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation
- Original Power
- Saltwater Freshwater Arts Alliance Aboriginal Corporation
- Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council
- The Trustee For AMY Nominees Charitable Trust
- Umoona Community Art Centre Aboriginal Corporation
- Urannah Properties Association Incorporated
- Urapuntja Aboriginal Corporation
- Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation
- Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation Ltd
- Wirrimanu Aboriginal Corporation

### 27 project partners (third party) (2022-23 new projects)

- Aboriginal Benefit Account
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Department of Health
- Department of Health and Aged Care (Commonwealth)
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (formerly 'Jobs, Precincts & Regions') (Vic Govt)
- Department of Premier and Cabinet - SA
- Department of Regional NSW
- Dept of Chief Minister and Cabinet, NTG
- Dept of Primary Industries and Regional Development (WA)
- Desert
- Fed Square Pty Ltd
- Feed Appeal
- Granite Mines Affected Areas Aboriginal Corporation
- Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support
- Judd's Park
- Many Rivers Microfinance
- Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council
- North Queensland Dry Tropics Ltd
- NSW Ministry of Health
- Rainforest Bounty
- Sunrise Project
- The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
- The Trustee for Gulf Regional Economic Aboriginal Trust
- Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation
- World Wide Fund of Nature Australia



# How we're tracking

So how do we know whether we are making the best use of ILSC resources? Are the activities we fund leading to our four desired long-term outcomes and positive change for Indigenous Australians? At the ILSC, we use an evaluation approach where we consider what 'good value for money' looks like from four perspectives: efficiency, effectiveness, equity and economy. Considering these perspectives help us select the best projects and activities in which to invest. And we can use them to evaluate whether those projects are performing as expected.

## OF OUR ACTIVE PROJECTS IN 2022-23:

### Efficiency

- **86%** of planned activities were delivered or exceeded across all projects
- **87%** of projects were rated 'satisfactory' or higher for delivering planned activities when context was also considered
- **85%** of projects were rated 'satisfactory' or higher for adaptability to project changes.

### Effectiveness

- **87%** of projects were rated 'satisfactory' or higher for effectiveness, meaning that project activities were leading to desired outcomes and objectives.

### Equity

- **86%** of projects were rated 'satisfactory' or higher for equity: a reasonable proportion of the group and/or those within the Indigenous community at extra disadvantage (e.g. women, young people, elderly, disabled, and others) are benefitting from project activities.

### Economy

- **86%** overall performance reflecting that the ILSC is demonstrating good stewardship of its resources and choosing the right investments that contribute to positive change for Indigenous people.

For more information on our 'Value or Money' evaluation approach see the Annual Report and ILSC Performance Framework on our website [www.ilsc.gov.au](http://www.ilsc.gov.au)

Cape Le Grand, Esperance  
Nyungar Country, WA  
Image credit: Esperance Tjaltjraak  
Native Title Aboriginal Corporation

# Thank you

The ILSC continues to adapt, evolve and assess our approach to supporting Indigenous people around the nation on their journey towards self determination. In the pages of this publication you have seen the wide diversity of activities that the ILSC supported in 2022-23 and the foundations proudly laid for positive change through our acquisition and management projects and our work directly with Indigenous corporations. Of course that's not all the ILSC does to support positive change for Indigenous people. Our Real Jobs Program provided employment and training opportunities for Indigenous people in land management, tourism and agribusiness. The Savanna Fire Management Program continued its support for new carbon projects on Aboriginal land in the Northern Territory. Our Emergency Response Grants Program provided relief to Indigenous corporations in response to the unprecedented flooding in the Kimberley, Top End and Queensland. And, with our partners, we helped deliver the National First Nations' Water Roundtable which resolved to establish a First Nations alliance to implement a nationally consistent approach to First Nations' water rights. In 2022-23 we were also pleased to launch our National Indigenous Land and Sea Strategy (NILSS) 2023-28. Our primary policy document, the NILSS was informed by our largest ever nation-wide effort to listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' aspirations for Country and thoughts on the current and future role of the ILSC. It will shape our future direction - what we do and how we do it - for the next five years.

Returning Country and Managing Country will remain two of our strategic priorities where we seek to expand Indigenous rights and interests in Country, and grow Indigenous-led initiatives on Country. We have also formalised four further strategic priorities - to increase Indigenous influence on priority sectors (Sector leadership); to build beneficial partnerships (Meaningful connection); to provide high-quality services (Excellent service); and to step up as a culturally capable leader (Cultural leadership). Next year, we look forward to reporting on our first year of progress against the NILSS. Thank you for reading about what we do; we know we are fortunate to work with dedicated Indigenous people, partners and stakeholders on some of the nation's most exciting initiatives that, may seem small in size and nature, are immensely impactful for the Indigenous groups and indeed the nation.

*We hope it inspires ideas and innovation.*

**Joe Morrison**  
ILSC Group Chief Executive

Home Valley Station boabs  
on Balanggarra Country,  
east Kimberley, WA  
Image credit: Tania Malkin





**Australian Government**  
**Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation**



**The ILSC GROUP**

**PEOPLE. COUNTRY. OPPORTUNITY.**



Joe Morrison  
CEO



Ian Hamm  
Chair



Claire Filson  
Deputy Chair



Kate Healy  
Director



Roy Ah See  
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Nigel Browne  
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Kristy Masella  
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[www.ilsc.gov.au](http://www.ilsc.gov.au)  
**FREECALL 1800 818 490**

Established in 1995 under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act*, we provide for the contemporary and future land needs of Indigenous people, particularly those unlikely to benefit from Native Title or Land Rights. We work with our Indigenous partners to grow their economic, environmental, cultural and social capital by supporting their acquisition and management of land and water. In redressing dispossession, we provide for a more prosperous and culturally centred future for Indigenous people.

The Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation is a Commonwealth entity under the  
*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*