

Media release

Academic knowledge hub - State of Indigenous Business series

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Supply Nation is continuing to foster diverse platforms to support the long-term viability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, launching the first two reports from a **'State of Indigenous Business'** series of evidence-based research projects.

Chief Executive Officer, Laura Berry, said the Supply Nation Board had agreed on the importance of establishing a 'Knowledge Hub' as part of its strategic planning in 2019 - consolidating and progressing the organisation's role as an evidence-based thought leader in the Indigenous business sector.

"While insights from the initial evaluations of policy initiatives such as the Indigenous Procurement Policy continue to inform the sector, we felt that Supply Nation had a role and obligation as the custodian of Australia's most respected data base of Indigenous businesses, to leverage that information into knowledge that enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to start, grow and thrive.

"A key focus of our research is to understand the contours, trends and contributions the Indigenous business sector makes to the broader national economy as well as its contribution to Indigenous wellbeing and self-determination," Ms Berry said. "We have formed strategic partnerships with diverse stakeholders to collaborate on a series of evidence-based research projects over the next 12 months, and have also engaged highly regarded educator and social impact expert, Dr Gianni Zappala, as our Head of Research. I would like to acknowledge that Google's philanthropic arm, Google.org, is generously supporting our research program, and I'm thrilled that they are supporting further initiatives to help the Indigenous business sector - with details to be announced in early 2021," Ms Berry added.

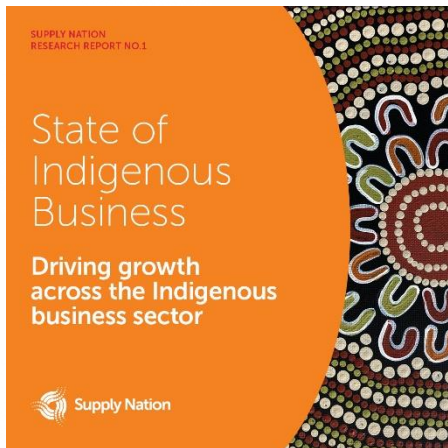
Supply Nation's first report **'Driving growth across the Indigenous business sector'**, was commissioned prior to the pandemic and its release was delayed as the COVID-19 situation escalated. The report found that bringing Indigenous procurement levels to 1% of spend in sectors that have had less traction to date, represented an \$8 billion opportunity for the Indigenous business sector, translating into an increase of circa 90% in Indigenous business sector revenue, and an extra 19,000 jobs for Indigenous Australians.

Ms Berry said Supply Nation had engaged EY's Indigenous Sector Practice (ISP) as the crisis evolved, to assist Supply Nations with the research project into the impact of COVID-19 on the Indigenous business sector.

"As part of our initial response to support the Indigenous business sector during the COVID-19 crisis, we collaborated with EY to produce and deliver a six-part webcast series to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses with practical advice and guidance to navigate the unprecedented landscape.

"The webcast series provided us with diverse insights around the challenges Indigenous businesses faced, providing a strong platform for EY to conduct detailed analysis on our behalf," Ms Berry concluded.

EY's Indigenous Practice Leader, Joe Hedger, said "Working closely with Supply Nation, we undertook research to explore the impacts of COVID-19 on the Indigenous business sector - to identify the extent of the possible impact, to consider appropriate contingencies and actionable plans that build on what we know is working and where further research needs to be undertaken as more COVID-19 impacts unfold - all with a view to assisting Supply Nation to work with government, private sector and other key stakeholders in exploring how best to invest and allocate resources to support the ongoing viability and wellbeing of the Indigenous business sector."



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