

McGowan Government commits \$374 million to Aboriginal well-being

Thursday, 9 September 2021

State Budget focused on building safe, fair and strong communities
Investment to help ensure positive outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities
Improving Aboriginal training and employment opportunities

The McGowan Labor Government has today committed more than \$374 million to ensure positive outcomes for Aboriginal people and communities.

The funding is split over three key policy areas: building strong communities, improving health and well-being, and delivering social and economic opportunities.

Building stronger communities includes:

- \$14 million to continue the Aboriginal Community Connectors Program across 13 locations throughout Western Australia;
- \$10 million for upgrades to Halls Creek District High School, including new classroom blocks and a new Food and Textile classroom;
- \$3.6 million for implementation of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap;
- \$1.5 million for the Aboriginal Business Capability Building Program;
- \$8 million additional funding to expand the shuttle conferencing pilot to support victims in Bunbury, Broome and Armadale;
- \$1.5 million for the second stage of the Olabud Doogethu Halls Creek Justice Reinvestment Project;
- \$1 million for the Better Beginnings program which will be expanded to the Kimberley and Pilbara, giving children in remote communities access to increased literacy and early learning; and
- \$5.6 million to establish a Broome Aboriginal-led specialist family violence court based on the Barndimalgu Court in Geraldton, including a Family Violence Intervention Service for those who have been referred to the court.

Improving health and wellbeing includes:

\$17.6 million investment in Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing pilot program;

\$6.3 million will be spent on planning and land acquisition for a new Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation facility in the Perth CBD to provide temporary accommodation for Aboriginal people travelling to Perth for medical, cultural and family reasons and reduce rough sleeping;

\$1.6 million will be spent from 2022-23 to support rapid rehousing for Aboriginal women and their children;

\$9.2 million to expand the Strong Spirit Strong Mind Metro Project to run State-wide from 2021-22 onwards;

\$2.8 million over four years to establish women's community health services in the Kimberley, including services for women's mental health, family, domestic and sexual violence

\$12.6 million to establish a new Child, Adolescent and Youth Forensic mental health and AOD Outreach service (for those aged 10-24 years) targeted at young people who are at risk of, have been or are currently in contact with the criminal justice system; and

\$9.8 million for the provision of the alcohol and other drugs education and support program by funding Drug Education Support Services (DESS) workers across the 12 Youth Accommodation and Support Services which currently have no dedicated positions (five metropolitan and seven regional); and increase resourcing for current DESS workers.

Delivering social and economic opportunities includes:

\$50 million will be spent over 2021-22 to 2024-25 to continue and expand the Aboriginal Ranger Program;

\$50 million for consultation, planning and design works for an Aboriginal Cultural Centre located near the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River);

\$20 million to implement the Jina: Western Australian Aboriginal Tourism Action Plan 2021 - 2025;

\$3.5 million Gascoyne Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Centre (Gwoonwardu Mia) in Carnarvon;

\$26 million for South West Native Title Settlement implementation;

\$2 million for the Aboriginal Cultural Centre Planning Project;

\$1.8 million to build a new, safer boat docking station at Danggu Geikie Gorge;

\$16 million will be spent over 2021-22 to 2024-25 to improve visitor facilities at key recreation sites within the Karijini National Park; and

An additional \$15.6 million will be spent over the forward estimates to facilitate negotiations with traditional owners for nine identified reserve proposals, including Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

For more information, visit <https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au>

Comments attributed to Aboriginal Affairs Minister Stephen Dawson:

"This investment into Aboriginal well-being is about Aboriginal people taking control of their own futures and taking another step towards self-determination.

"This significant investment will help us Close the Gap in Western Australia and aligns with our four Priority Reform Areas for changing how governments work with Aboriginal people.

"Aboriginal Affairs is a whole-of-government priority, with funding committed in the areas of environment, child protection, women's interests, prevention of family and domestic violence, community services, education, health and mental health, tourism, justice, water and others to deliver positive outcomes for Aboriginal people."

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