

Media Release

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



Thursday, 22 August 2024

MORE SUPPORT FOR ABORIGINAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

The Allan Labor Government is supporting Aboriginal organisations across Victoria to develop and upgrade their infrastructure, ensuring they can continue to deliver the services their communities need.

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins today visited the Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES) in Brunswick East to announce the 22 recipients who will share in over \$11 million as part of the seventh round of the Labor Government's Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program.

ACES, located on the banks of the Merri Creek, will receive more than \$1.5 million to upgrade their facilities and provide a functional and comfortable gathering space for Elders.

ACES was established in 1987 thanks to the tireless work of the late Aunty Iris Lovett Gardiner and other Elders. The residential aged care facility provides a range of services to First Nations Elders, ensuring they receive care that is culturally appropriate and tailored to their individual needs and choices.

The Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative in Ararat is receiving \$1.6 million to expand its medical clinic and support the delivery of culturally safe services in an accessible and welcoming environment.

Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Cooperative also received \$1.4 million to renovate and expand its community hub in Warrnambool to improve accessibility and create community spaces to host events and art exhibitions, as well as support service delivery.

The Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program supports Aboriginal organisations to build new functional and accessible infrastructure, or to repair, renovate or expand existing infrastructure.

Since 2018, the program has delivered almost \$50 million to deliver fit-for-purpose buildings and enhance culturally responsive services to improve the lives of Aboriginal Victorians. As well as repairs and capital works, the program also supports planning activities for future projects.

The program reflects the Labor Government's work to put decision making power in the hands of Aboriginal Victorians – the best outcomes are achieved when Aboriginal people drive the decisions about their lives, communities and futures.

For more information visit firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-community-infrastructure-program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"The Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program means Aboriginal organisations can upgrade their facilities to better serve their communities."

"Aboriginal community-controlled services are best placed to deliver what Aboriginal communities need."

Quote attributable to Aboriginal Community Elders Services CEO James Atkinson

"We look forward to beginning the fantastic upgrades to ACES' facilities. This funding means we will continue to deliver our vital services to the Elders who have done so much for the Aboriginal community."

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