

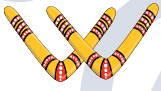
Waalitj
FOUNDATION



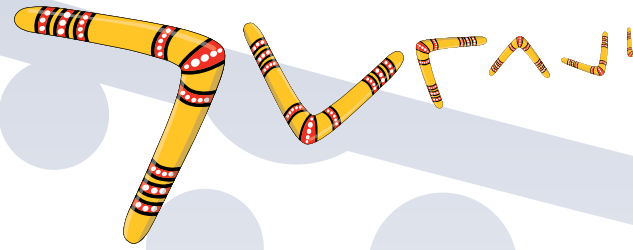
Annual Review

2023





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Welcome to the Waalitj Foundation's 2023 Annual Review.

This has been another impactful year for the Foundation, filled with achievements and progress toward our mission. Our dedicated team continues to make a difference with their unwavering commitment to empower First Nations Australians across our education, employment, and business programs.

I continue to be impressed and inspired by our teams passion and capability to make a significant positive impact in communities across Western Australia, Victoria, and Queensland.

In 2023, our team comprised of 126 staff members, with 73% identifying as First Nations Australians. We remain steadfast in our advocacy for our participants and the broader community.

As we mark 19 years since our operations commenced, the Waalitj Foundation leads the provision of education, employment and business opportunities for First Nations Peoples by working together to empower and build capacity amongst individuals, their families and their communities.

The priority of the Foundation remains delivering programs that are designed and developed by First Nation people for First Nation people. Our programs are designed to increase the retention of students in school, assist jobseekers into sustainable meaningful employment, assist them to access and succeed in further vocational training or study and to build or sustain competitive and resilient businesses.

2023 saw the relocation of the Waalitj Hub from the inaugural location in Burswood to Mineral Resources Park. Housing the Hub at Lathlain has had a number of benefits including a significant financial saving, allowing for these funds to be used to provide additional support for Aboriginal Businesses. The move has also strengthened the connection between our business delivery and other program areas of education and employment, enabling us to continue to improve the services we provide our valued participants, clients and community.

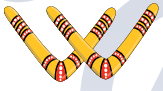
Our Employment and Justice programs continue to support jobseekers through Perth Metro, Kwinana, Peel, and Upper-Southwest, and Goldfields Regions, and have brought life-changing opportunities to participants and their families. Witnessing the transformative impact of mentoring and employment support reaffirms our commitment to driving positive change through this area.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our Key Funders—the National Indigenous Australians Agency, Shell, Alcoa Foundation, Western Power and the State Government—for their invaluable partnership and unwavering support, which enables us to continue delivering impactful programs.

Our participants are not only beneficiaries but also emerging as positive role models in their communities, paying forward the support they've received from the Foundation. It's heartening to see the ripple effect of our programs, extending their impact beyond individual participants but further to their own families and to the wider community.

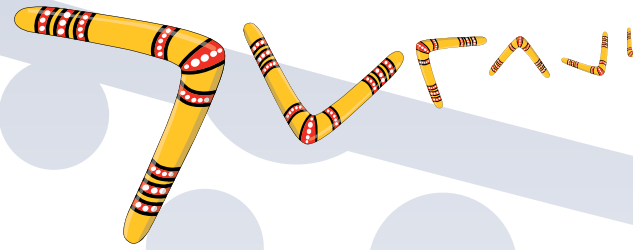
Together, we will continue to make a difference, one individual, one family, and one community at a time. Thank you for being part of this journey with us – we are proud of what we have achieved but understand we have a lot more work to do.

Alan Cransberg
Chairman, Waalitj Foundation



Waalitj
FOUNDATION





Over the past year, the Waalitj Foundation has continued to grow, with our programs gaining strength and our team maintaining their unwavering dedication to delivering positive outcomes for our participants. Each day, the Waalitj Foundation empowers individuals to make life-changing decisions, guided by our passionate staff who assist participants, students, and businesses in achieving their goals.

As CEO, I am honoured to oversee an approach that addresses each individuals' circumstances holistically, guiding participants at every stage of life. From the youngest participants enrolled in our education programs to our Waalitj Hub business clients, our Foundation strives to make a meaningful impact.

In 2005, the Waalitj Foundation embarked on its journey on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja in collaboration with our founding partner, the West Coast Eagles. Beginning with a humble team of three, we focused on promoting healthy lifestyles and school attendance among First Nations children. Today, we operate 15 programs spanning across Western Australia, Victoria, and Queensland. I am particularly proud of the fact the Foundation continues to prioritise the employment of strong and passionate First Nations roles models. 73% of our 126 staff identify as First Nations Australians, ensuring our diverse workforce is always guided and led by First Nations voices. Our management and board are also heavily represented by First Nations people.

In 2023, we continued our mission by mentoring students through our five education programs. Among these programs, the Deadly Sista Girlz initiative stands out, operating in 18 schools across WA and Victoria and delivered by First Nations women. This program not only encourages students to take pride in their culture and identity but also improves school attendance and engagement.

Our Waalitj Hub, which relocated to our head office at Mineral Resources Park in 2023, serves as a catalyst for cultivating competitive and resilient First Nations businesses. Over 400 businesses have received support, ranging from startups to large-scale operations. Our business coaches provide expert guidance and source services to empower individuals to grow and sustain their businesses.

Furthermore, in 2023, we successfully placed 391 jobseekers into meaningful and sustainable employment. This remarkable outcome is a testament to the dedication of our team of employment and justice mentors who work tirelessly to support participants in overcoming barriers to employment.

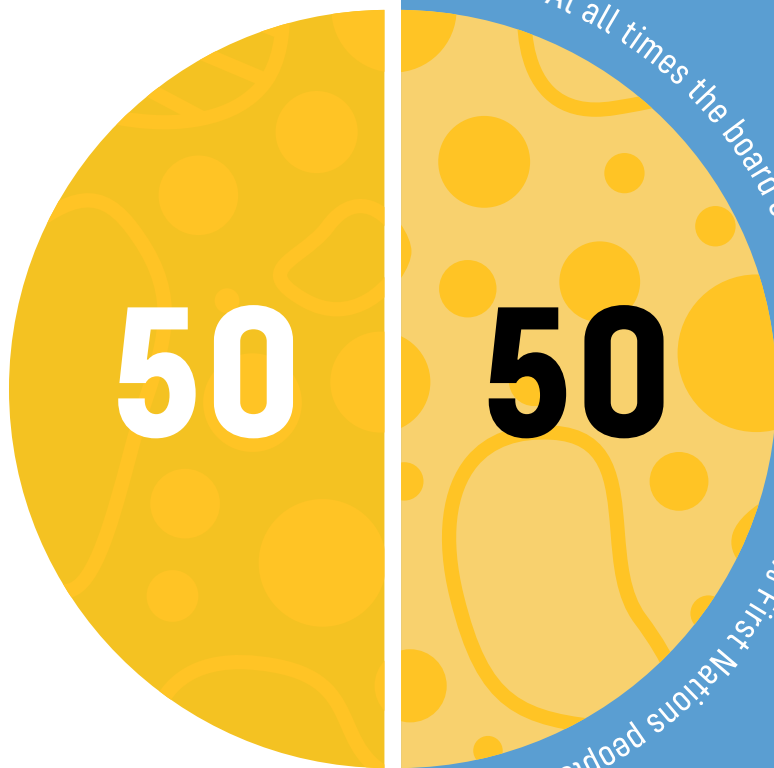
As we move forward into 2024, I eagerly anticipate witnessing further growth and strength in our programs and among our people. Together, we will continue to make a positive impact and empower First Nations Peoples to fly.

Lisa Cunningham
CEO, Waalitj Foundation



The Foundation is governed by a separate Board of Directors.

The Foundation is governed by a independent Board of Directors. The Board possess extensive commercial and strategic acumen and meet five times a year, they run on an entirely voluntary basis. The focus of the Board continues to be strong governance and financial management. At all times the board composition is at least 50% First Nations people.





THE BOARD

CHAIRPERSON



Alan Cransberg

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON



Trevor Nisbett

COMPANY SECRETARY
AND DIRECTOR



Richard Godfrey

DIRECTOR



Amanda Healy

DIRECTOR



Michael McNulty

Josie Janz-Dawson

Brad Collard

Troy Cook

DIRECTOR

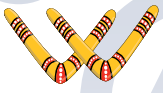


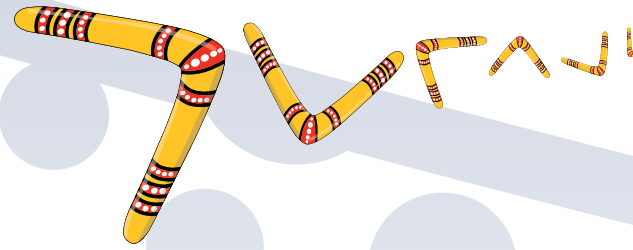
DIRECTOR



DIRECTOR







OUR MISSION

“To lead the provision of education, employment and business opportunities. We influence and inspire the empowerment of our people through our diverse workforce, which is led by our First Australian role models.”

OUR VISION

“The Waalitj Foundation is recognised as a leader enabling First Australians to thrive”

The Waalitj Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation with DGR item 1 status, Incorporated on 11 January 2002 and endorsed as an income tax-exempt charity on 12 February 2002. The Foundation is a wholly-owned separate legal entity of Indian Pacific Limited, trading As West Coast Eagles Football Club. The West Coast Eagles provide financial, IT and media services under a shared service agreement that ensure the Foundation's administration and staffing costs are kept to a minimum.

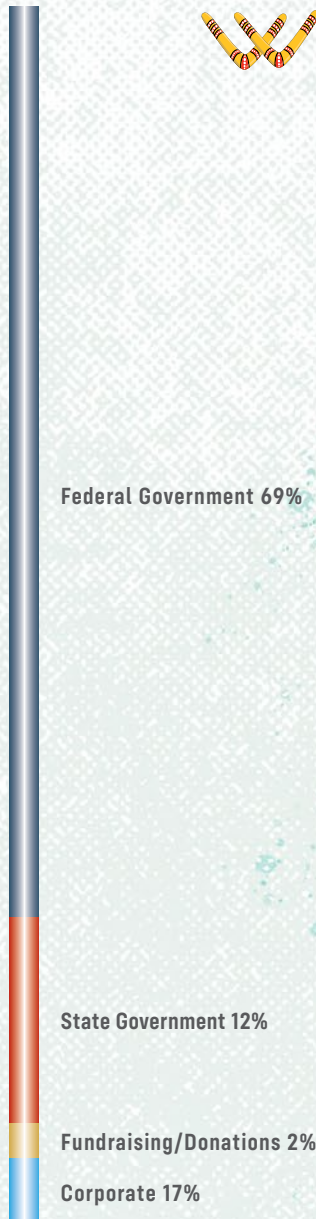
OUR PEOPLE

Strong, successful, and passionate First Nations mentors are employed to deliver our programs, with 73% of our current employees being First Nations peoples.

We currently employ over 120 staff members nationally, all of whom have completed culturally appropriate facilitator and mentor training. The Foundation is committed to fostering community partnerships and engaging and empowering parents, families, and community groups to break the cycle of disadvantage.



Our current funding breakdown is approximately:



2,154

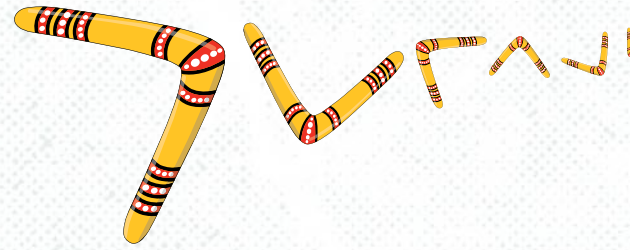
Since 2008 the Waalitj Foundation has assisted over 2,154 job seekers into employment and provided ongoing mentoring

100%

of Deadly Sista Girlz staff are First Nations Women

1098

Girls reached through Deadly Sista Girlz in 2023



Over 120 Staff

Non Indigenous

First Nations
People

73% of which are First Nations

- Programs currently delivered
- Programs previously delivered



5225

Deadly Sista Girlz
Mentored since 2007

15

Programs across
education,
employment and
business

529

Adult justice
participants
mentored
in 2023



2001

- West Coast Eagles registered David Wirrpunda Foundation Inc
- Endorsed as Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR)

2002

- David Wirrpunda Foundation Inc register for Income Tax Exemption

2005

- David Wirrpunda Foundation Inc Launch at the old Subiaco Football Club
- Wirra Club Program commences

2014

- Change of Name from David Wirrpunda Foundation Inc to The Wirrpunda Foundation Ltd
- Opened Great Southern Office in Albany to support the Wirra Sports Program and the role of the Great Southern Aboriginal Sports Development Manager position

2013

- Opened Kwinana Office to support the delivery of the P242 Happy Families Employment Program, Parenting Program, Driver Training Program, Deadly Brotha Boyz Program and DSG Program
- National DEADLY AWARD for Excellence in Education for DSG Program
- Opened ACT Office in Canberra to support the Wirra Club Program

2012

- Opened Victorian Office to support the delivery of DSG programs
- The DSG program named a best practice program by the Commissioner of Children and Young People in WA.
- DSG was named a best practice program in the AMP Foundations Best of Every Woman: An overview of approaches for philanthropic investment in Aboriginal women and girls.

2015

- Launched the Moorditj Ngoorndiak Program in Perth Metro
- Launched the Deadly Sistas Program in Brisbane in Partnership with Institute of Urban Indigenous Health and Office for Women

2016

- Decision to move to Cannington to be closer to many of our participants and readiness for our transition to the new Lathlain Facility
- Foundation attended the SOD ceremony at Lathlain facility site
- Commencement of the Remote School Attendance (RSAS) program for Wiluna
- Establishment of the Western Australian Training Academy (WATA)

2017

- Launch of the youth justice contracts: Bunuru in partnership with Outcare and Full Circle partnership with Life without Barriers in the West Kimberley
- Relocation of our Victorian office to Korin Gamadji Institute (KGI) at Richmond Football Club
- Commencement of program delivery in Onslow, WA
- Launch of the Empowering Youth Initiatives employment program: Bidi Waalitj, in collaboration with the West Coast Eagles and the Department of Jobs and Small Business
- Expansion of the Deadly Sista Girlz program to include 11 delivery sites across Australia and inclusion of the DSG Football Program
- Acquisition of training facility in East Victoria Park

2021

- Proudly changed our name to Waalitj Foundation, signifying our evolution and expansion after almost two decades of growth.
- In 2021 we launched three new employment programs our Bunbury Driver Training Program, Employment Enabling Support for Aboriginal Youth, and the Indigenous Scholarship Program in Queensland, further expanding our employment sector.
- Established 3 new Deadly Sista Girlz sites and surpassed 1000 participants in the program.
- Awarded the Maxima Training Group Outstanding Contribution by a Host 2021

2022

- Launched the Indigenous Scholarships program in Queensland, aimed at increasing the number of First Nations Australians with tertiary and trade qualifications.
- Expanded the Plan 2day 4 2morrow Employment Program expand into the Kwinana, Peel and Upper-South West Region.
- Commenced our tailored boys program at Clontarf Aboriginal College in Perth.



2006

- Pilbara Office Opened in Wickham with the support of Rio Tinto

2007

- Dare to Dream for girls commences and develops into the Deadly Sista Girlz (DSG) Programs
- On My Way Leadership Program in Pilbara
- Troy Cook Health and Fitness Program in Pilbara Dare to Dream at Balga SHS

2008

- P242 Employment Program with Bunnings
- Change of Name from David Wirrpunda Foundation Inc to David Wirrpanda Foundation Inc

2011

- Moved head office from Subiaco Oval to Central Institute of Technology in Leederville
- Commenced DSG in Doonside and Queanbeyan in NSW
- Commenced DSG in Healesville in VIC
- Commenced DSG Program in Broome with the support of Shell Australia

2010

- Commenced the Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) with Central Institute of Technology

2009

- Commenced P242 Employment Program in Partnership with Central Institute of Technology based in Leederville

2018

- ReSet program launched
- Commencement of the ParentsNext Program, in collaboration with Stirling Skills Training
- Midland/Perth North office opened
- Expansion of our VTECs to include the Goldfields, Wheatbelt and South West Regions
- VTEC program alongside Skill Hire named as a finalist for the Innovation in Indigenous Employment award at the NESAs Excellence Awards

2019

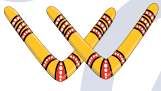
- Relocated operations to our new home at Mineral Resources Park, alongside the West Coast Eagles in Lathlain
- Commenced delivery of the Community Development Program in the Yaaliku Region of WA
- Design and Delivery commenced for the WA Indigenous Business and Employment Hub (Wirra Hub) in Burswood.
- Expansion of the Deadly Sista Girlz Program to include 14 full-time delivery sites
- Extension of Bunuru and Full Circle Youth Justice Programs of a further 2 years

2020

- Opened the Wirra Hub: WA Indigenous Business and Employment Hub in Burswood, WA, supporting over 140 Indigenous Businesses.
- Our partnership with the Town of Victoria Park, West Coast Eagles and Perth Football Club won the national award for the Community Based Initiative of the Year at the 2020 Parks and Leisure National Awards of Excellence.
- Onslow Family support won the Onslow Chamber of Commerce and Industry People's Choice Award
- Commenced Stronger Communities Program, providing intensive mentoring support to Indigenous Jobseekers

2023

- Relocated the Waalitj Hub from Burswood to our Head Office at Mineral Resources Park
- Commenced Deadly Sista Girlz at two additional school sites



REMOTE SCHOOLS ATTENDANCE STRATEGY PROGRAM

“Our Remote Schools attendance Strategy program is a community-focused initiative that involves collaboration with the school, local families, and other services to create and implement location-specific solutions to enhance school attendance and engagement. The program has played a critical role in improving school attendance rates among children in Wiluna, working alongside Wiluna Remote Community School.

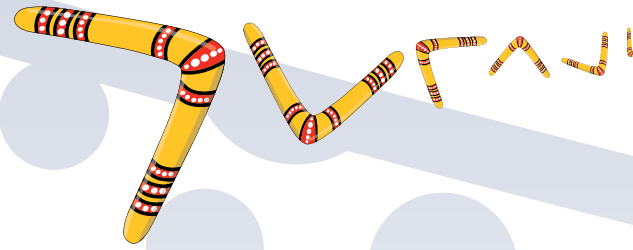
of education in students and ensures that everyone is working together to encourage attendance and success.

This is just one of the ways we are working to ensure First Nations children have access to quality education and the opportunity to reach their full potential. We are proud of the progress we have made so far and are committed to continuing our efforts to improve education outcomes.”

The aim of our education programs extends beyond simply getting children to attend school. We recognise that education can empower children to become leaders in their communities and create positive change.

The program works with teachers and school staff to provide support to students and improve education outcomes. By fostering a community minded approach, the program emphasises the importance





Deadly Sista Girlz

Delivered by strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander role models, Deadly Sista Girlz is a culturally appropriate healthy lifestyle program that aims to improve engagement and education amongst school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls. Participants are enabled to make informed decisions about their health and well-being to lead a positive and healthy lifestyle.

The Program focuses on building self-esteem and confidence, pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, having practical cultural contribution in the community, positive social interactions, building relationships based on mutual respect, encouraging active self-development and yarning about sexual and women's health, drug and alcohol abuse, road safety, healthy nutrition, financial literacy, and healthy relationships.

Onslow Family Support

The Onslow Family Support Program works with Aboriginal families in Onslow and the Bindi Bindi community with the primary aim of improving school attendance, and building capacity in parents and caregivers. Local mentors work with the community and nearby services to provide support and overcome any barriers that may prevent children from regular school attendance. Intensive mentoring is provided to families that covers support for establishing routines, school pick-ups, dealing with departmental agencies, paperwork, and medical concerns.

RSAS Wiluna

(Remote School Attendance Strategy)

Our Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) is a community-focused program run in partnership with Wiluna Remote Community School in the Mid-West town of Wiluna. RSAS aims to improve school attendance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by working together with families and the wider community to ensure attendance and retention at school. Wiluna based mentors engage other community members and services to work together to overcome any potential barriers that may prevent children from regularly attending school through organising rewards, mentor visits, sport and recreation activities, community events and supporting families with daily responsibilities.

Waalitj Club

As part of the Town of Victoria Park's Community Benefits Strategy, the Waalitj Foundation delivers Waalitj Club Lathlain, a weekly engagement program for local youth. Waalitj Club utilises our strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander role models to deliver activities focusing on a mix of health, wellbeing and physical activity.

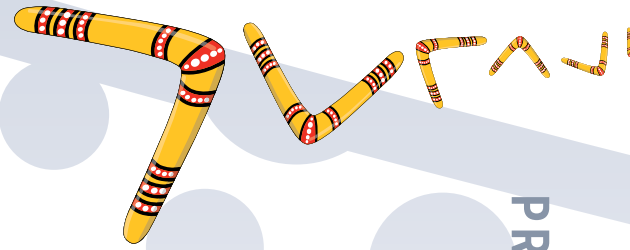


Waalitj
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2011

students mentored
through education
programs



A NEW BEGINNING FOR JAMES BONNY

James, a Wongi man based in Kalgoorlie has formed a new lease on life after engaging the support of the Waalitj Foundation.

Through the Workforce Australia program, James started attending SMYL, a community service that provides participants with the opportunity to build their literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout the program, James worked on completing his Certificate II in Community Services and has made great progress developing his literacy skills.

James said that he learns something new every day while in the program.

"I really like learning new things and have already gotten a lot out of the course," said James.

The Waalitj Foundation mentors deliver the Workforce Australia program in Kalgoorlie with the aim of equipping participants like James with the skills and knowledge to find meaningful employment.

Participants are offered career guidance, job placement and post-placement support, training and any necessary licensing or identification. This holistic approach ensures each individual is set up for success when entering employment.

For James, engaging with the program meant that he could forge a new career path. After working in the resources sector for many years he was looking to build his skills and find a role he was passionate about. He hopes to work within a community program and give back to people in need, just as he was supported.





Plan 2day 4 2morrow (P242)

P242 focuses on improving the employability of First Nations job seekers through the development of foundational skills and work readiness. Program delivery combines weekly pre-employment group sessions (Fit 4 Work) with individual mentoring support.

Fit 4 Work sessions incorporate presentations from potential employers, complimentary service providers (including health/mental health) with physical activity, mock interviews, budgeting sessions, Assessment Centres for multiple roles and promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. The Foundation's mentors deliver the weekly program and provide mentoring support for participants whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of attendees.

Community Development Program

The Community Development Program (CDP) is a remote employment and community development service. CDP supports job seekers in remote Australia to build skills, address barriers and contribute to their communities through a range of flexible activities. It is designed around the unique social and labour market conditions in remote Australia. Community Development Program participants with activity requirements complete up to 20 hours per week of work-like activities that benefit their community. CDP offers a broad range of flexible activities to increase our participants' skills and contribute to their community. The Waalitj Foundation is the CDP provider for the Yaaliku Region, covering Leonora, Laverton, Wiluna, Menzies, Mt Margaret and Mulga Queen.

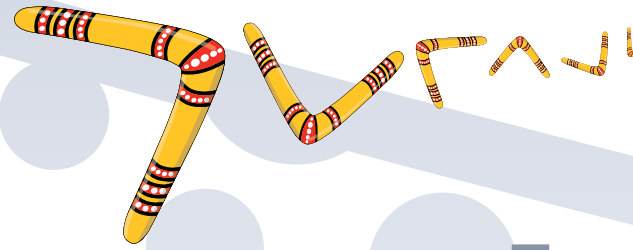
Acacia Real Support Network - Perth Metro

Waalitj Foundation staff form part of the Real Support Network, delivering holistic prisoner-focused services that support the rehabilitation and reintegration of Prisoners at Acacia Prison.

The Foundation's RSN team specialise in the delivery of employment and training services to Aboriginal males aged 18-28 both in a custodial setting and upon release to the community.

Staff are based in Acacia Prison delivering group sessions and working on an individual basis with prisoners to improve their employability with throughcare support into community. Waalitj Foundation staff utilise existing employer networks to place clients into sustainable and culturally appropriate employment opportunities.

The Network is a group of like-minded organisations that deliver collaborative services across key areas of focus determined as critical to overcoming barriers leading to recidivism. Other RSN members include Community Transitions, SHINE for Kids, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Males Healing Centre and Real Futures.



ReSet

Using an integrated suite of tailored, culturally competent and evidence-based reintegration services, ReSet provides support to men and women while in prison and after leaving prison. The Foundation's ReSet team specialise in the employment and education space of the program and work closely with other providers using a throughcare model aimed at addressing individual barriers to employment that a person exiting the justice system may be facing. Our ReSet Reintegration Program forms part of a consortium of partners including Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, Centrecare and St Bartholomews House. The program covers connecting with family, community, positive parenting relationships, adjusting to life after prison, finding a place to live and preparing for work.

Workforce Australia

Workforce Australia is the front door for government employment and skills services, helping Australians to find and keep a job, change jobs or create their own job, connecting employers with job seekers, and a refreshed network of providers to deliver tailored case management. Workforce Australia employment services give individuals the knowledge and tools they need to get a job, learn new skills or access the extra support if they need it. Waalitj Foundation is the Workforce Australia provider for Kalgoorlie, providing tailored case management services with local knowledge.





Full Circle Partnership

Full Circle Partnership provides intensive individual mentoring support to Aboriginal youth involved in the Youth Justice System in the Kimberley region. Delivered in partnership with Hope Community Services, the program mentors operate in Broome with participants exiting Banksia Hill Detention Centre, as well as servicing surrounding communities. The program uses re-engagement in school, and other healing programs such as Equine Therapy and 'Reconnection On Country' weekly excursions to ensure our young participants are supported to acknowledge and address offending behaviours. Encouraging and guiding participants to make better choices which lead to law-abiding and healthy lifestyles.

Bunuru

Bunuru provides intensive mentoring support and development for participants involved in youth justice across the key development areas of education and training with the ultimate aim of reducing recidivism and providing employment pathways for young males. Delivered in partnership with Nulsen Group, Bunuru has both the practical and class-based elements to develop work readiness. Registered Training Organisation Site Skills provides training and an opportunity for participants to complete a Certificate 1 in Resources and Infrastructure Operations.

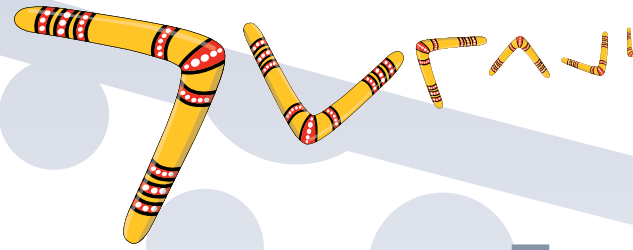
Employment Enabling Support for Aboriginal Youth

The program supplements the Foundation's delivery of pre-employment programs and wraps around support services to Aboriginal youth job seekers by providing funding to address eligible youths' identified barriers that are not being met through these programs and services. The program will support Aboriginal youth job seekers aged 15-24 years engaged in the Foundation's pre-employment programs.

Eligible youth can receive support to address multiple identified barriers, for example, the need to pay for high-risk training and the associated licence, and the purchase of work-related PPE, to assist them entering the workforce.

529

Adult justice
participants mentored
in 2023



Indigenous Scholarships Program

The Indigenous Scholarships program is aimed at increasing the number of First Nations Australians with tertiary and trade qualifications to enhance employment outcomes, with a specific focus on the resources sector. The Foundation provides mentoring services to support the administration of tertiary and vocational scholarships.

Each scholarship recipient is guided by an Individual Career Plan, which they establish with their mentor, ensuring they have all the support and tools required to reach their goals. The delivery of this program is guided by consultation with Traditional Owners to ensure its success. Local First Nations staff coordinating the program are empowered to adjust the content and delivery to a local community and individualised context.

Priority for scholarships is given to the following Traditional Owner Groups: Iman, Mandandanji, Bigambul, Barunggam, Cobble Cobble, Jarowair, Western Wakka Wakka, Yiman, Byelle, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang, Bunda, Wulli Wulli, Wakka Wakka and Gangulu. Waalitj Foundation in partnership with Shell's QGC business is proud to deliver this program.





EMPOWERING INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Malcolm Binder, a proud Noongar man with ties to Ballardong and Yued country, is carving a unique path in the refrigeration, air conditioning, and electrical services industry. The founder of Boya Refrigeration, Malcolm's journey from an unexpected business venture to a burgeoning enterprise is both inspiring and transformative.

"I never wanted to be in business," said Malcolm candidly. But as his career progressed, Malcolm found himself at the helm of his own venture. The challenges were abundant, yet the fulfillment derived from running his own business became the driving force behind Boya.

"I always knew that I had a bigger purpose than just working for a company and being sent to jobs," reflected Malcolm.

"Now I'm here. I'm like, this is my purpose in life. I know what I need to do and it's amazing. It's great."

Boya's growth trajectory brought Malcolm to the Waalitj Hub where his business coach has played a pivotal role in guiding Malcolm through the intricacies of entrepreneurship. Recognising the need for solid foundations, the support Malcolm has received focused on critical elements including a business plan and a capability statement.

"The Hub has given me access to services, linking me up with other Aboriginal-owned businesses to provide the support or documentation I need."

Describing his experience with The Waalitj Hub, Malcolm emphasised the importance of feeling comfortable and empowered. The welcoming atmosphere, coupled with

positive encouragement, has made the daunting prospect of entrepreneurship more manageable.

"Walking in and having an idea or ideas for a business and going to your business coach or whoever it is you speak to, and they say to you, 'That's a great idea. Let's do it.' That is empowering. That's positive." For Malcolm, The Hub's most significant impact lies in education.

"So far, it's definitely education. Being given the tools to educate myself. That, I feel, has been the most important thing," he said.

Boya's journey is not just a personal success story for Malcolm; it's a commitment to creating opportunities for his family and community. His vision for the next five years is rooted in sustainability and giving back.



"I want Boya to be sustainable. I want to take on an Indigenous apprentice and provide opportunities for my community.

"If anyone ever wears a Boya shirt, even if they only spend a year of their apprenticeship with me, I want them to go, 'Wow, Malcolm and the crew taught me amazing things. Boya is a great company.'"

Malcolm encourages those contemplating entrepreneurship to overcome any hesitation. "Don't be ashamed. Don't be embarrassed. At least take the first step and make a

phone call. Even if you don't feel comfortable, don't be embarrassed. Don't feel shame. There's nothing to worry about. And it's exciting."

Through Boya and with the support of The Hub, he is not only building a successful business but also breaking barriers and inspiring others to follow suit. The next five years hold the promise of sustainability, growth, and a legacy of knowledge-sharing. Through the Waalitj Hub, Indigenous business owners, like Malcolm, have access to a wide range of free services, including state-of-the-art

facilities, mentoring from business coaches, industry connections, and independent professional services. Clients can receive specialized support in key business areas like tendering, marketing, and legal.

At the heart of our services is a drive to inspire and empower the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to build competitive, resilient businesses. Since its establishment in 2020, the Waalitj Hub has assisted over 400 Indigenous clients in achieving their business goals."





Waalitj Hub

WA INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT HUB

SPIRIT SHOWCASED THROUGH BUSINESS

WAALITJ HUB business

24

Proud Noongar Man, Gino Matera, is the Owner of Keipa Water, a 100% Aboriginal owned business providing premium bottled water and hydration products.

Keipa Water celebrates the enduring and sustainable spirit of Aboriginal Australia, with products proudly showcasing Aboriginal language and design, providing consumers with a unique opportunity to make a clear statement of inclusion and empowerment.

Through his hard work, and support provided by the Waalitj Hub, Gino has seen steady growth in Keipa Water, servicing a range of retail and corporate customers, and more recently expanding into flavoured water and hydration products with Keipa Hyrd8.

For Indigenous entrepreneurs, the challenges of running a business can be even greater.

The Waalitj Hub provides valuable support and resources to help overcome these challenges and grow successful businesses.

Indigenous business owners have access to a range of free services, including state-of-the-art facilities, mentoring from business coaches, industry connections, and independent professional services. Clients

can access specialised, one-on-one support across a range of business areas, such as tendering, industrial relations, marketing, and HR.

Inspiring and empowering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to cultivate competitive and resilient Businesses is at the heart of the services we offer. Since its inception in 2020, the Waalitj





Hub has serviced over 400 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Working with the Waalitj Hub Business Coaches, Gino has received support services including an updated business plan providing him with a path to follow to grow Keipa Water and launch Kepia Hydr8.

Reflecting on his business journey, Gino acknowledged the importance of services like the Waalitj Hub.

“It gives you a head start and puts you on a path you want to go. It has given me the confidence and support to achieve my goals.

“I would tell anyone who is thinking of coming to the Waalitj Hub that it’s the first step in your journey and they will walk with you.”

Gino also attended the Waalitj Hub Regional Business Builder in Bunbury, proudly supported by the Alcoa Foundation, which he credits with providing important networking opportunities, and allowing him to build industry connections with potential customers.

“The Business Builder event helped to get me in front of clients to pitch my business,” he said.

Waalitj Hub Business Coach Michael Jack said these events are essential in empowering and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build business capability.

“Business Builders provide Indigenous business leaders with incredible opportunities to connect and explore genuine business opportunities within their region.

“The possibility to engage in meaningful conversation with industry leaders is invaluable in helping to build a robust, sustainable, and competitive Indigenous industry sector benefitting the entire community.”

The Waalitj Foundation can deliver this vital service Kwinana, Peel and the Upper South West thanks to a partnership with the Alcoa Foundation. Alcoa Global Procurement Director Adrian Jones said the company - which mines bauxite and refines alumina - is committed to increasing economic

participation opportunities for Indigenous Australians through business and employment opportunities.

As well as partnering to deliver the Business Builder events, Alcoa Foundation is a proud supporter of the Waalitj Foundation’s pre-employment programs across their local communities, focusing on improving the employability of Indigenous job seekers through developing skills and work readiness.



Waalitj Hub

WA INDIGENOUS BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT HUB

Waalitj Hub

The Waalitj Hub, also known as the WA Indigenous Business and Employment Hub, assists the Indigenous business sector to thrive in WA.

The Hub provides support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wanting to start, grow or sustain their businesses. With our in-house business coaching - plus direct access to independent, professional support - we inspire and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build their business capability.

The Waalitj Hub also proudly supports the wider business community (across WA's public, private and not-for-profit sectors) to achieve their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement and employment targets.



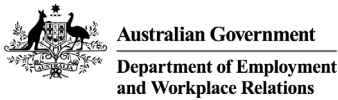
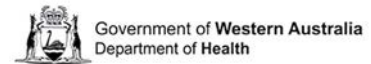


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