

## Media release: Supply Nation Connect 2019

DATE OF RELEASE: 10 May 2019  
DATE OF EVENT: 8 May and 9 May 2019  
CONTACT: [sybil@atomictangerine.com.au](mailto:sybil@atomictangerine.com.au), phone: 0424 011 245

### Supply Nation's Connect 2019 showcases the powerful ideas that drive supplier diversity in Australia

Over 2,500 people from across Australia and the globe gathered for Australia's largest Indigenous business event, Supply Nation's Connect 2019 on 8 and 9 May.

Supply Nation's CEO, Laura Berry, says "Supply Nation's annual event, Connect, always brings out the best in the sector. This year the theme was 'the power of an idea' – and we saw that throughout the event. We presented best practice strategies and tactics to implement supplier diversity from around the globe at the Knowledge Forum; we showcased the diversity of business ideas and the growing maturity of the sector at the Indigenous Business Tradeshow; and we celebrated the leaders in the sector at our Gala Awards Dinner."

Connect 2019 was the biggest on record, with over 450 attendees at the Knowledge Forum; over 170 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses exhibiting at the Tradeshow with over 1,000 buyers in attendance; and over 1,200 attendees at the marquee event where the whole supplier diversity community celebrated the announcement of the 2019 Supplier Diversity Awards.

The 2019 Supplier Diversity Awards are presented at the Gala Awards Dinner which this year was held at the Grand Ballroom at the International Convention Centre in Sydney.

Ms Berry commented, "With an incredible Calling Country and screen content curated by Rhoda Roberts; a surprise performance from Casey Donovan and Jessica Mauboy as the headline act ending the night on a high – the whole evening was spectacular and a real testament to the whole sector."

Ms Berry continued, "The announcement of the 10 Supplier Diversity Awards is always exciting. This year the night was dominated by Australia Post – who won four out of the ten awards on offer (Corporate Member of the Year, Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year, Procurement Professional of the Year and the Outstanding Impact Award). They are a leading example of what happens when organisations set clear strategy and are supported by talented and dedicated people to make a real difference.

"I'd also like to congratulate all the other award winners – including our 2019 Indigenous Businesswoman of the Year, who was last year's Young Indigenous Entrepreneur of the year – Sharna Collard of Kooya Australia Fleet Solutions and Indigenous Professional Services who won Certified Supplier of the Year for the second year in a row."

Ms Berry also congratulated the other winners: "There were some high profile winners I'd also like to recognise: PSG and Lend Lease who won the 2019 Supplier Diversity Partnership of the Year for their work on the \$213M Garden Island Redevelopment project. That project is the biggest government project ever awarded to an Indigenous business. Additionally, the Department of Defence – who were also a finalist in the partnership category – won the Government Member of the Year award.

“We also had some new faces amongst the finalists and winners – Registered Supplier of the Year went to Indigenous Management Group who entered these awards for the first time this year! Our next generation of Indigenous business owners were well-represented with some incredible and innovative business ideas – and the Young Indigenous Entrepreneur of the Year award was won by James Curran of MOEC Pty Ltd.”

## 2019 Supplier Diversity Awards winners

### **Certified Supplier of the Year – proudly sponsored by Telstra**

Indigenous Professional Services (IPS)

IPS provides world-class management consultancy services across a range of capabilities: from organisational development, leadership and business capability; to market research, branding and communication. Their vision is to create positive change through the meaningful projects on which they work, while providing lasting value to their customers.

### **Registered Supplier of the Year – proudly sponsored by BP**

Indigenous Management Group (IMG)

Indigenous Management Group is a business consultancy firm specialising in Aboriginal business growth and development. IMG positively impacts the sector through their commitment to outreach programs; apprenticeship and internships for young Indigenous people; and pro-bono workshops to develop key business skills to facilitate a pipeline of businesses entering the space.

### **Corporate Member of the Year – proudly sponsored by Kulbardi**

Australia Post

Australia Post is focused on driving systemic change by positioning themselves as thought-leaders in the supplier diversity space; playing a leadership role in communicating the benefits and challenges of supplier diversity; building capacity in the sector and giving opportunities to all Indigenous businesses regardless of size.

### **Government Member of the Year – proudly sponsored by Evolve FM**

Department of Defence

Defence has supported and championed the growth of the Indigenous business sector through the award of over \$485 million in new Indigenous business contracts in FY17-18 – a significant increase from previous years. The Defence Indigenous Procurement Strategy released in late 2018, demonstrates Defence’s commitment to increasing procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses.

### **Indigenous Businesswoman of the Year – proudly sponsored by Westpac**

Sharna Collard

General Manager and Co-founder, Kooya Australia Fleet Solutions

Co-founded by Sharna and father Kim in 2015, Kooya Australia Fleet Solutions provides bespoke vehicle leasing, fleet management, procurement and rental solutions nationally and has doubled turnover in the last year. Sharna is committed to creating the next generation of Indigenous business leaders through training, developing and mentoring young Aboriginal people.

### **Young Indigenous Entrepreneur of the Year – proudly sponsored by EY**

James Curran

Managing Director, MOEC

In 2016 the resources sector was in a downturn and James co-founded MOEC after recognising that they could offer clients real value at a lower price with smart solutions. MOEC is establishing itself as a speciality pipeline construction company of choice for Tier 1 contractors. James hopes to inspire others by establishing and running a sustainable business

**Procurement Professional of the Year – proudly sponsored by Every Trade Recruitment and Construction**  
Steve Hansen

Strategic Procurement Manager – Fleet, Logistics and Automation, Australia Post

With two decades in procurement, Steve recognised the need to challenge traditional sourcing processes and diversify the supply chain so that every Australian has the opportunity to succeed. He ensures Indigenous procurement is included in KPIs and that all team members feel empowered to engage with the sector.

**Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year – proudly sponsored by Laing O’Rourke**

Stephanie Roache

Corporate Responsibility Manager, Australia Post

Stephanie Roache has over 10 years’ experience working across procurement, community relations and corporate social responsibility. She champions positive change at Australia Post through spearheading their social procurement and supplier diversity strategy. Stephanie believes supplier diversity is one of the most powerful mechanisms for delivering positive social impact

**Supplier Diversity Partnership of the Year – proudly sponsored by ANZ**

PSG Holdings and Lendlease

PSG Holdings and Lendlease joined forces to create the Garden Island Bayinguwa Delivery Team, responsible for the delivery of the \$213M Garden Island Redevelopment, Critical Infrastructure Recovery Project, due for completion in 2022. Both parties are proud to deliver a project that will have a lasting impact on Sydney Harbour.

**Outstanding Impact Award – proudly sponsored by Lendlease**

Australia Post

See winner images and logos here: <https://bit.ly/2LyaHej>

## For editors

---

For more information about Connect 2019:

[supplynationconnect.com.au](http://supplynationconnect.com.au)

For more information about the Knowledge Forum speakers:

[supplynationconnect.com.au/speakers/](http://supplynationconnect.com.au/speakers/)

For more information about the Knowledge Forum program:

[supplynationconnect.com.au/schedule/](http://supplynationconnect.com.au/schedule/)

## Who are we

---

Since 2009, Supply Nation has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses along with procurement teams from government and corporate Australia to help shape today's emerging and rapidly evolving Indigenous business sector.

Supply Nation's world-leading [5-step verification process](#) provides peace of mind by ensuring that all businesses listed on Australia's largest national directory of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses (approx. 1850 suppliers), Indigenous Business Direct, are not only Indigenous owned but are also regularly audited for changes in company structure and ownership.

In addition, Supply Nation receives daily updates from ASIC regarding any changes to business ownership which allows us to conduct real-time audits. This reinforces the integrity and accuracy of Indigenous businesses listed on Indigenous Business Direct

Supply Nation partners with its paid membership of government, corporate and not-for-profit organisations to develop procurement policies that modify and redirect spend to include the traditionally underutilised Indigenous business sector.

For further information about Supply Nation, visit [www.supplynation.org.au](http://www.supplynation.org.au)

## Interviews available

---

Interviews with Supply Nation's Chief Executive Officer, Laura Berry are available by appointment.

Should you wish to arrange an interview with Supply Nation CEO or with any of the 2019 award winners please contact Sybil Williams:

CONTACT: Sybil Williams, Head of Marketing, Supply Nation  
PHONE: 0424 011 245  
EMAIL: [sybil@atomictangerine.com.au](mailto:sybil@atomictangerine.com.au)