

Local & Regional Voice Principles

Nine principles will guide Local & Regional Voices, governments and the partnership arrangements between them.

Empowerment

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have greater control and voice in their own affairs – a self-determination approach. Governments shift to an enabling role. Arrangements are culturally safe.

Inclusive Participation

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the opportunity to have a say, including traditional owners and historical residents. Arrangements are broad-based and support respectful engagement across a diversity of voices – individuals, communities and organisations. This includes ‘unheard’ community members that have been historically excluded, or who face unique barriers to participation.

Cultural Leadership

Local & Regional Voice arrangements strongly connect to cultural leaders - those responsible for upholding and maintaining cultural law, lore and customs -in a way that is appropriate for each community and region. Communities determine how this principle interacts with the Inclusive Participation principle in their context.

Community-led Design

Arrangements are determined by communities according to local context, history and culture. Community ownership gives authorisation and mandate to Local & Regional Voices. Communities determine implementation pace; governments support and enable this.

Non-duplication and Links with Existing Bodies

Local & Regional Voices build on and leverage existing approaches wherever possible, with adaptation and evolution as needed to improve the arrangements. Voices link to other existing bodies, not duplicate or undermine their roles.

Respectful Long-term Partnerships

Governments and Local & Regional Voices commit to mutually respectful and enduring partnership, supported by structured interface. Governments are responsive and proactive. Governments support building capacity and expertise of Local & Regional Voices and implement system changes.

Transparency and Accountability

Government and Local & Regional Voices adhere to clear protocols and share responsibility and accountability, especially downwards to communities.

Capability Driven

Local & Regional Voice arrangements match the unique capabilities and strengths of each community and region. Governments and communities both build their capability to work in partnership and support local leadership development.

Data and Evidence-based Decision-making

Data is shared between governments and communities to enable evidence-based advice and shared decision-making. Communities are supported to collect and manage their own data.