

Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

Consultation session details

Gadigal of the Eora Nation

Inner Sydney, 6.00pm, 24 February 2021, Session 3

Number of participants: 5

Key points raised

Please note, this is a summary of the discussion and the views and opinions expressed by participants in consultation sessions. It is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of all points raised, but draws out the key points.


The evening session was attended by 5 participants and Nathan Moran gave an acknowledgement of country. Key points discussed are summarised below.

General discussion included:

- Participants discussed the need to apply what we learned from ATSIC into this model. This included the ATSIC regional plan model which held governments accountable for outcomes in the region, as well as making sure issues around managing conflict of interest are not replicated. Co-design members noted that learning from previous examples was an important focus in the design of proposals.
- Participants agreed the need for the Indigenous Voice to determine their budget and the need to change the narrative of money being spent for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Participants noted the need for the Indigenous Voice to be accountable and transparent, and be measurable to international business standards was important.
- It was reflected that the Indigenous Voice is a big statement about the diversity that exists across Indigenous Australia. It was thought that the Indigenous Voice could be representative but it needs to be representing individuals and not Government interests.
- There was a question of how do we ensure the quiet voices are also being represented and heard.

Discussion about the Local and Regional Voice proposal included:

- The need to consider how regions would operate across state/territory borders.
- Some participants stressed the need to ensure Local and Regional Voices are representative of the community and not just government representatives at the table.
- Participants felt that the Local and Regional Voice principles need to be aligned to cultural integrity.
- Participants felt that the principles of transparency and accountability and non-duplication were very important for Local and Regional Voices. This included accountability back to community.
- It was discussed that if implementation of Local and Regional Voices is left too unstructured it may leave people behind and may not be representative enough.
- It was discussed that for Local and Regional Voices to work well it would require a reform that Government has to be open to.
- Questions were raised around how communities will be supported in establishing Local and Regional Voices. Participants felt there was a need to make sure the implementation is adequately resourced. Implementation



cannot be rushed and that Indigenous Australians need time to determine what is best for them. When rushed, good feedback cannot be given. It was suggested to not put a deadline on when feedback is needed.

- Some participants were concerned that there would be duplication especially with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils in NSW. There is a need to work out how the delineation between the two will work.

Discussion on the National Voice proposals included:

- One participant thought that the National Voice proposal was very modest, and that there was a missed opportunity for the proposal to be bolder in its thinking.
- Some participants were not sure why the advice given by the National Voice had to be divided up into expectations vs obligation on the Parliament and Government.
- Some participants felt that implementation through legislation first undermines the future potential for constitutional recognition and were concerned that constitutional recognition was not part of the co-design process.
- One participant commented that the ideas and proposals are very 'white-centric'.
- One participant also felt that gender balance representation may not be the right way to go and that in some situations more women than men might be more appropriate.
- Participants were generally supportive of the Indigenous Voice providing advice the earlier the better in terms of informing policy discussions.
- There were questions on how existing bodies are going to be incorporated and how the Indigenous Voice will represent the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and cultures.
- Some participants felt that proportionality is an issue and there was concern that more populous states were getting the same representation as smaller states.

Other issues raised included:

- Some participants felt that funds that are earmarked for Indigenous Affairs allocated to states actually reach the community and areas that need funding.
Participants expressed concerns that there was not enough lead time ahead of the sessions to read the material and get across the issues.