

Media release

Supply Nation, DPS and NIAA host Canberra's biggest Trade Fair

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On Tuesday 11 February 2020, Supply Nation, in partnership with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and the Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) will host the Indigenous Business Trade Fair in the Great Hall of Parliament House, Canberra.

With a record number of over 120 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses exhibiting (up from 79 last year) and more than 600 government and corporate buyers already registered to attend, this will be the biggest Canberra Trade Fair to date! Showcasing the vibrant and growing Indigenous business sector, there will be Indigenous businesses representing a range of industries, including building and construction; facilities management; recruitment and HR services; consultants; education and training; and office supplies.

Laura Berry, Chief Executive Officer of Supply Nation said: "Supply Nation and the NIAA have partnered to host a series of ten Trade Fairs with successful events already held in Karratha, Adelaide, Dubbo, Brisbane, Perth, Darwin and Melbourne. Over the series, a total of 600 exhibitors promoted their products and services to over 2,700 buyers across the country. The size of this Trade Fair in Canberra is a testament to the growth in the sector - and we look forward to growing engagement with these Trade Fairs over the next year."

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been successfully trading for tens of thousands of years. Supply Nation brings together today's Indigenous businesses with potential buyers so that procuring organisations can see first-hand the opportunities offered by the sector and the enormous value these businesses offer. We welcome all Indigenous businesses to register with Supply Nation and take advantage of the free marketing available for their businesses!"

The Canberra Trade Fair falls in an important week for Indigenous Australians, as Thursday 13 February 2020 marks the Anniversary of National Apology Day. It has been 12 years since Prime Minister Kevin Rudd delivered the National Apology to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the injustices of past government policies, particularly to the Stolen Generations.

Since then, the Australian government has introduced policies, such as the Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) to grow the Indigenous business sector and help to close the gap between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians. Since 1 July 2015, the IPP has generated \$2.6 billion in economic activity for the Indigenous business sector. This has involved contracts being awarded to over 1,800 Indigenous businesses by the Commonwealth and its major suppliers.

"By any measure, the Indigenous business sector is growing exponentially. The Indigenous Procurement Policy demonstrates that setting targets, monitoring them and reporting on them publicly can have a transformative effect on buying behaviours and further, on an entire business sector" says Ms Berry.

In addition to the Trade Fair series, Supply Nation will hold Australia's largest supplier diversity event, Connect 2020, later this year. Connect is an annual event that consists of a full day Knowledge Forum (conference), an Indigenous Business Tradeshow and a Gala Awards Dinner. This year's event will be held over two days, Wednesday 20 May and Thursday 21 May 2020. Connect 2020 tickets are now available at connect.supplynation.org.au.