



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land in which Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) operates, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations and we pay our respects to the Wurundjeri elders past and present for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal people of the place we connect to. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and extend our acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodians across Australia.

### Submission

Whittlesea Community Connections is a place based community led organisation with long standing connections with the local community in northern Melbourne. We work to address disadvantage, promote participation and create opportunities by fostering real and direct relationships with the community we are part of. These relationships enable us to understand community needs, provide an opportunity for the community to have a say about issues of importance and for us to remain accountable. Community members are integral to our planning, decision-making, program design and delivery, reviews and advocacy.

We are independent of any government, political or religious ideology and of any economic interests and support efforts that fairness and transparency in decision making and promote structural change to move Australia towards a united, equal and equitable country for First Nations people.

WCC recognise the oppression and the intergenerational trauma and suffering experienced by First Nations people and their struggle for justice, recognition and equality. The over representation of Aboriginal people in our prison systems and the unacceptable number of Aboriginal deaths in custody is just one indication of the structural injustices and racism experienced by First Nations people.

We stand in solidarity with First Nations people and their significant Uluru Statement from the Heart, and call on the Australian Government to establish a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Australian Constitution and progress the important step of establishing a Makarrata Commission.

We ask that the Australian Government

- Ensures equitable membership of the Voice giving First Nations people the same chance of being selected as established leadership figures.
- First Nations people to lead the development of the Voice model
- Follow through with its commitment to hold a referendum once the First Nations Voice is established.
- Enable legislation to be passed if the referendum is successful

Alex Haynes, Chief Executive Officer  
Whittlesea Community Connections  
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