

## Media Release

### Supply Nation's Supplier Diversity Awards 2025 finalists announced

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Supply Nation is pleased to announce the finalists in the annual Supplier Diversity Awards.

The awards recognise individuals, businesses and government agencies making significant contributions to the Indigenous business sector.

Award winners for all 11 categories will be announced at the Connect 2025 Gala Awards Dinner on Thursday 21 August. The night will conclude Australia's largest and most influential Indigenous business event connecting verified Indigenous suppliers with corporate and government buyers.

Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year, Connect will return to Gadigal Land at ICC Sydney, having been held in in Meanjin on the lands of the Turrbal and Jagera peoples last year. The theme for this year's event is 'Beyond the Horizon'. After celebrating our 15-year anniversary, we look to where land, sea and sky meet, ready to break new ground and help shape the future of Indigenous business.

Supply Nation's Chief Executive Officer and proud Awabakal woman, Kate Russell said there is a lot to celebrate, with both the growth and diversity of the sector, but the benefits are even more far reaching when the broader social value is considered. Indigenous-owned businesses are contributing to the prosperity of all Australians.

Supply Nation now has over 5,700 verified Indigenous businesses listed on its national database, Indigenous Business Direct, and more than 850 corporate, government and non-profit members. Indigenous-owned businesses are contributing \$16 billion to the Australian economy each year and paying \$4.2 billion in wages.

"Despite the success, challenges remain from both domestic and international drivers. Indigenous entrepreneurs still find it difficult to access capital to support start-ups or expansion. There is a need for more support around building business knowledge and skills as well as accessing support services and grants. Unconscious and conscious bias negatively impacts the potential of businesses. The Connect 2025 Knowledge Forum aims to address and discuss some of these obstacles."

"In addition to the Tradeshow hosting hundreds of Indigenous exhibitors across all industries, the Supplier Diversity Awards recognise Blak excellence and highlight corporate and government organisations that are committed to diversified procurement and the benefits of these policies and practices," she said.

Over 4,000 participants are expected to attend across the two days, spanning the Knowledge Forum, Indigenous Business Tradeshow and Gala Awards Dinner. Supply Nation acknowledges our major event sponsors:

- Commonwealth Bank of Australia – Gala Awards Dinner (Platinum Sponsor)
- Woolworths Group – Indigenous Business Tradeshow (Platinum Sponsor)
- BHP – Gala Awards Dinner (Gold Sponsor)
- Qantas – Gala Awards Dinner (Gold Sponsor) and Official Airline Partner

Award category and sponsor	Finalists
<b>Certified Supplier of the Year</b> Telstra	Ethan Indigenous Hardy Fencing Australia Pipeline Talent
<b>Supplier Diversity Advocate of the Year</b> Department of Industry, Science and Resources	Amy Crookes – EY Sam Muir – Coles Group Shinead Coleman – Transport for NSW
<b>Corporate Member of the Year</b> Ethan Indigenous	BAE Systems Australia CPB Contractors Woolworths Group
<b>Indigenous Businesswoman of the Year</b>	Jadah Pleiter – Panku Safety Solutions Nicole Appleton – NLA Logistics Tammy O'Connor – KingKira Group
<b>Registered Supplier of the Year</b> bp	Jabil Commercial Diving Mob Jobs TVN On-Country
<b>Procurement Professional of the Year</b> Killara Services	Mark Harrington – CPB Contractors Matthew Plichta – Rio Tinto Samuel Hampson – Sodexo Australia
<b>Government Member of the Year</b> Laing O'Rourke	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Department of Defence Main Roads Western Australia and the Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Engagement (TPAE) branch
<b>Sam Tjengala Reuben Award recognising Young Entrepreneur of the Year</b> EY	Associate Professor Rick Macourt – First Nations Economics Steven Fordham – Blackrock Industries Tara Croker – Yaala Sparkling
<b>Indigenous Exporter of the Year</b>	Complete Business Solutions (Australia) Kakadu Organics WV Technologies
<b>Supplier Diversity Partnership of the Year</b> ANZ	ARA Indigenous Services and Woolworths Group Djinda Produce and Cater Care Group MobReady and Ventia
<b>Dr Dean Jarrett Award recognising Outstanding Impact</b>	Winner to be selected from finalists across all award categories.

### About Supply Nation:

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

Supply Nation has a zero-tolerance approach to any commercial fraud, dishonest or anti-competitive behaviour that impacts the successful growth and reputation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. Allegations of fraudulent behaviour, including the unauthorised use of Supply Nation's brand and logos signifying Registered and Certified Suppliers will be investigated.

In FY23-24, Supply Nation enabled over \$4.6 billion to the Indigenous economy. To find out more, visit: [supplynation.com.au](https://supplynation.com.au)

**About Connect:**

Connect is Australia's biggest Indigenous business event. The event brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, corporate and government organisations to foster strategic opportunities and celebrate the success of the sector.

Connect 2025 will take place on Wednesday 20 August and Thursday 21 August 2025 at ICC Sydney on Gadigal Land. Tickets are on sale now: [Connect 2025](#).

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