

# Media Release

**The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence  
Minister for Women



Thursday, 29 July 2021

## ADVANCING RECOGNITION FOR TRADITIONAL OWNER GROUPS

The Andrews Labor Government is boosting its support for Traditional Owner groups to gain formal recognition as part of an ongoing commitment to Aboriginal self-determination.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams today announced additional funding of more than \$11 million to extend the Traditional Owner Nation-building Support Package.

The Package will also now have a stronger focus on supporting Traditional Owner groups without formal recognition by expanding formal recognition support and increasing resources for foundational activities.

Formal recognition, among other rights and responsibilities, gives Traditional Owner groups automatic representation in the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria – the state's first and only democratically elected body for Aboriginal people.

Following feedback from key stakeholders, the funding package has been expanded to better support Traditional Owner groups in areas without formal recognition.

Today's investment builds on more than \$13 million for Traditional Owner Nation-building in the *Victorian Budget 2019/20*. This included more than \$4 million for the Nation-building Resource Pool, which will be administered to Traditional Owners by the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations."

Earlier funding has supported five Traditional Owner groups to do important nation-building work and prepare for future treaty negotiations. It has also funded 10 engagement officer roles at formally recognised Traditional Owner corporations, as well as in regions without formal recognition.

There are currently eleven recognised Traditional Owner groups in Victoria, covering 75 per cent of the State.

Traditional Owner groups of regions without formal recognition are at various stages of coming together to undertake nation-building activities.

For more information about the Nation-building package visit [aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/nation-building](http://aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/nation-building).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

*"Formal recognition is a critical step towards ensuring Traditional Owners are afforded their full rights, responsibilities and benefits as the First Peoples of Country."*

*"This funding will support and empower Traditional Owner groups to build strong communities and prepare for future treaty negotiations as we progress on our nation-leading path to treaty, truth and justice."*