

Indigenous Voice Community Consultation

Consultation session details

Boandik Country,

Mount Gambier, 10 March, 9am

Number of participants: 10

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 session was attended by 10 participants and were welcomed to country by Mark Lovett. Key points discussed are summarised below.

Overarching points

- One comment at the start of the meeting noted that the Voice needs to be enshrined in the Constitution so it cannot be abolished.
- It was noted that in Mount Gambier, with the Mount Gambier Council's Recognition Action Plan committee, Indigenous people are quite active in the region, and this is not just about the Council 'ticking a box'. A general view from the group that an Indigenous Voice continues in Mount Gambier Council.

Local & Regional Voice

- The group agreed that commitment to the Voice needs to come with resourcing, as it cannot be done via volunteers, and people need to be paid for their time and commitment.
- In respect of regions, the group agreed that in all regions the Local and Regional Voice needs to have gender balance, be culturally appropriate, and ensure a good selection of people who will do the work.
- The group considered buy-in from state and local governments was important and that they needed to support the voice of Indigenous people across Australia. Participants felt governments needed to commit to putting funding and resources into this as well. Support from all sides of government would help everyone to be involved in the conversations and be invested.
- The group noted the importance of co-design members coming back to Mount Gambier, and when they do ensuring that sessions are accessible for people who work so they can come to the sessions and have their voices heard, i.e. evening and weekend sessions are preferred.
- There was general consensus that there needs to be a focus on developing the cultural capability of government, and ensuring that government and other organisations are culturally capable to work with Indigenous communities. It was proposed that this could be built into the Local and Regional Voice principles.

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- Participants raised the importance of ensuring that data and cultural knowledge is managed by community, and community have the resources and support to be able to do this – while noting the need to share this information, in a safe way, to support government decision making processes.

National Voice

- The group noted that importance of ensuring the right person or people are selected for the National Voice and the Local and Regional Voices as they will have a key role in working with community to hear ideas directly from community members. It was noted that there will be differing opinions at the community level, and those selected for the Voice will need to be able to work through these.
- The group agreed that when selecting people onto the Voice there are some basic things that the region will need to consider – a person’s involvement in the community, the work a person has done in the community, the person’s knowledge of other organisations in the community, the person’s connection to the community and their personal abilities. The group noted that these are essential to getting the right people, the people who know the community.
- The group agreed that it is important to get some of the younger people involved in the Voice. It was suggested opportunities could be provided for young people to shadow the Voice member, so that they could be exposed to this role and grow into the position over time.
- One participant stated that the involvement of young people in the Voice is about empowerment and arming young people for the future.