

Media Release

Ready for take-off: Gunggandji Aerospace opens new pathways to Indigenous aviation careers

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Images for download available [here](#).

Gunggandji Aerospace, Australia's only 100% Aboriginal and veteran-owned, Supply Nation Certified aerospace consulting and services business, has reached a significant milestone in its Raising Horizons program, with an industry work experience collaboration now underway.

In partnership with Cairns Airport, the initiative is providing a young Indigenous student aspiring to a career in aviation with valuable hands-on experience and exposure to the aviation industry, including opportunities to engage with industry partners such as Qantas.

Founded by proud Gunggandji man and former Royal Australian Air Force officer Daniel Joinbee, Gunggandji Aerospace is a profit-for-purpose company dedicated to breaking down barriers for Indigenous peoples and veterans while creating meaningful pathways into Australia's aviation, aerospace and defence industries.

The program aims to increase industry awareness and interest, provide practical experiences and engagement opportunities for young Indigenous people, and connect students with mentors and role models.

Cairns Airport is one of 19 government and industry partners supporting the initiative. Since launching in 2025, Raising Horizons has engaged more than 200 students through 15 events across Cairns and Townsville.

The program supports students from 29 remote communities across North and Far North Queensland, including the Torres Strait Islands, and is expanding its reach across the aviation, space and maritime sectors.

Beyond delivering programs that inspire the next generation, Gunggandji Aerospace provides specialist Defence, aviation and aerospace capability for complex, regulated and security sensitive environments. Gunggandji also develops practical, low barrier workforce pathways that connect First Nations people with real industry opportunities, while helping employers build the resilient workforce needed to strengthen Australia's sovereign capability.

Partnerships with organisations such as Cairns Airport provide students with invaluable opportunities to experience real workplaces, learn directly from industry professionals, ask questions and make informed decisions about their future careers.

This latest collaboration demonstrates the power of industry partnerships in creating tangible opportunities for young Indigenous Australians and highlights Gunggandji Aerospace's ongoing commitment to building a more diverse and inclusive future for Australia's aviation and aerospace industries.

Supply Nation CEO Kate Russell said:

“One of the most rewarding parts of my job is seeing young Indigenous entrepreneurs and young Mob succeed.

“Gunggandji Aerospace is leading the way by creating innovative, non-traditional career pathways that are making a real difference in the lives of young Indigenous Australians.

“It is inspiring to see the success already being achieved through the Raising Horizons program. Young people can look to mentors and role models like Daniel Joinbee and see what is possible. They can aspire to those same opportunities, build on them, and forge their own path.

“Gunggandji Aerospace is not only strengthening Australia's sovereign defence and national security capability but also opening doors for the next generation of Indigenous talent. Through Raising Horizons, young people are gaining the skills, confidence and opportunities to help shape Australia's future economic prosperity while making a lasting contribution to their communities.”

Gunggandji Aerospace Founder and Managing Director Daniel Joinbee said:

“When we succeed, our community succeeds. That success allows us to remove barriers, create access and build real pathways for young First Nations people into aviation, aerospace, Defence and emerging industries.”

“Success for us is not measured only by commercial outcomes. It is also measured by the opportunities we create, the barriers we remove and the pathways we leave open for the next generation.

“Raising Horizons is First Nations led, grounded in Culture and built around the young people taking part. It nurtures curiosity and ambition, creates meaningful exposure, and helps young people see pathways they may not have known existed.

“You can’t build a career in something you don’t know exists. Talent exists everywhere, opportunity should too. It has nothing to do with a lack of capability. Young people need to see what’s possible, have access to real opportunities and be supported through a pathway that helps them get there.

“The next person to walk on the moon is in school right now. Why can’t it be a young First Nations person? We have to make sure young people can see those possibilities, access them and believe they belong there.”

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