

Media Release

Supply Nation's Connect opens in Boorloo (Perth) with record WA Indigenous business representation

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Images for download available [here](#).

More than 130 Western Australia-based Indigenous businesses will be represented at Supply Nation's Connect 2026, which opens in Boorloo (Perth), today on the lands of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation.

Now in its 16th year, Connect is the largest and longest-running event in the First Nations business sector. Held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, the event will open with the Knowledge Forum hosted by award-winning journalist, media presenter, and proud Gamilaroi woman Brooke Boney.

The following morning, Supply Nation presents the Indigenous Business Tradeshow which will then culminate in the evening with the Gala Awards Dinner which recognises First Nations excellence in business.

WA Indigenous businesses received more than \$2.1 billion in procurement spend from Supply Nation's corporate, government and not-for-profit members in 2024–25. The total national figure in procurement spend received by Indigenous businesses during the same period was \$5.83 billion.

The Knowledge Forum seeks to address issues and challenges to the growth of the Indigenous business sector through discussions with government and industry in a constructive and meaningful way grounded in lived experience to ensure economic empowerment and greater self-determination.

The day begins with a keynote address from KingKira Group Founder and Supply Nation's 2025 Indigenous Businesswoman of the Year, Tammy O'Connor. A series of panel discussions and interactive workshops will follow, providing Indigenous business owners with practical insights, expert advice, and valuable connections to help maximise future success.

More than 230 exhibitors will present their products and services at the Indigenous Business Tradeshow opening on Wednesday, 12 August 2026. These include well-being and beauty products derived from native botanicals, creative industries, construction and project management, geo-spatial mapping services, mine rehabilitation, fleet and car hire services and cybersecurity and software digital consulting.

A Sand Circle will feature activities and performances throughout the day hosted by author, TV presenter and proud Gamilaroi, Barkindji, Ballardong and Whadjuk woman, Bianca Hunt.

A panel discussion 'First Nations Women in Business' will also be a feature of the day's activities.

The Gala Awards Dinner held on the evening of 12 August celebrates the Supply Nation Supplier Diversity Awards finalists and winners and their commitment to excellence in the sector and Indigenous business success.

Winners will be announced across ten categories, with one business or individual selected from all finalists to take home the Dr Dean Jarrett Award recognising Outstanding Impact.

The exclusive Media Partner for Connect 2026 is Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) together with National Indigenous Television (NITV). The three-year strategic partnership will bring news of the Indigenous business sector to a wider and diverse Australian audience.

Supply Nation acknowledges major sponsors for Connect 2026:

- Commonwealth Bank of Australia – Gala Awards Dinner (Platinum Sponsor)
- BHP – Gala Awards Dinner (Gold Sponsor)
- Qantas – Gala Awards Dinner (Gold Sponsor / Official Airline Partner)
- Woolworths Group – Indigenous Business Tradeshow (Platinum Sponsor)
- Baidam – Indigenous Business Tradeshow (Gold Sponsor)
- Kirra Services – Indigenous Business Tradeshow (Gold Sponsor)
- Business Events Perth – Destination Partner
- City of Perth – Event Partner
- SBS/NITV – Media Partner

Supply Nation CEO Kate Russell said:

“Connect is not just another business event or tradeshow, it is unique in an Australian context. It brings together Blak excellence with corporate and government buyers as well as ensuring the broader community understand the contributions Indigenous peoples make to the national economy and prosperity of all Australians.

“We are extremely excited to bring Connect to Boorloo this year and have received fantastic support from government and businesses across the state. Given its strengths in mining, resources and energy, Western Australia remains an extremely strong jurisdiction for procurement from Indigenous-owned businesses.

“Pleasingly, Supply Nation’s recent research found that WA is a national leader in procurement from businesses owned by Indigenous women. These businesses received a total of \$708 million in procurement spend from Supply Nation’s government and corporate members, which is almost half of the national total spend with female-owned Indigenous suppliers. Notably, 73% of WA’s transactions over \$1 million were awarded to businesses owned by women.”

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