

# AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS TOURISM CONFERENCE

29-31 OCT 2024

MCG . NAARM . MELBOURNE



## TUE, 29 OCTOBER

8:30 AM

### WALKING TOUR WITH KOORIE HERITAGE TRUST

Take the Birrarung Wilam Walk, which starts at Federation Square, through the Birrarung Wilam Aboriginal art installations and ends at the MCG. This walk is a chance to learn about the history of the Birrarung and the Aboriginal Peoples of the Kulin Nation.

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

### REGISTRATION OPENS AND MORNING TEA ON ARRIVAL

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

10:30 AM - 10:40 AM

### WELCOME TO AITC 2024 BY MEGAN WATERS

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Olympic Room, MCG

10:40 AM - 11:30 AM

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS FOR WINTJIRI WIRU

An insightful case study given the land management responsibilities and businesses that Voyages Indigenous Tourism manages.

**Matt Cameron-Smith, Voyages Indigenous Tourism**

Olympic Room, MCG

11:30 AM - 12:15 PM

### CULTURAL TOURISM ON WADAWURRUNG DJA

Corrina Eccles, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Olympic Room, MCG

12:15 PM - 1:30 PM

### LUNCH AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

### FIRST NATIONS ADVISORY - SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL TOURISM OPERATORS COUNCIL (SAATOC)

In late 2022, representatives of Aboriginal tourism businesses and interests in South Australia came together and committed to an idea to form an organisation specifically dedicated to supporting and developing Aboriginal tourism. With WAITOC's model as a guiding light, a small working group of dedicated Aboriginal tourism leaders progressed the idea. The interim board of the South Australian Aboriginal Tourism Operators Council (SAATOC) was established in September 2023.

Haydyn Bromley, SAATOC Chair, will share the journey so far of establishing SAATOC and outline the road that lies ahead. He will discuss some of the foundational principles and ambitions that are driving SAATOC forward and how SAATOC intends to bring about a new future for Aboriginal tourism in South Australia.

**Haydyn Bromley, SAATOC Chair**

Olympic Room, MCG

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

### YOUTH FORUM

Youth leading tourism enterprises - hear the stories and views about youth engagement and leadership in tourism. Keynote address from First Nations Ambassadors for Youth, and Sports Champions, **Patty Mills AM** and **Jada Mathysen-Whyman**. Facilitated by **Kelly Lehmann**, Youth Tourism Business Leaders will follow with their stories including **Sarai Atkinson** - Business Owner of Wanyara - Traditional Aboriginal Games Enterprise, **Josh Deane** - Creative and Influencer, **Paris Atkins**, Tourism Graduate and Content Officer at Tourism Western Australia. Session hosts will invite questions and input from the floor about how the industry and community leaders can practically encourage and support youth pathways into tourism..

Olympic Room, MCG



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## TUE, 29 OCTOBER

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM

### AFTERNOON TEA AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

3:30 PM - 4:15 PM

#### KAARTDIJIN YEYI, MOORDITJ MILA (KNOWLEDGE TODAY FOR A STRONGER FUTURE)

Michelle Sidebottom, with over 30 years of tourism experience, will share the journey of the Harvey Aboriginal Corporation (HAC) in developing a cultural tourism business through the Boola Bidi Dreaming Tourism Business Development Action Plan. This plan has helped HAC achieve various milestones, including planning and developing tourism products, creating operational capacity, establishing supplier networks, and enhancing customer experience. Michelle's extensive background in tourism, business, and workforce development ensures a comprehensive and strategic approach to building sustainable Aboriginal tourism enterprises.

**Michelle Sidebottom, Breakaway Tourism**  
Olympic Room, MCG

#### BETTER WAYS TO HELP GROW FIRST NATIONS TOURISM THAN EXISTING APPROACHES

Presented by SMA Tourism, this session will explore several innovative strategies to advance Indigenous tourism. It will start by addressing limitations in current approaches, such as fragmented grant programs, businesses needing to be made larger to achieve economy of scale, and a need for greater investment in Indigenous run accommodation. A number of case studies will show how these problems are being addressed. A region-wide strategic approach to addressing all three issues will then be shared. This comes from the NSW Aboriginal Land Council's audit of Indigenous tourism businesses in north-west NSW, which led to a plan to grow five interconnected businesses for faster regional development.

**Simon McArthur and Karl Flowers, SMA Tourism**  
Jim Stynes Room, MCG

4:20 PM - 5:30 PM

#### CLOSED-DOOR SESSION: BUSINESS OWNERS AND DIRECTORS Navigating Challenges in Business Tourism

Join us for an exclusive, closed-door session designed specifically for business owners and directors in the Indigenous tourism sector. Under the confidentiality of Chatham House Rules, this session provides a safe and private environment to openly discuss the pressing issues and challenges your businesses are facing in the current climate. A fantastic opportunity to engage in candid conversations, share experiences, and explore solutions with fellow peers.

**Facilitated by Caroline Kell, Blak Wattle**  
Olympic Room, MCG

#### CLOSED-DOOR SESSION: GOVERNMENT / STAKEHOLDERS / INVESTORS

**Navigating Challenges in Business Tourism**  
Join us for an exclusive, closed-door session designed specifically for public servants and investors / stakeholders entering into the Indigenous tourism sector. Under the confidentiality of Chatham House Rules, this session provides a safe and private environment to openly discuss the pressing issues and challenges your businesses are facing in the current climate. A fantastic opportunity to engage in candid conversations, share experiences, and explore solutions with fellow peers.

**Facilitated by Sam Palmer, Austrade**  
Jim Stynes Room, MCG

5:30 PM Onwards

### OFFICIAL WELCOME

Welcome to Country & Smoking Ceremony led by the Wurundjeri Tribe | Boundary Line, MCG  
Welcome Reception | Australian Sports Museum, MCG



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## WED, 30 OCTOBER

8:00 AM

### REGISTRATION AND TRADE SHOW OPENS

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

### WELCOME AND OPENING ADDRESS - FACILITATED BY MEGAN WATERS

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country by WAITOC Chairperson, Walter McGuire  
Wominjeka Ngarrga (Welcome Dance) Performance by Djirri Djirri  
Olympic Room, MCG

9:00 AM - 9:15 AM

### MINISTERS ADDRESS

Minister Vicki Ward, Minister for Employment and Prevention of Family Violence  
Olympic Room, MCG

9:15 AM - 9:30 AM

### WELCOME TO NAARM

Victorian Senator Jana Stewart, Labor Senator for Victoria  
Olympic Room, MCG

9:30 AM - 10:15 AM

### ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

This session will cover Australia's policy directions and investments aimed at growing accessible tourism, as outlined in the THRIVE 2030 strategy. Industry leader **Nick Morris OAM**, with First Nations Access and Inclusion educators, the Red Dust Healers - anchored by Youth Ambassador **Ryan Morich**. They will share their experience and advice to improving access and inclusion in the tourism sector. They will also share examples of new technologies and venue design to improve the experience of people with disability in tourism and major events. The session highlights how diverse the accessible market is in Australia, and the world.

Olympic Room, MCG

10:15 AM - 11:00 AM

### MORNING TEA AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

### DRIVING INTERNATIONAL DEMAND AND SUPPORTING A SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY, THROUGH STORYTELLING AND FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

Bede Fennell will discuss the role Tourism Australia is playing to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are central to the Australian tourism narrative. He will provide research and insights that outline the value of Indigenous tourism in the minds of travellers and highlight how Tourism Australia is using the diversity and depth of Indigenous cultural experiences across its international campaigns and content to increase awareness, understanding and participation in Indigenous tourism experiences.

Bede Fennell, Tourism Australia  
Olympic Room, MCG

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

### FIRST NATIONS TOURISM MENTORING PROGRAM "PARTNERSHIPS AND SUCCESS STORIES"

The First Nations Tourism Mentoring Program (FNTMP) is a free mentoring program for First Nations tourism businesses across Australia, matching businesses with skilled and experienced mentors. This program is designed to support mentees to grow their tourism businesses and achieve their business goals. This panel session provides an opportunity to learn more about the FNTMP and to meet the incredible team of mentors.

Facilitated by Roanna Edwards, Yamagigu Consulting  
Olympic, MCG



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12:00 PM - 12:30 PM

### THE BUDJ BIM CULTURAL LANDSCAPE TOURS - THE JOURNEY SO FAR

Joey will share the Gunditjmara journey into the visitor economy, focusing on the story of Budj Bim Cultural Tours and the opening of the Tae Rak Aquaculture Centre. This business, which has been over 60,000 years in the making, opened to visitors in the post-COVID era to celebrate the recognition the Budj Bim Cultural landscape received with UNESCO World Heritage Status.

Joey Saunders, Budj Bim  
Olympic Room, MCG

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

### OPEN DISCUSSION: LEARNINGS AND INSIGHTS FROM DAY 1'S CLOSED-DOOR SESSIONS

Olympic Room, MCG

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

### LUNCH AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

2:30 PM - 3:05 PM

### FOLLOW THE FLOWERS TOURISM

**The Visitor Experience with Australian First Nations Regenerative Farmers, Healing Country, Building Economy and Communities**

Leanne Miller AM and her team from Outback Academy Australia will present their agritourism initiatives that combine cultural and natural resource management with agribusiness, focusing on healing Country and communities through food production, including bush foods. As agritourism is projected to reach \$18.6 billion by 2030, they will share how this approach benefits local regions, communities, and the environment.

Leanne Miller, Outback Academy  
Australia  
Olympic Room, MCG

### CAREER PATHWAYS

Panel Discussion

Hear from a panel of youth to seasoned elders where we unpack current career pathways from entry level to mid-tier growth opportunities, how to navigate the journey and how does one take an idea to fruition. What skills training are available to youth of today?

Chaired by Clinton Walker, WAITOC  
Jim Stynes Room A, MCG

### USE WHAT'S IN YOUR HANDS - YOU DON'T HAVE TO REINVENT THE WHEEL!

Explore innovative strategies that leverage local resources and networks to launch impactful cultural initiatives without needing excess funding. Learn the art of collaboration for success in creating sustainable, immersive tourism experiences. Gain insights into workshops on Reconciliation and Healing, Songlines, Cultural Understanding, and more.

Discover how collaborations and alternative income streams can drive your business growth Presentation & Panel  
Suzanne Philpot, Grateful Remnants  
Linda Daniel Rowlands and Christina  
Goodman, Cultural Living Colour  
Jim Stynes Room B, MCG

3:10 PM - 3:40 PM

### TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN PARKS AUSTRALIA, INCLUDING SEA COUNTRY

Hear from the team at Parks Australia about different opportunities and projects, including in Australian Marine Parks and Sea Country, and on Kakadu National Park.

Adrian Buman, Natalie Bool and Amy  
Mulcahy, Parks Australia  
Olympic Room, MCG

### WARRMIJALA MURRGURLAYI

Rubibi youth 'Rise Up to Work' in the Hospitality and Tourism industry supported by Nyamba Buru Yawuru Timeah Archer and Jesse Cussen will present on the Warrmijala Murrugurlayi program, a social investment initiative by Nyamba Buru Yawuru in partnership with Shell, WA Tourism, and the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development. This program offers cultural immersion, pre-employment, and vocational training for First Nations youth, focusing on building meaningful career pathways in various industry streams, including hospitality and tourism. They will share outcomes from the program's review, success stories, challenges, and learnings from its delivery since 2018.

Timeah Archer and Debra Pigram,  
Nyamba Buru Yawuru  
Jim Stynes Room A, MCG

### PROTECTING YOUR CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE Presentation on Intellectual Property and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

This session will explore the significance of Intellectual Property (IP) and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) within the Indigenous space in Australia. Attendees will gain insights into the legal frameworks that protect Indigenous knowledge, cultural expressions, and traditional practices, ensuring that these assets are respectfully managed and appropriately used. The discussion will highlight the importance of safeguarding ICIP against misuse and exploitation, while also addressing the challenges and opportunities for Indigenous communities to control and benefit from their cultural heritage in the modern economy

Neane Carter, Solicitor,  
Terri Janke Legal  
Jim Stynes Room B, MCG





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## WED, 30 OCTOBER

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM

### AFTERNOON TEA AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

4:15 PM - 4:45 PM

### COMPENDIUM OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM BEST PRACTICES: A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WINTA AND UN TOURISM

Since 2012, the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA) has been collaborating with UN Tourism to champion and elevate Indigenous tourism practices worldwide. This session will delve into the enduring partnership between WINTA and UN Tourism, beginning with the pivotal endorsement of the Larrakia Declaration. Together, they have made significant strides, including the publication of the Recommendations for Sustainable Indigenous Tourism and the Inclusive Recovery Guide – Sociocultural Impacts of COVID-19, Issue 4: Indigenous Communities.

In early 2023, this collaboration led to the release of the Compendium of Good Practices in Indigenous Tourism, focusing on the Americas. Building on this success, WINTA and UN Tourism are currently working on a second compendium with a focus on Asia and the Pacific islands.

Jean-Philippe Le Moigne, World Indigenous Tourism Alliance - WINTA  
Olympic Room, MCG

4:45 PM - 5:30 PM

### NATIONAL ABORIGINAL TOURISM BODY

Panel: Rob Taylor, WAITOC | Cam Costello, QFNTC | Paul Ah Chee, NT Aboriginal Tourism  
Committee | Dwayne Bennon-Harrison, NATOC | Jarrod Anderson, Austrade  
Olympic Room, MCG

7:00 PM - 11:00 PM

### CONFERENCE GALA DINNER

Members Dining Room, MCG



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## THU, 31 OCTOBER

8:00 AM

### REGISTRATION OPENS

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

8:30 AM - 8:45 AM

### WELCOME DAY 3

Christine Couzens, Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples  
Olympic Room, MCG

8:45 AM - 9:15 AM

### CHANGE THE WORLD THROUGH TOURISM

Join Kohutapu Lodge & Tribal Tours, NZ Tourism Award winners, to explore their groundbreaking project, "Native Nations - Tracing Indigenous Footsteps." This initiative promotes cross-cultural understanding and sustainable tourism by taking indigenous youth on transformative journeys through global indigenous communities. Participants reconnect with their culture, heal, and gain leadership skills. Discover how industry partnerships support thematic indigenous tourism trails and the expansion of this impactful program. Be inspired by stories of youth empowerment and cultural exchange, and learn about opportunities for collaboration and sustainable tourism practices.

Nadine ToeToe, Kohutapu Lodge & Tribal Tours  
Olympic Room, MCG

9:15 AM - 9:45 AM

### CREATING RESILIENT VALUES-BASED TOURISM BUSINESS

How to value and understand intrinsic aspects of tourism experiences and build it into your pricing, packaging and planning.

Kylie Ruwhiu-Karawana, TRC Tourism  
Olympic Room, MCG

9:45 AM - 10:30 AM

### A COLLABORATIVE VISION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

In the heart of the nation and the birthplace of contemporary Aboriginal art, Mparntwe, Alice Springs, Australia the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Gallery is a transformative project that will see construction of a world-class gallery. Celebrating the artistic traditions and cultural expressions of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the gallery and surrounding precinct will honour the stories and truth-telling of Australia's First Nations people internationally.

Paul Ah Chee, NT Aboriginal Tourism Committee and Nigel Browne, Larrakia Development Corporation  
Olympic Room, MCG

10:30 AM - 10:45 AM

### MORNING TEA AND NETWORKING BREAK

Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

10:45 AM - 11:30 AM

### BOOLA BIDI

Many Journeys, Many Pathways in Cultural Tourism, Immersion and Knowledge Sharing. Engaging your network and community to get the support and knowledge to successfully start up and run a tourism business in short time.

Presented by: Brad Vitale, Harvey Aboriginal Corporation  
Panel: Rob Hyatt, Koorie Heritage Trust and Paul Ah Chee, NT Aboriginal Tourism Committee  
Olympic Room, MCG

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

### FIRST NATIONS TOURISM

#### AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND INSIGHTS

Austrade, as the Australian Government agency responsible for tourism policy, will outline key initiatives relevant to First Nations tourism under THRIVE 2030, the national visitor economy strategy. This includes an update on the co-design of the First Nations Visitor Economy Partnership, the National Sustainability Framework, and new data from Tourism Research Australia on how tourists engage with First Nations experiences. Sam will also share resources and programs to help grow tourism businesses.

Sam Palmer, Austrade  
Olympic Room, MCG



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## THU, 31 OCTOBER

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**LUNCH AND NETWORKING BREAK**  
Betty Cuthbert Lounge, MCG

1:00 PM - 1:30 PM

**HARVESTING THE PAST: REVIVING AND CELEBRATING  
INDIGENOUS BUSH FOODS**

This session explores the rich cultural heritage and culinary potential of Indigenous bush foods, highlighting their significance to First Nations peoples for millennia. Attendees will learn about traditional harvesting techniques, the nutritional and medicinal benefits of native ingredients, and how these foods are being revived and celebrated in modern Australian cuisine. Experts will also share insights into the growing bush foods industry, its sustainable practices, and the opportunities it offers for Indigenous-led businesses and community empowerment.

**Panel:** Sharon Brindley (Jala Jala Treats), Rebecca Phillips (DDWCAC), Tanya Taylor (GLaWAC),  
Chef Kevin Murray (GLaWAC)

**Chair:** Megan Waters  
Olympic Room, MCG

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

**DIGITAL DREAMING: AI TOOLS TO ENHANCE INDIGENOUS  
TOURISM MASTERCLASS**

Introduction to user-friendly AI tools and platforms suitable for small to medium-sized tourism businesses that will make you work smarter and stay ahead of the curve. Bring your laptop and be prepared to be informed and empowered by AI. Leave the session equipped with the knowledge and tools to harness AI for your tourism business. Embrace digital dreaming and see how AI can elevate your operations, improve sustainability, and enhance visitor engagement.

**Lucio Ribeiro, Lucio Ribeiro AI**  
Olympic Room, MCG

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

**WORLD INDIGENOUS TOURISM ALLIANCE UPDATE**  
Rob Taylor, WAITOC and Neville Poelina, Kook Koo's Own (Uptoyu)  
Olympic Room, MCG

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM

**THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS TOURISM COUNCIL + CLOSING**  
Olympic Room, MCG

4:00 PM

**CONFERENCE CONCLUDES**



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