

Media release

Flagship event to foster opportunities for the Indigenous business sector

Date of release 21 May 2021

This year, Australia’s leading supplier diversity event, Connect, has transformed into a unique online experience, breaking down borders to support the growth of the Indigenous business sector. Supply Nation’s Connect 2021 will be delivered via world-class technology, allowing greater accessibility and engagement, with plans to resume the face-to-face tradeshow event in 2022.

Hosted by renowned journalist, author and filmmaker, Stan Grant, Connect 2021 will be held on **Tuesday 25 May and Wednesday 26 May** and will incorporate the Knowledge Forum, Tradeshow and Awards Show into an interactive two-day online experience.

Supply Nation’s Chief Executive Officer, Laura Berry, says “There is no doubt we have all been navigating an unprecedented situation over the past year – and no business, regardless of size or maturity, has been immune from the impact of COVID-19.”

[Research](#) conducted by Supply Nation shows Indigenous businesses were significantly impacted by COVID-19, with half of all respondents in one survey experiencing a substantial reduction in revenue in 2020. In recognition of the challenging circumstances over the past year, Supply Nation is offering a significant discount for Registered and Certified Indigenous businesses and members to participate in the event.

“We are proud to offer a nationally accessible show and would like to take this opportunity to commend our Indigenous businesses on their resilience in the wake of significant challenges over the past year. We would also like to thank our event sponsors and corporate, government and not-for-profit members for their ongoing commitment to the Indigenous business sector” Ms Berry continued.

Connect 2021 will feature a diverse line up of Knowledge Forum speakers including award-winning author Dr Anita Heiss, Managing Director of Tourism Australia, Phillipa Harrison, Managing Director of Microsoft Australia, Steven Worrall and Chief Customer Officer of Qantas, Stephanie Tully. For a full list of speakers, click [here](#).

The Tradeshow run alongside the Knowledge Forum and will provide an exciting opportunity for Indigenous business owners to showcase the diversity and vibrancy of their products and services and foster business opportunities.

The two-day event will conclude with the Awards Show hosted by Television Presenter Brooke Boney and Actor and Producer Aaron Fa’Aoso. The show will include the announcement of the Supplier Diversity Award winners and will feature a performance from First Nations Entertainer, Mitch Tambo.

For more information about Connect 2021, visit: connect.supplynation.org.au

2021 Supplier Diversity Award finalists

Corporate Member of the Year

- JLL
- Laing O'Rourke
- Ventia

Government Member of the Year - proudly sponsored by Evolve FM

- Department of Defence
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Services Australia

Certified Supplier of the Year - proudly sponsored by Telstra

- Marrawah Law
- Barpa Construction Services
- Muru Office Supplies

Registered Supplier of the Year - proudly sponsored by BP

- Marawar
- Rork Projects
- WV Technologies

Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year - proudly sponsored by Laing O'Rourke

- Gary Searle, Lendlease
- Helen Slater, Sodexo
- Robin Burton, JLL

Procurement Professional of the Year

- Kevin Fogarty, Department of Defence
- Henri Fadli, JLL
- Hamish Johnston, ATCO Australia

Young Indigenous Entrepreneur of the Year - proudly sponsored by EY

- Nathan Martin, Yalagan Group
- Glenn Many, Many Fabrication and Engineering
- Deborah Hoger, Riley Callie Resources

Indigenous Businesswoman of the Year - proudly sponsored by Westpac

- Leah Cameron, Marrawah Law
- Tammy O'Connor, Kingkira Group
- Terri Janke, Terri Janke and Company

Emerging Indigenous Exporter of the Year - proudly sponsored by Austrade

- Voltaic Auto Electrical
- Tagai Management Consultants

Supplier Diversity Partnership of the Year - proudly sponsored by ANZ

- Biodiversity Australia and Department of Defence
- GJK Indigenous Solutions and BGIS
- Commonwealth Bank and BlackCard

Outstanding Impact Award - proudly sponsored by Wesfarmers

The winner will be selected from the finalists of all other award categories.

Connect 2021 sponsors:

Platinum Sponsor – Knowledge Forum	Winc
Platinum Sponsor – Tradeshow	AusIndustry
Platinum Sponsor – Awards Show	The Commonwealth Bank
Gold Sponsor – Awards Show	Qantas
Gold Sponsor – Tradeshow	NAB
Silver Sponsor – Event App	Accenture
Silver Sponsor – Knowledge Forum	CPB Contractors
Silver Sponsor – Knowledge Forum	Inside Policy
Silver Sponsor – Media Partner	Koori Mail
Silver Sponsor – Tradeshow	Maybell Group
Silver Sponsor – Tradeshow	Total Surveying Solutions (TSS)
Silver Sponsor – Tradeshow	Worimi Collective

About Supply Nation:

Supply Nation is Australia’s leading supplier diversity organisation. Since 2009, Supply Nation has worked with Indigenous businesses and procurement teams from government and corporate Australia to help shape today’s emerging and rapidly evolving Indigenous business sector. Supply Nation’s world-leading verification process provides peace of mind by ensuring that all businesses listed on Indigenous Business Direct are not only Indigenous owned but are regularly audited for changes in company structure. Supply Nation’s support, combined with a range of business tools, helps our members develop their supplier diversity practices, and build a strong, successful and sustainable Indigenous business sector.

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