



The National Co-design Group developed the below options and features for consideration to build the National Voice.

Structural Membership Link Model 1

OR

Direct Election Model 2

Selection of Members

Local and Regional Voice arrangements
Determined according to the Principles Based Framework.
Two National Voice members* from each state, territory and Torres Strait Islands determined by one of the following options:



Selection by local and regional

Regional Voices determine collectively the national representative for that state, territory and Torres Strait Islands.

OR

State/territory-level assemblies

Provision for state/territory/TSI assemblies, where they exist and are formed by drawing on Local and Regional Voices, to determine representatives to the National Voice.

OR

Hybrid arrangement

1 national member determined by special meeting of local and regional; 1 member determined by state/territory elected representative assemblies, where these exist.

*option for 1 member for each of ACT and Torres Strait Islands

Selection of Members

Two National Voice members* from each state, territory and Torres Strait Islands determined by one of the following options:



Direct election of members to the National Voice. An election would be held in each state, territory and TSI.

OR



Potential to draw from elected state/territory/TSI-level assemblies, where they exist, to determine representatives to the National Voice, should local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people want this as the preferred method.

*option for 1 member for each of ACT and Torres Strait Islands

Options

Core membership numbers

a Total: 18 Members
States and NT: 2 members of different gender per jurisdiction
ACT and TSI: 2 members of different gender per jurisdiction

OR

b Total: 16 Members
States and NT: 2 members of different gender per jurisdiction
ACT and TSI: 1 member per jurisdiction, with rotating gender of members

Appointment of members

a Maximum of 2 appointed members
If it is required, appointment co-considered by the National Voice and the Australian Government. Determined according to specific skills set or representative requirements.

OR

b No appointments

Member terms

a 4 year terms
Staggered terms, with half the membership changed every two years. Limit of two consecutive terms.

OR

b 3 year fixed term
Limit of two consecutive terms.

Optional independent policy body

a No separate policy body required

OR

b Complementary independent Indigenous policy body
Subject matter experts to advise on specific issues. The National Voice, Government or Parliament may refer matters for advice.

Legal form of a National Voice

a Commonwealth body
Independence guaranteed in legislation.

OR

b Private incorporated body
Recognised to perform statutory advice function under special legislation. National Voice members would appoint a CEO.

The National Voice:

! Will not deliver Government programs

- Will **not** be a clearing house for research
- Will **not** provide mediation or facilitation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

- Will **not** be an escalation point for the local and regional operational issues, nor provide mediation or facilitation between government and Local and Regional Voices on specific issues
- Will not replace existing bodies or structures

- Will **not** undertake program evaluations, but could identify matters where evaluation may be needed or how evaluations could be more effective

Common across Models 1 & 2

All elements are agreed by the National Co-design Group

Membership



Membership boundaries

State/Territory boundaries and Torres Strait Islands

Role

Full time co-chairs of different genders are elected by National Voice members. Part time general members.

Eligibility

Minimum eligibility requirements set for National Voice members with Ethics Council option.

Member support

Induction training and ongoing professional development to be offered.

Functions



Role

The National Voice will have a right and responsibility on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to advise Parliament and the Government with regard to any matters of national significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.



Core function and scope

National Voice to Commonwealth Parliament and Government on matters of critical importance to the social, spiritual and economic wellbeing, or which has a significant or particular impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians of national significance.

A National Voice would have a proactive, unencumbered scope to advise on priorities and issues as determined by the National Voice.



Principles of advice

- Cannot be required by Parliament or Government to provide advice – can be requested to advise.
- National Voice will generally issue public advice, with discretion for informal discussion where appropriate.
- Issue advice with a clear position, with flexibility to reflect diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views or dissenting views.
- Issue periodic statements on the work of the National Voice.
- Two-way interaction between the National Voice and the Parliament and Government. The National Voice may ask for advice and information.



Local and Regional Voice advice linkage mechanism

Advice link between the levels of an Indigenous Voice.

National will:

- Engage with Local and Regional Voices, and state assemblies where they exist, for community input into policy development.
- Provide feedback to local and regional on how advice has been used.

Local and Regional will advise on:

- Systemic issues associated with national policies and programs
- Local and regional input and advice on national policies and programs.
- Matters of national importance.

Parliament and the Australian Government



Parliament and the Australian Government obliged to consult the National Voice on a narrow range of proposed laws which are exclusive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and would be expected to consult on a broader component.

Parliament and the Australian Government to engage as early as possible in development of policy and laws.

The obligation would be non-justiciable, nor affect the validity of any laws.



Tabling

Advice must be tabled on issues that have been referred to the National Voice. Informal advice is not tabled.



Parliamentary committee

Establish a new parliamentary committee to examine engagement and consideration of advice.



Statement on Bills

Statement of consultation provided with Bills, addressing engagement with a National Voice.

Policy and expert input



Panel of experts

A panel of qualified people and experts for the National Voice to draw upon as required and constitute to undertake a specific inquiry or task.

National Voice committees

The National Voice has the power to establish committees to support the National Voice in considering policy matters or perspectives. Committees provide the opportunity to bring in external views and expertise.

Youth and Disability Advisory Groups

Permanent standing committees specified in establishing legislation comprised of non-National Voice members.



Engagement with stakeholders

Central principle of not replacing or undermining existing bodies and structures. The Parliament and Government is expected to continue engaging with stakeholders, and the National Voice will not be a gatekeeper.

The National Voice would engage with peak bodies and other subject matter expert organisations. This role is intended to both ensure the advice from the National Voice is well informed and developed, and draws on the partnerships with key stakeholders, as well as amplify the advice of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and experts.