

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Jobs and Industry
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Women



Thursday, 7 December 2023

MUNARRA CENTRE FOR REGIONAL EXCELLENCE TOPS OUT

Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence was topped out today in Shepparton, cementing its place as an employer of Aboriginal people and bringing outstanding educational opportunities for the region one step closer.

Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples Christine Couzens joined Yorta Yorta Elders and representatives from the Centre's partners – Munarra Limited, Rumbalara Football Netball Club, Kaiela Institute and the University of Melbourne – to mark the installation of the Centre's roof, featuring a massive Aboriginal flag.

Supported by the Albanese Government's investment of \$30.2 million, the Centre is being built by 70 per cent First Nations-owned construction company TVN On-Country, providing a range of opportunities to First Nations peoples even before the Centre's completion.

Ambitious social procurement targets have ensured First Nations Victorians have been employed at every stage of construction – with every target exceeded.

First Nations staff make up 30 per cent of TVN's project team – double the original target. Twenty-three per cent of the project's labour hours have been contributed by First Nations Victorians – against a target of four per cent.

TVN has also provided direct training opportunities including cadetships and work experience for First Nations students and women interested in construction. Almost 23 per cent of hours by apprentices and trainees on the project and 28 per cent of management and supervisory hours were worked by women.

The project is also on track to meet a 10 per cent target of contract value spent with First Nations businesses, with current commitments already at 7.6 per cent of the estimated contract value. The project is the largest ever awarded to a First Nations owned and operated company, with a total of 12 entirely new jobs created.

When completed, it will be a First Peoples-led pathways-based university – the first of its kind in Australia, delivering culturally responsive education, employment, health and wellbeing initiatives.

For more information visit rfnc.com.au/munarra

Quote attributable to Acting Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Lizzie Blandthorn

"The development of the Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence is an inspiring example of how First Nations Victorians are creating beautiful spaces to support the delivery of culturally responsive education, employment, health and wellbeing initiatives."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples Christine Couzens

"The Munarra Centre for Regional Excellence illuminates the path of First Nations-led initiatives and self-determination in action, by actively employing and supporting First Nations people."

Quote attributable to Kaiela Institute Executive Chair Paul Briggs OAM

"Munarra represents the future – it will impact here and contribute locally, nationally and globally. We are planning and looking forward to the launch of MCRE in early 2024."

Media contact: Alison Caldwell 0408 495 637 | alison.caldwell@minstaff.vic.gov.au