

Media Release

Supply Nation releases pioneering new research on Indigenous businesses

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Supply Nation today releases new research and data on Indigenous businesses and their contribution to Closing the Gap targets. *The Sleeping Giant Rises* report confirms that Indigenous-owned businesses are generating significant economic and social value to the Australian economy.

The pioneering research has discovered that Indigenous businesses create \$42.6 billion of social value each year for Indigenous business owners, their households and Indigenous employees.

Social value refers to the positive changes seen through an Indigenous lens of wellbeing. This value includes improved agency and control over life, expanded aspirations, financial security, pride, physical health and mental wellbeing and stronger connections to Community, Culture and Country.

The report provides detailed insights on the values and ways of working that help Indigenous businesses build wealth for their families and communities. *The Sleeping Giant Rises* research methodology links social value to select Closing the Gap targets, to understand how self-determination and economic empowerment contribute to those targets. Little research has been undertaken on entrepreneurship and Closing the Gap. It is important that Supply Nation puts forward a positive narrative and supporting evidence in an otherwise deficit focused environment.

Supply Nation's Chief Executive Officer and proud Awabakal woman Kate Russell said Indigenous businesses create this social value purely by operating as a business, it excludes any funding support or other philanthropic programs that might be out there.

"We know that Indigenous businesses often give back, through formal or informal processes but there should not be the expectation or assumption that Indigenous businesses are all philanthropic. It is important to demonstrate that even without social or community elements, these businesses are creating economic and social value purely by being in business and that's a great thing.

"The Sleeping Giant Rises report clearly shows the significant impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses are having. These entrepreneurs are creating social and economic value that is changing Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia."

Key findings of the Report show that an estimated 16% of the Indigenous population are directly connected to the Indigenous business sector, including 29,200 Indigenous business owners, over 61,300 people living in the households of these business owners, and more than 65,700 Indigenous employees working within these businesses.

Outcomes related to owning a business described in the Report show that 95% of respondents feel proud of who they are, 89% said they are more able to express their Culture with 86% stating that young people in their family have more pride in their Culture.

“I am immensely proud of this research and what Supply Nation verified businesses and member organisations are achieving together. This NAIDOC Week, we need to focus on strength, vision and legacy and this report allows us to celebrate the strength of Indigenous businesses, the vision they hold and the legacy they are leaving for future generations,” said Ms Russell.

Non-Indigenous organisations can be proactive in sourcing from Indigenous-owned businesses and ensure procurement teams understand the social value being created. It is also important to ensure that Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses owners are consulted when discussing policies and programs that engage Indigenous businesses.

A copy of the report is available [here](#).

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 Certified and Registered business will be investigated. In the year 2023/2024, Supply Nation enabled over \$4.6 billion to the Indigenous economy. To find out more, visit: supplynation.org.au

Connect is Supply Nation’s flagship event for the Indigenous business sector. The event brings together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and corporate and government organisations to foster strategic opportunities and celebrate the success of the sector. Connect 2025 will take place on 20–21 August at ICC Sydney on Gadigal Land. To find out more and purchase tickets visit: [Connect 2025](#)

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